

Bill 24 Housecleaning Amendments from Committee and Solicitor's Office:

Amending Title Eleven, Authorities, Boards and Commissions by adding Article 172, Small Business Advisory Board. The purpose of the board is to advise the Mayor and Council on issues relating to small businesses in Allentown.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ALLENTOWN:

SECTION ONE: That the following be added to Title Eleven as Article 172:

ARTICLE 172 SMALL BUSINESS ADVISORY BOARD

172.01 Purpose

172.02 Establishment and Composition of the Board

172.03 Powers and Duties

172.04 Annual Report

172.01 Purpose

The purpose of the Small Business Advisory Board is to advise the Mayor and Council on any matter that will enhance the capability of small businesses in Allentown to succeed. To promote small business, the Small Business Advisory Board will make recommendations to the Administration, the city's business development specialist and city council on policies and legislation to streamline the processes and promote growth. ~~While the board will work directly with the senior business development specialist, they will have the authority and the power to work with all departments and city council to address any issues that could affect small businesses in the city.~~

172.02 ESTABLISHMENT AND COMPOSITION

The Small Business Advisory Board shall consist of seven members (7), four (4) of whom shall be appointed by Council and three (3) by the Mayor.-The Mayor shall appoint the Chairperson of the board with the approval of council.

Duly appointed Board members shall serve a term of four (4) years, except that initial appointments shall be so staggered that the terms of the membership shall expire each year. On the initial appointments two members shall serve for four years, two for three years, two for two years and one member for one year.

A senior business development specialist of the City ~~or a designee of the Director of Community and Development and approved by Council~~ shall serve in a non-voting capacity as the board secretary and as a liaison to the Administration and City Council.

Members of the Board ~~must do not need to be residents of Allentown but need to have~~ own and operate a small business within the City. Members do not need to be residents of the City of Allentown.

For purposes of this Article, "small business" is defined as "A person, sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, association or other business entity which employs fewer than 25 employees."

The board must contain members from the east side, south side, center city, and west end of the city as so determined by Council in the approval process.

Council and the Mayor shall make every effort to ensure the board reflects the cultural diversity of the city.

The board shall meet bi-monthly or on an as needed basis – having at least four meetings a year - with additional meetings as determined by the board. All meetings shall be advertised and open to the public.

The Board shall develop and approve their by-laws which shall be approved by Council by resolution.

177.03 POWERS AND DUTIES

The Board shall serve as an advisory body. It shall be tasked with offering suggestions on the following:

Identifying issues related to of concern to small businesses. It shall, research, discuss and propose solutions to the concerns it identifies. The Board shall provide these, and make recommendations to Allentown City Council and the Administration on a regular basis, at least annually as part of the annual report and presentation (see below, Section 177.05);

Identifying potential inefficiencies with ordinances, regulations and the permit process as relates to small business. The Board may provide suggestions for improving efficiencies. Reduce red tape by working with the city to reduce regulations and streamline the permit process;

Consider and opine on Evaluate the impact on small businesses of potential city actions when Council or the Administration requests such input. Examples of such inclusive of items such as construction projects, parking practices, fees, signage, and zoning changes and make recommendations to Council and the Administration.

Look for ways to expand access to capital, and to create other tools, resources and support services for neighborhood businesses.

Facilitate communications, networking and referrals within the small business community.

Promote small business activities.

Make any recommendations on any policies or laws that may affect the management, operation and stability of small businesses.

177.05 ANNUAL REPORT AND PRESENTATION

The Business Advisory Board shall prepare a written report of the year's activities, a (1) one-year plan and long-term goals and scenarios. The report shall be given to the Mayor and shall be presented to Allentown City Council at an appropriate committee meeting no later than the second meeting in March.

SECTION TWO: That this Ordinance will take effect ten (10) days after final passage.

SECTION THREE: That all Ordinances inconsistent with the above provisions are repealed to the extent of their inconsistency.