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Mayor Becker to Meet with City Board and Commission Leaders Today

Becker Seeks to Increase Public Engagement in Local Government

SALT LAKE CITY – Salt Lake City Mayor Ralph Becker will complete individual meetings with the leadership of Salt Lake City’s 24 boards today at 4:00 p.m. in a “speed dating” type format in which he will spend 10-15 minutes with each board leader over a two and a half hour period at the Mayor’s Office.

Mayor Becker began the individual meetings last week. This is the first time a Salt Lake City Mayor has met with every board chair individually in over a decade. The goal of the meetings is to strengthen the relationship between the Mayor’s Office and the City’s constituent boards, which are comprised of volunteer residents, business owners and activists within the City.

In addition to meeting with Mayor Becker, board leaders will meet with the Mayor’s Chief of Staff, Senior Policy Advisor, Assistant Chief of Staff and Policy Analyst to discuss ideas about how each board can operate most effectively. Most of the members of the City’s 24 boards are appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council; terms typically run from three to five years.

The idea for holding these extensive meetings was an outgrowth of a report recently completed by the Boards and Commissions Review Committee (BCRC). The BCRC’s report reflects Mayor Becker’s commitment to increasing Salt Lake City residents’ accessibility to city government.

“With an eye to increase public engagement in local government, we have been working on ways to improve the overall effectiveness of our boards and commissions. I strongly believe this report is a huge step forward in increasing public involvement in Salt Lake City,” said Mayor Becker.

The Mayor believes that by improving the effectiveness of Salt Lake City’s boards and commissions, the city will be better able to respond to the needs of its citizens. According to the BCRC report, City boards and commissions “provide much needed citizen input, diverse perspective, and added expertise into the organization and operations of the City.”

Upon Mayor Becker’s arrival in office, the BCRC was assigned the task of researching how every board and commission functions within City Hall. The review committee’s purpose was to identify, assess, and make recommendations to improve the interaction between the Mayor’s Office, the City Council, and the City’s Boards and Commissions.

The comprehensive study examined boards and commissions throughout City government and was conducted by an experienced panel of five people.

The study, determined the various boards and commissions within City Hall are functioning properly, but could improve in several areas. Recommended improvements include clearer appointment procedures, a better understanding of each board's specific mission and purpose, as well as more intergovernmental communication regarding pertinent issues. In response to these findings, the Mayor has begun the implementation of the report's recommendations.

The study also recommended the Mayor personally meet with board and commission chairs to discuss current policy initiatives and the development of a citywide board member database and website. "I am pleased to report Salt Lake City's boards and commissions are moving forward," said the Mayor.

For a full copy of the study, click here: www.slcgov.com/mayor