

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Decennial Committees on Local Government Efficiency Act

Background

The Decennial Committees on Local Government Efficiency Act, 50 ILCS 70/1, *et seq.*, requires units of local government that levy any tax to form a committee to study local government efficiencies and provide a report to the county board in which the unit of local government is located.

The Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD) worked with state legislators and other stakeholders to relieve the most costly and burdensome provisions of this legislation before it became law. Although still an unfunded mandate, the law gives park districts, forest preserve districts, and conservation districts the ability to appoint the committee membership and provides an opportunity for these agencies to demonstrate the countless ways in which they efficiently and effectively deliver park, recreation, and conservation programs, facilities, and services to their residents.

As one resource to our members, IAPD has developed these FAQs to assist in meeting the requirements of this new law.

Q: Who must form an efficiency committee?

A: The Decennial Committees on Local Government Efficiency Act requires units of local government that levy any tax, including park districts, forest preserve districts, and conservation districts, to form a committee to study local efficiencies. Municipalities and counties are exempt from the Act.

Q: When do I have to form a committee?

A: Units of local government must form a committee within one year after the effective date. Because the Act took effect on June 10, 2022, each governmental unit must form its committee no later than June 10, 2023.

Q: Who serves on the committee?

A: Each committee must include: (1) the elected or appointed members of the governing board of the governmental unit, (2) at least two residents of the governmental unit appointed by the board president and approved by the board, and (3) the chief executive officer or other officer of the governmental unit. The chairperson may also appoint additional members to the committee as he or she believes appropriate. Committee members serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for incurred expenses with the approval of the governmental unit.

Q: Who chairs the committee?

A: The committee will be chaired by the board president or their designee.

Q: What are the duties of the committee?

A: Each committee must: (1) study the governmental unit's governing statutes, ordinances, rules, procedures, powers, jurisdiction, shared services, intergovernmental agreements, and interrelationships with other governmental units and the State of Illinois, (2) collect data, research, and analysis as necessary to prepare a written report that includes recommendations with respect to increased accountability and efficiency, and (3) provide a written report to the administrative office of the county board of each county in which the governmental unit is located.

Q: What is the deadline for completing the report?

A: Each committee must provide a report to the administrative office of the county board of each county in which the governmental unit is located no later than eighteen months after the formation of the committee. If a committee is formed on the last possible date (June 10, 2023), then the report would need to be provided to the county board no later than December 10, 2024.

Q: What other State laws apply to the committee?

A: Each committee is considered a public body to which provisions of the Freedom of Information Act and the Open Meetings Act apply.

Q: How often must the committee meet?

A: The committee is required to meet at least three times. The committee may, but is not required, to meet during the regularly scheduled meeting of the governmental unit if the following conditions are met: (1) separate notice is given in conformance with the Open Meetings Act, (2) the committee meeting is listed as part of the board of the governmental unit's regular meeting agenda, and (3) at least a majority of the members of the committee are present at the committee's meeting.

However, because the committee's membership is not identical to the park board membership, the park board would want to adjourn or recess its regular meeting before convening a meeting of the committee if it chooses to meet on the same day as a regularly scheduled meeting.

Q: What are the requirements for each meeting of the committee?

A: Each meeting of the committee must be public and held in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. The committee must provide an opportunity for any person to be heard at each meeting for at least three minutes. At the conclusion of each meeting, the committee must conduct a survey of residents who attended the meeting and ask for input on matters discussed at the meeting. Although not a required method, a survey conducted by email to all residents who attended the meeting and provided a valid email address is one way to satisfy this survey requirement. Pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, all public bodies must keep written minutes of the meeting.

Q: What resources can IAPD provide to assist with the Act?

A: IAPD has prepared these FAQs to assist in meeting the requirements of this new Act, a fact sheet to provide an overview of the Act, a model resolution to create the committee, and a sample reporting form for agencies to use in complying with the Act. As always, for more information, please feel welcome to contact IAPD by phone at (217) 523-4554, or by email at janselment@ilparks.org or mremmert@ilparks.org.

The committee may, but is not required to, employ or use the services of specialists in public administration and governmental management, and any other trained consultants, analysts, investigators, and assistants it considers appropriate.

Q: What happens once the report is submitted?

A: After the report is provided to the administrative office of the county board of each county in which the governmental unit is located, the committee will be dissolved until it is reestablished with newly appointed members in 10 years.

IAPD requests that member agencies provide a copy of their final report to IAPD so that we can utilize this information in future advocacy efforts.

Q: Can we appoint employees of the agency to serve as the two resident members of the committee if they reside within the boundaries of the park district?

A: While the Act may technically permit employees of the agency to be appointed as the resident members of the committee, IAPD strongly discourages this practice.

The resident members are intended to provide community input to the committee. Appointing employees of the agency to serve in these positions may invite criticism that the agency is not involving the community in the process.

Q: Does the Committee have to conduct its first meeting by June 10, 2023?

A: The Act only requires your agency to form its committee by June 10. It may do so by adopting a resolution such as IAPD's model.

As long as your agency forms its committee by adopting a resolution prior to June 10, there is no statutory requirement that the committee meet prior to June 10.