

Memorandum

TO: Members of the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission

FROM: David Rubedor
Director, Neighborhood and Community Relations

DATE: July 18, 2012

RE: Boards and Commissions Diversity Survey and Recommended Actions

Requested Action: To provide guidance on recommended actions to increase the diversity on the City's boards and commissions.

Background: The City benefits from the volunteer efforts of over five hundred residents who serve on more than fifty advisory boards and commissions. These boards and commissions represent a key component of community engagement activities in regard to City actions and decision making. Boards and commissions fall into a handful of categories: appeal boards, development boards, general advisory boards, and special service districts, which are defined areas within the city where special services are rendered.

NCR is working with the City Clerk and the City Council to improve the effectiveness of these boards and commissions. One such effort is to ensure that the boards and commissions represent the diversity of the City's residents. Diversity includes racial, economic, age, gender, geographic, ownership and education status.

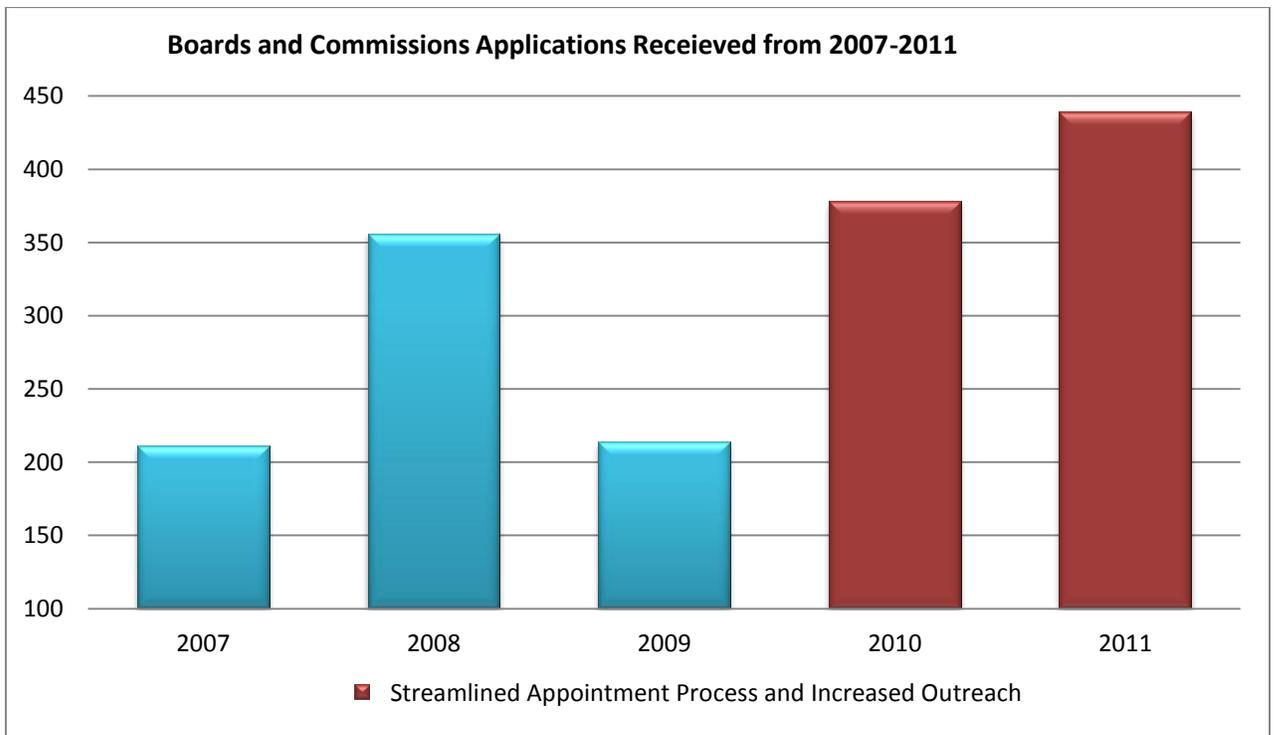
Actions Implemented To Date: To increase the diversity on the City's boards and commissions, the following actions have been undertaken:

1. **Streamlined appointment process:** In 2010, the appointment process for all boards and commissions was streamlined so that it occurred twice per year (spring and fall cycles). This provides clarity for residents and community members by allowing information, communication, and outreach about vacancies to occur in a coordinated manner.
2. **Outreach and Education:** The Neighborhood and Community Relations Department actively supports outreach to cultural communities, neighborhoods and other community-based organizations about upcoming boards and commission vacancies during the appointment process. The NCR department works directly with individuals from under represented communities interested in applying for vacancies.
3. **Boards and Commissions Diversity Survey:** To understand and measure the demographics of the City's boards and commissions, the NCR department

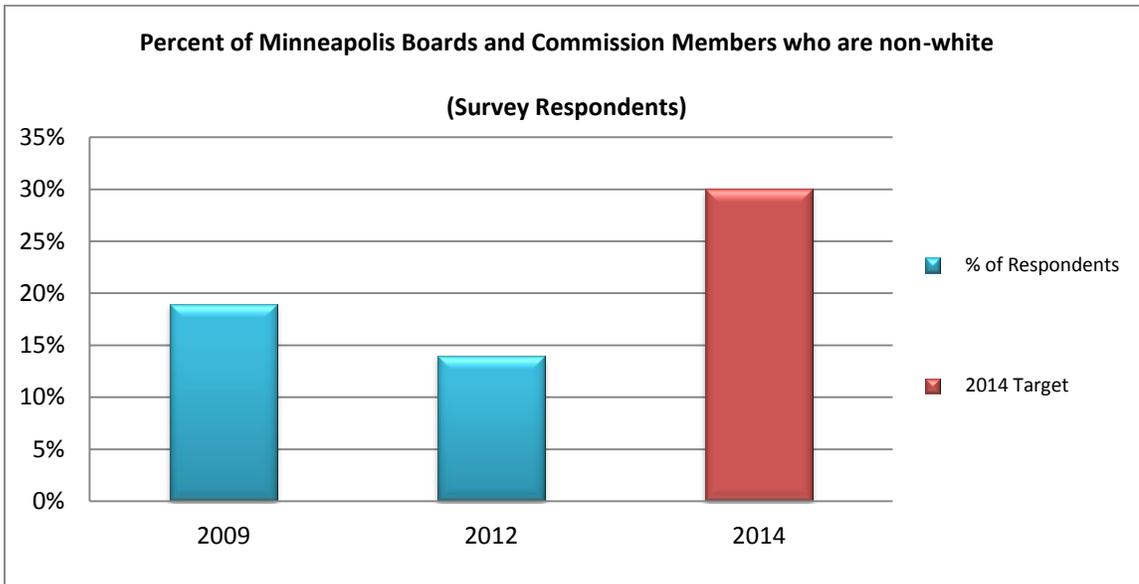
conducts a voluntary survey of their members. The first survey was completed in 2009. The second survey was just completed in June, 2012.

Summary of Survey Findings:

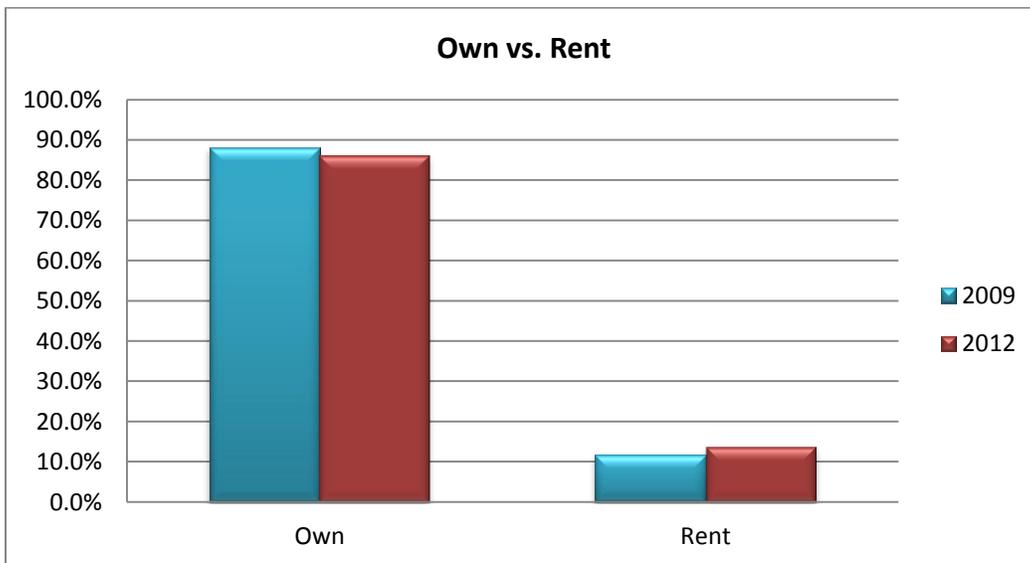
1. Limitations of the Survey: It should be noted that the Boards and Commissions' Diversity Survey is voluntary. Respondents' participation is not compulsory. Also, the survey is not scientific. Any propensity for one demographic group to participate/not participate is not weighted in the results. The validity of the survey is based on the response rate. Both the 2009 and the 2012 survey had nearly identical response rates of 39% (195 and 196 respondents, respectively, out of a pool of 500).
2. Significant increase in applicant pool: The actions implemented to date have resulted in a significant increase in the applicant pool. Since the streamlined appointment process was completed, and with the increased outreach, the number of applicants for our City's boards and commissions has increased significantly.



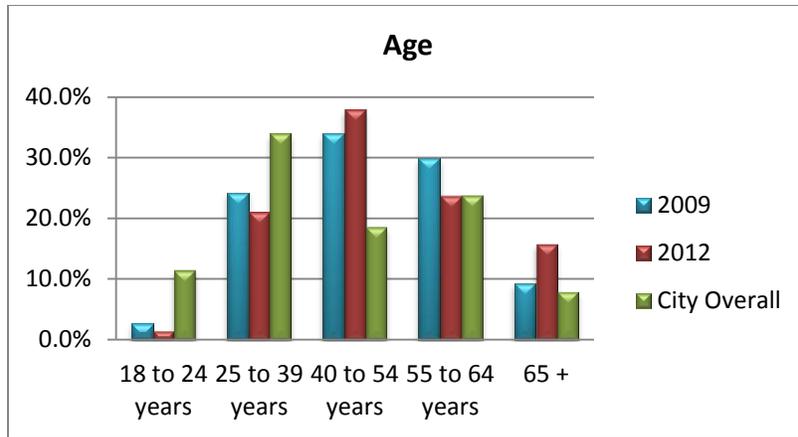
3. No effective change in the diversity: Although the applicant pool has increased significantly, there is no overall effective change in the diversity of people serving on the City's boards and commissions. See details below:



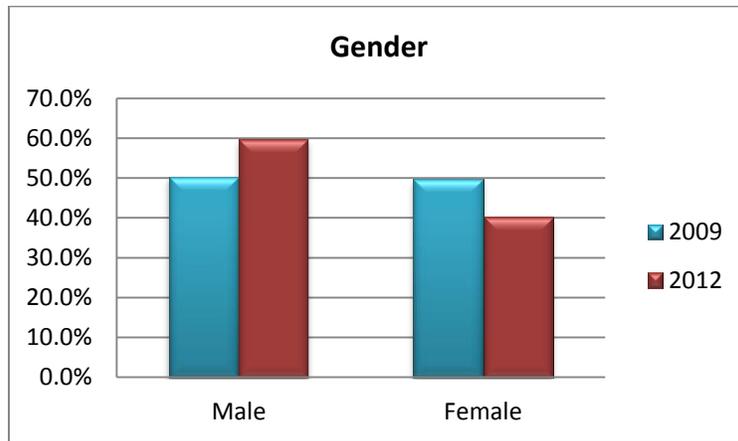
As the above chart indicates, the percentage of survey respondents identifying themselves as non-white decreased from 19% in 2009 to 14% in 2012. The goal established 30% non-white representation by 2014.



The number of renters on our City's boards and commissions increased slightly but still remains very low. About 50% of Minneapolis' occupied housing units are rental.



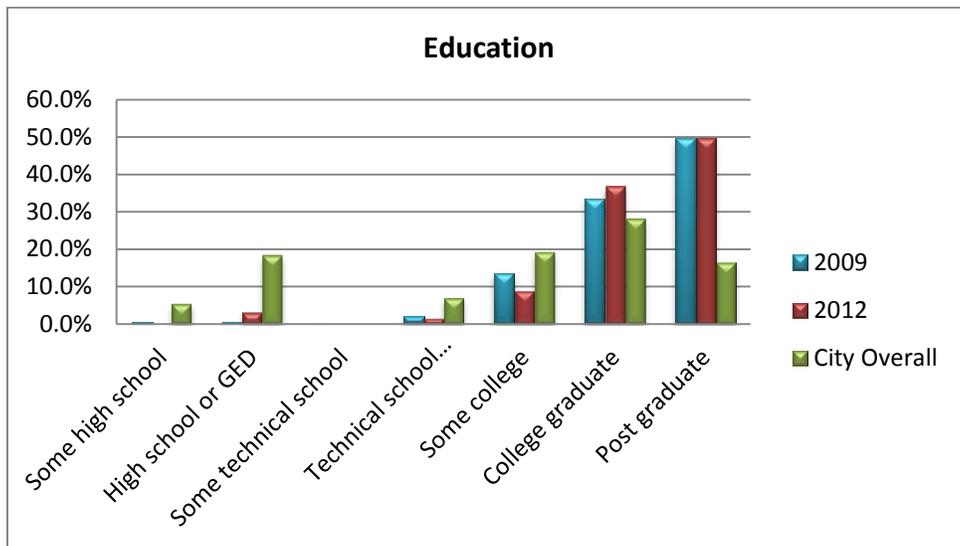
Volunteers on our boards and commissions tend to be older than the city overall.



Since 2009, the gender composition has changed to have more men than women serving on our boards and commissions.



Although more evenly distributed than in 2009, board and commission members have higher incomes than the city median income of \$46,508/year



Note: City Overall compares to the population of 25 years and older.

The education level of people serving on the City’s boards and commissions is much higher than the city overall.

Preliminary Recommendations:

Based on the survey findings, and a broader understanding of the appointment process, the following recommendations are being considered:

1. Continue Outreach Services: The increase in the applicant pool with the outreach to cultural and other under-represented groups will be imperative in achieving greater diversity on the City’s boards and commissions.
2. Increase opportunities for more participation: Changing current appointment practices can open new opportunities.
 - a. Limit multiple appointments: The survey found that over 1 in 4 volunteers serve on two or more boards or commissions. Reducing the number of people serving on multiple boards will increase opportunities for others to participate.
 - b. Enforce Term Limits: A number boards and commissions have members who have served past the established term limits. Adhering to term limits will increase opportunities for others to participate.
3. Increase Staff Involvement: There are a couple of specific examples where diversity has been significantly increased when staff and appointing authorities work together. For both the Civil Rights Commission and the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission, staff work directly with the City Council and the Mayor in the recruitment and appointment process. For the NCEC, this has resulted in people of color representing 50% of its membership. Modeling this

technique for some of our boards and commissions may prove more effective in achieving greater diversity.

4. Collect Demographic Data: Establishing a voluntary system to be able to track diversity factors may help in getting the information to the appointing authorities.
5. Implement Leadership Training Supported with Cultural Outreach: Residents should have good information about service opportunities and be well-oriented once selected to serve. The NCR department is developing a resident leadership academy that will support residents' capacity to effectively serve on our City's boards and commissions. An emphasis on cultural outreach will help ensure a diverse pool of applicants.

The City Clerk's office is also developing an orientation session to ensure that new members understand their roles and responsibilities as members of boards and commissions. Both of these efforts should increase the capacity within under-represented communities to serve effectively on the City's boards and commission.

Next Steps:

1. Finalize recommendations.
2. Present Boards and Commissions Diversity Survey to the City Council's Committee of the Whole (CoW) on August 30th with recommendations.
3. Continue working with the NCEC on developing additional strategies and techniques to increase under-represented community participation in our City's boards and commissions.