



Legislative Summary

0-9-26

Updating the Standing Committees Section of the City Code

The City of Annapolis Office of Law created this summary for the use of Annapolis City Council members during their consideration of the legislation.

Bill Summary

Ordinance 9-26 amends § 2.16.190 of the City Code to update the Standing Committees section. The changes include expanding the jurisdiction of the Environmental Matters Committee to cover environmentally-related chapters in Title 17 (Buildings and Construction) and Title 21 (Planning and Zoning). Additionally, the scope of the Economic Matters Committee has been modernized. A description of duties for the Rules and City Government Committee has been added, and procedures for both automatic and discretionary committee referrals have been codified. The entire section has also been reformatted for improved clarity and consistency.

Background

The City of Annapolis has a system of standing committees of the City Council designed to provide focused oversight and substantive review of legislation in distinct subject-matter areas. These committees receive referrals of proposed legislation based on the titles of the City Code that fall within their respective jurisdictions.

Over time, certain gaps and inconsistencies have developed in the standing committee framework. Provisions of Title 17 (Buildings and Construction) and Title 21 (Planning and Zoning) with significant environmental implications—such as stormwater management, floodplain management, Critical Area overlay, forest conservation, green buildings, illicit discharge, and grading and erosion control—were not within the Environmental Matters Committee’s referral jurisdiction despite being directly environmental in character.



The Economic Matters Committee's charge to study communications services had not been updated to reflect modern technologies such as the internet, wireless, streaming, and digital media services, and did not encompass apprenticeships and workforce development.

The Rules and City Government Committee was the only standing committee without a written description of its duties in the Code.

Finally, the City Code lacked a clear, codified procedure for referring legislation to standing committees.

DETAILS

Legislative Information

Introduced by: Alderman Savidge

Ordinance 9-26 repeals and reenacts § 2.16.190 of the City Code (Standing Committees) with the following changes:

Environmental Matters Committee – Expanded Jurisdiction.

The Committee's mandatory referral jurisdiction is expanded beyond Titles 14, 15, and 16 to include the following chapters of Title 17 and Title 21:

- Chapter 17.07 (Illicit Discharge and Connection Stormwater),
- Chapter 17.08 (Grading, Erosion and Sediment Control),
- Chapter 17.09 (Trees in Development Areas),
- Chapter 17.10 (Stormwater Management),
- Chapter 17.11 (Floodplain Management),
- Chapter 17.14 (Green Buildings: Energy Efficiency and Environmental Design),
- Chapter 21.47 (Open Space District),
- Chapter 21.54 (Critical Area Overlay), and
- Chapter 21.71 (Forest Conservation).



Economic Matters Committee – Updated Scope.

The Committee’s charge is updated to replace the outdated reference to “cable television service” with a broader mandate to evaluate and make recommendations on cable television, internet, wireless, streaming, and digital media services.

The bill also adds apprenticeships and workforce development to the Committee’s areas of focus.

The Committee’s mandatory referral jurisdictions (Title 7 and Title 17) are unchanged.

Rules and City Government Committee – Duties Codified.

A new subparagraph is added describing the Committee’s duties: to consider matters and make recommendations concerning the Charter and Code of the City of Annapolis, elections, and certain operations and processes of City government, personnel, and planning and zoning.

This brings the Rules and City Government Committee into parity with all other standing committees, each of which already had a written duties subparagraph.

The Committee’s mandatory referral titles are unchanged.

Committee Referral Procedure – Codified.

A new subsection (§ 2.16.190.C) is added to codify the referral process. It establishes that proposed amendments to titles listed under a committee’s jurisdiction are automatically referred to that committee (“automatic referrals”).

In addition to automatic referrals, each committee chair retains the authority to request that additional legislation be referred to their committee.

General Reformatting and Updates.

The section is reorganized into a consistent two-subparagraph structure for each committee (duties subparagraph and mandatory referrals subparagraph).

Terminology and cross-references are updated throughout, including renaming Title 3 correctly: “Title 3 (Personnel)” to “Title 3 (Human Resources).”