



CLEARWATER NEIGHBORHOODS COALITION

Dear Mayor and City Councilmembers,

As an extension of the City Council, the city's advisory boards play a vital role in providing citizen engagement, insight, and oversight on projects, plans, and initiatives in a public forum. These boards are not just procedural bodies; they are a cornerstone of transparency and communication between residents and their government.

While it is fair to review advisory boards for efficiency, we strongly urge you not to consolidate the Environmental Advisory Board, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, and Library Advisory Board, and not to disband the Airpark Advisory Board. Each of these boards provides unique and irreplaceable expertise that strengthens Clearwater's governance.

The Parks and Recreation Department is the second largest piece of the city's budget. Its advisory board provides meaningful discussion that has helped residents improve one of the city's largest resources - its parks.

The Environmental Advisory Board has supported and advocated policies that have made Clearwater a more resilient and sustainable community. These policies have helped the city save millions of dollars and would not be at the forefront of the community if not for the board's advocacy efforts.

The Airpark Advisory Board plays a critical role in providing citizen insight and oversight, coupled with aviation and industry expertise to shape present and future operations at the multi-million dollar city-owned resource.

These boards meet quarterly, and each meeting is supposed to be two hours or less. The cost savings from combining these boards seem negligible, and the reduction in public discourse seems more like shuttering Sunshine than a cost savings measure. Disbanding the Airpark Advisory Board because the company tasked with running the operations of the airpark meets "without Sunshine constraints" certainly reads more like removing important discussions about a city resource from the public.

It should also be noted that many members of the city's advisory boards are graduates of the city's Citizens Academy, which promotes serving on these boards to its graduates.

Consolidating and disbanding citizen advisory boards is a decision that significantly reduces transparency and residents' ability to address the government. The City Council has

continued to keep public comment on items not on the agenda off the agenda. Please do not further erode and reduce the few remaining public forums we have.

Thank you,

Jared Leone
President, Clearwater Neighborhoods Coalition

Patrick Raftery
Vice President

Annette Pardue
Secretary

Cheryl Acton
Treasurer