



ALBANY COMMON COUNCIL TASKFORCE ON THE MUNICIPAL FLAG MINUTES

Date: January 12, 2026 | Time: 5:30 PM

Task Force Members Present: Lindsay Duncan, Benjamin Houck, Jonathan Patrizio, Liz Richards-Hart, Jennifer Richardson, Jamie Sottile

City Personnel Present: Alyssa Kamara (Junior Policy Analyst), Carly Johnson (Junior Legislative Aide)

Minutes

Agenda Items:

- Discussion of Task Force bylaws and operations
- Leadership elections

Public Comment:

No public comment was heard.

Discussion:

- Junior Policy Analyst Alyssa Kamara shared that she spoke to IT concerning the questions the Task Force expressed regarding the website that will be used to conduct voting. She noted that IT would not be present at meetings, but can answer questions indirectly.
 - Member Liz Richards-Hart clarified that they will be building the website and asked for further information on the process.
 - Member Benjamin Houck noted that the Task Force would default to IT for guidance.
 - Members discussed Syracuse's recent flag change, noting that insight could be received from them as well.
- The Task Force noted that they would hold off on leadership elections.
- The Task Force discussed the drafted bylaws.
 - Member Lindsay Duncan noted that the mission statement was brief and could be clarified. Junior Policy Analyst Kamara shared she would update Article I.
 - Members agreed that Article II and Article III looked good.
 - Members agreed that due to the Task Force lasting about 18 months, there was no need to annually elect leadership.
 - Junior Policy Analyst Kamara shared that while monthly meetings were tentatively scheduled, the frequency can increase as the competition is being held.
 - Member Jennifer Richardson asked whether members could attend meetings virtually.
 - Junior Policy Analyst Kamara noted that Council staff would have to clarify virtual requirements with New York State's Open Meetings Law. She noted that

typically one can only attend virtually due to more extreme reasons beyond convenience.

- Junior Policy Analyst Kamara shared that Council staff will ensure that meeting notices and minutes adhere to Open Meetings Law, which is detailed in the bylaws.
- The Task Force discussed the role of public comment during their meetings.]
- The Task Force discussed general duties of all members, but noted that due to the implicit nature of being a member, the bylaws would not have to be amended.
- Member Houck clarified whether the bylaws could be voted on despite there needing to be small amendments.
 - Junior Policy Analyst Kamara and Junior Legislative Aide Carly Johnson noted that it depended on their preferences, but the Task Force could wait to adopt the bylaws so that all members can see the amendments.
 - The Task Force agreed to vote to adopt the bylaws at the following meeting.
- Member Houck clarified that nominations for leadership could be made then, but voted on at the proceeding meeting.
- *Task Force Member Houck moved to nominate Task Force Member Jamie Sottile as Chair; the motion was seconded by Task Force Member Richards-Hart.*
- *Task Force Member Richards-Hart moved to nominate Task Force Member Bryan Fonder as Vice Chair; the motion was seconded by Task Force Member Houck.*
- *Task Force Member Sottile moved to nominate Task Force Member Houck as Secretary; the motion was seconded by Task Force Member Duncan.*
- The Task Force discussed the location of future meetings.
- Member Sottile clarified if the Task Force could have more than a month to select finalists after the submission deadline.
 - Junior Policy Analyst Kamara noted that the ordinance stated there is to only to be one month, but if necessary, the sponsor could amend the legislation.
- Junior Policy Analyst Kamara noted that following their discussions, she would amend the bylaws for adoption and talk further with IT regarding topics including the website creation process, voting and identifying location/IP addresses, and the speed at which content will be uploaded to the website on behalf of the Task Force.
- Junior Policy Analyst Kamara also shared that she received an answer regarding differing shapes and sizes of flag entries; she was informed that the Task Force need not worry as production would be guaranteed.

Adjourn:

Member Jamie Sottile moved to adjourn meeting, which was seconded by Member Benjamin Houck and passed by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 6:12 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Carly Johnson
Junior Legislative Aide