

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

**SUBJECT: OUTLINE OF 28E AGREEMENT FOR STUDENT/COMMUNITY ISSUE
TASK FORCES**

BACKGROUND:

The *Municipal Code* has provided for a Student Affairs Commission (SAC) since 2006. During that time, the Commission has had repeated challenges related to continuity of membership, obtaining a quorum, and identifying appropriate topics to address. At a recent meeting between Mayor Campbell, City staff, and Government of the Student Body (GSB) leadership from ISU, it was determined that there is interest in pursuing a new model to address issues that affect students and the community.

GSB President Hillary Kletscher, City Council Student Liaison Lissa Villa, and six other students met in late August to outline concepts for how a 28E agreement might be created between the City and GSB. This agreement would provide for ad-hoc joint task forces to address identified issues. City staff was present during this discussion to provide guidance. The specific concepts proposed by GSB at the meeting are as follows:

1. Either the GSB President or the Mayor could initiate a meeting with the other to discuss any issue of mutual interest and determine if a task force should be created. If a task force is determined to be in the interests of both parties, the Mayor and GSB President would identify the charge of the task force and the key policy questions to be investigated.
2. The Mayor would appoint Ames community members to the task force, and the GSB President would appoint student members. A chair would be identified jointly by the Mayor and GSB President. The City Council Student Liaison would assist in coordinating the work of the task forces and reporting on progress to the City Council and to GSB.
3. Task force meetings would be open to the public and would conform to all Iowa Open Meetings and Open Records Law requirements.
4. Upon completion of its charge, the task force would submit its final report to the GSB Senate and to the City Council. Either body could act on the final report through their powers according to law. If further investigation was requested by either the City Council or GSB Senate, and the other body agrees, the task force would reconvene and submit an addendum to its report. If no further questions remain, the task force would dissolve.

City staff further recommends including in the agreement a provision that the City Manager would appoint a City staff member to staff task force meetings as a resource for the task force members, similarly to how the SAC had been staffed. Additionally, the SAC ordinance allows for meetings to be held in alternative locations such as the ISU campus or other locations where access might be more convenient for those affected by the discussion. City staff recommends that the agreement provide for the use of alternative venues in a similar manner.

The students have requested that this task force agreement be adopted for a period of one year, as a means of testing the model and determining if it should be agreed to in perpetuity. During this time, the students have requested that the Student Affairs Commission ordinance remain in *Municipal Code*. This request has been made to allow the ordinance to act as a fallback in the event that the task forces model is unsuccessful.

There does not appear to be any explicit prohibition in Iowa law against maintaining the SAC ordinance in the *Municipal Code*, even if its provisions are not actively being used. However, retaining the ordinance may be confusing to residents who might discover the ordinance and would like to participate in the Commission's proceedings. Additionally, it is clear from past history that if not replaced on a permanent basis by the task force agreement, the provisions of the existing ordinance will need to be modified to assure a more effective Commission. **Therefore, City staff recommends that the City Council repeal the Student Affairs Commission ordinance at the same time it enters into agreement with GSB.** Should the task force model prove ineffective, the City Council could use that opportunity to bring back the Student Affairs Commission ordinance with modifications to make it more effective.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Direct staff to prepare a 28E agreement outlining the concepts as described above, and further direct staff to prepare an ordinance repealing the Student Affairs Commission.
2. Direct staff to prepare a 28E agreement outlining the concepts as described above, and retain the Student Affairs Commission ordinance in the *Municipal Code*. After one year under the 28E agreement, City staff would bring back to the City Council a discussion about repealing or modifying the Student Affairs Commission ordinance. (This alternative is the GSB preference.)
3. Direct staff to work with GSB to find another method to address issues with the Student Affairs Commission.
4. Do nothing.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Although well intended, the Student Affairs Commission has had challenges in functioning for several years. A model in which issue-specific task forces are developed as needed to address issues of mutual interest may be a more effective way to continue building relationships between the community and students. Repealing the Student Affairs Commission ordinance at the same time would reduce the possibility of confusion among those who might expect to have it available.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, thereby directing staff to prepare a 28E agreement outlining the task force concepts described above, and further directing staff to prepare an ordinance repealing the Student Affairs Commission.