

DIVISION 5. - PUBLIC PROPERTY NAMING COMMITTEE

Sec. 2-776. - Established.

There is hereby created and established a committee to be legally known as the "City of Knoxville Public Property Naming Committee," referred to in this chapter as "committee," which has previously existed on an ad hoc basis.

The terms and membership of the ad hoc committee in place as of the date of the adoption of this division shall not be affected by this division and shall continue to the planned expiration of their terms. Likewise, this division does not affect the prior actions of said ad hoc committee.

(Ord. No. O-214-2014, § 1, 11-25-14)

Sec. 2-777. - Purpose.

The purpose of the committee is to review and act upon requests to name or rename public buildings or property and to adopt honorary names for streets and public rights-of-way, to honor notable Knoxvilleans who have contributed to our community's history and success in a significant way. Consideration should also be given to the historical, geographical and social/cultural context of the nomination. Public property should be named after its principal function, location, or historical reference; however, significant community events, organizations or well-known persons with important contributions to the community, state or nation may deserve public recognition, which may occur by way of naming public rights-of-way or properties.

(Ord. No. O-214-2014, § 1, 11-25-14; Ord. No. O-107-2020, § 1, 6-30-20)

Sec. 2-778. - Types of naming and renaming and criteria for consideration.

(a) *Type of naming and renaming.*

- (1) *Honorary name:* An honorary name is an additional name assigned to a right-of-way or a street segment, which supplements but does not replace the official street name. The honorary name is displayed on a different color sign mounted directly below the official street sign.
- (2) *Public property name:* A request to provide an honorary name for a significant publicly-owned property including, but not limited to, buildings, parks and recreation facilities, public structures.
- (3) *New or unnamed city property:* Any request to name newly acquired, created or previously unnamed public property shall require written approval from the mayor and a council member before an application is made to the city recorder's office. Applications require:
 - a. The precise location and description of the subject property;
 - b. A thorough discussion regarding the history of the property or surrounding area, as may be applicable;
 - c. The name, address and contact information of the requestor; and
 - d. An endorsement by the current mayor or a current council member in which the property is

located.

- (b) *Exception—Naming and renaming of streets.* The committee shall not be involved with the naming of newly created streets or re-naming of existing streets which are named in accordance with the City of Knoxville Uniform Street Naming and Addressing Ordinance and the Knoxville-Knox County Subdivision Regulations. In accordance with Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission policies, honorary namings:
- (1) Shall be evaluated by the planning commission for uniqueness and appropriate naming convention.
 - (2) Shall not contain current road type nomenclature (i.e. boulevard, street, way, etc.).
 - (3) Shall not be an exact or phonetic duplication of an existing street or facility within the city or the county.
- (c) *Criteria for consideration of naming requests.*
- (1) Namings shall satisfy at least one of the following criteria:
 - a. Honors and commemorates a noteworthy person associated with the city, the county, the state or the United States of America;
 - b. Commemorates local history, places, events or culture;
 - c. Will strengthen neighborhood identity; or
 - d. Recognizes native wildlife or natural geographical features.
 - (2) The following shall not be considered for purposes of naming or renaming:
 - a. Persons that resided in the city for less than five years, other than prominent national figures;
 - b. Individual family tributes, commercially concerned and corporate-related recognitions;
 - c. Designations that cause discord within the community;
 - d. Names assigned to existing public property within the city or the county where duplication of the name is likely to lead to confusion.
 - (3) The committee shall consider:
 - a. The number of residents and businesses directly affected;
 - b. Community diversity;
 - c. The historical significance of preexisting name or location;
 - d. The appropriateness and compatibility of the request in relation to the existing area. Namings shall reflect the values and character of the community served by the facility;
 - e. The impact on emergency service delivery.
 - (4) Requests for namings in honor of a natural person should also consider the following:
 - a. Absent extraordinary or extenuating circumstances, the proposed honoree shall be deceased. Approvals to honor a living individual require unanimous support from the public property naming committee, the mayor and city council;
 - b. Whether the proposed namesake made a demonstrable and significant positive impact to local, state, or national affairs. Contributions will have been sustained over an appreciable time period and/or demonstrated leadership in governmental, cultural or historical affairs, humanitarian

efforts, or community development;

- c. Contributions that beneficially changed the nature and characteristics of the community; and
- d. Achievement by a native Knoxville of national or international acclaim in a specific field of endeavor that has reflected positively on Knoxville.

- (5) For naming requests of public properties that already have a name, consideration should be given to the origin and the significance of the existing name and any historical facts about the name.

(Ord. No. O-214-2014, § 1, 11-25-14; Ord. No. O-107-2020, § 1, 6-30-20)

Sec. 2-779. - Members of the committee.

- (a) The committee consists of fifteen (15) persons, who are to be appointed as follows:

- (1) One (1) person nominated by the councilmember for each district;
- (2) One (1) person nominated by the mayor;
- (3) One (1) representative of council nominated by the vice-mayor who will serve as chairman for a term of two (2) years or until a successor is appointed. The council member selected chairman may serve up to two consecutive terms as chairman. The chairman may appoint such other officers as deemed appropriate;
- (4) One (1) member from the professional staff of Knoxville-Knox County Planning, as nominated by its executive director, who shall serve in a non-voting advisory capacity;
- (5) One (1) representative of the law department, as nominated by the law director, who shall serve in a non-voting advisory capacity;
- (6) One (1) representative of the engineering department, as nominated by the director, who shall serve in a non-voting advisory capacity.

All members of the committee shall be nominated as stated above and shall be confirmed by a majority of the members of city council. The terms of these members will be four (4) years (except to fill vacancies), staggered as follows:

Three (3) city council appointees per year:

(Year 1: First District, Second District, At-Large Seat A);

(Year 2: Third District, Fourth District, At-Large Seat B);

(Year 3: Fifth District, Sixth District, At-Large Seat C);

Mayor's office representative;

Law department representative;

Engineering department representative;

Metropolitan planning commission representative.

- (b) No member shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.
- (c) Upon the recommendation of the majority of the committee, the chairman, with approval of the city council, may remove any member of the committee for official misconduct or neglect of duty. In addition, members who fail to attend three (3) consecutive regular meetings shall be considered to have vacated their positions and may be replaced, as provided for herein.
- (d) No member of the committee shall receive compensation for services performed.
- (e) No committee member or relative of a committee member may submit a renaming application for which the committee has approval authority or administrative responsibility. For the purposes of this section, "relative" means a person related to the committee member within the third degree of consanguinity or affinity, or a person living in the same household as the committee member.

In addition to the requirements of Knoxville City Code § 1-7, committee members must declare a conflict of interest if an application comes before the committee with which the member is involved. Committee members must also declare a conflict of interest if a relative, as defined above, or a person whom the member professionally represents has a matter before the committee. In such an event, the member must recuse himself or herself from approving said application.

(Ord. No. O-214-2014, § 1, 11-25-14; Ord. No. O-107-2020, § 1, 6-30-20)

Sec. 2-780. - Powers and duties of the committee.

- (a) The committee shall meet at a regularly scheduled date, at least two (2) times each year. A special-called meeting can be called by the committee chair or by seven (7) members of the committee with at least forty-eight (48) hours' notice. All meetings shall be open to the public. All meetings of the committee shall require a quorum of the voting membership in order to act.
- (b) The committee is authorized to develop and establish its own operating procedures, including identifying additional criteria for proposing and evaluating applications for namings, and to prescribe the necessary forms and fees to be charged for application. The committee's procedures shall be made available through the city council office, as well as posted on the city's website.
- (c) The committee is authorized to initiate public forums when appropriate for determining merits of an application.
- (d) The committee is authorized to periodically review and recommend changes to its own procedures and processes, and to adopt the same by majority vote.
- (e) If an application is approved by the committee, it is sent to the mayor for review. Within thirty (30) days of receipt, the mayor shall consider the approved application and may make any recommendation in writing for either approval, amendment or rejection. The proposal along with the mayor's written recommendation, if any, is thereafter placed on city council agenda for consideration.
- (f) Reassessment. Approved namings are bestowed with the intention that they will be permanent. However, the city and the committee will retain the right to reassess any naming in the future if facts, circumstances and/or conditions arise that make it prudent for the city, on behalf of the public interest, to amend, alter or remove the name of a street or public property.

(Ord. No. O-214-2014, § 1, 11-25-14; Ord. No. O-107-2020, § 1, 6-30-20)

Secs. 2-781—2-800. - Reserved.