

**Sunset Advisory Commission  
Board and Commission Review**

***Travel Information Council***

The Commission reviews every State board and commission and takes testimony regarding whether each board or commission should continue to operate or be eliminated and whether the powers and duties of any board or commission should be revised. Each board and commission has the burden of justifying its continued operation.

The Commission also reviews whether members of a board or commission should be entitled to a per diem and, if so, the amount of that per diem.

In testifying before the Commission, you should be able to provide the following information:

1. In general, how often does the board and commission meet? Provide specific information on how often the board or commission has met in the past two fiscal years. Provide information on where agendas and minutes of meetings can be found.

The Council meets on an as needed basis; during FY17 and FY18 the Council met twice a year and has met once so far in FY19. Agendas and meeting notices are posted at the Department of Libraries website. The Agency of Transportation is setting up a web page link for the Council to post minutes to, as well as general program information.

2. Provide the names of members of the board or commission, their term length and expiration, their appointing authority, and the amount of any per diem they receive.

The TIC has seven members; the Agency of Commerce Secretary serves as the Chair with the governor appointing six other members to staggered two-year terms. Non-State members are paid a per diem of \$50 per meeting, \$5 per meeting for lunch and mileage reimbursement at the authorized state rate.

**Current Membership:**

John Kessler, Chair (ACCD Secretary's designee)

Noah Fishman, Zen Barn (Restaurant Rep.) term expires 2/28/19

Francis Heald, former Ludlow Town Mgr. (Recreation Rep.) term expires 2/29/20

Elizabeth Kennett, Liberty Hill Farm (Agricultural Rep.) term expires 2/29/20

Jacqui DeMent (AOT Secretary's designee) term expires 2/28/19

Lisa Lang, Weathertop Mountain Inn (Lodging Rep.) term expires 2/29/20

John LaBarge, Public Member at Large, term expires 2/29/20

3. Provide an overview of the board or commission's purpose.

The purpose of the Council is to provide oversight for the Administration of the [Official Business Directional Sign program](#) and to oversee enforcement of non-regulatory signs under Chapter 21 of Title 10.

4. Is that purpose still needed? What would happen if the board or commission no longer fulfilled that purpose?

Oversight by the Council is still needed to achieve the legislative intent of providing safe and effective guidance to travelers and to prevent the proliferation and inappropriate use of signage. The sign law was a matter of extensive public debate when Chapter 21 was adopted 50 years ago, having the Council to balance commercial sign deployment interests with the need for safety and information provision for the traveling public has served the state well.

5. How well is the board or commission performing in executing that purpose? What evidence can you provide to substantiate that performance?

The Council has an excellent track record of implementing their duties as evidenced by the low rate of appeals of their decisions, the service they provide to assure business and safety needs are balanced and considered, and the low level of public notoriety.

6. If the purpose is still needed, can State government be more effective and efficient if the purpose was executed in a different manner?

The purpose is still needed; the Council is the best mechanism to deliver the specific function. If the functions of the Council were delivered by a program within state government, there would be a loss of perspective from the interest groups the program is specifically designed to serve. The most effective means of achieving efficiency would be to update Chapter 21, an undertaking which has not been completed in a comprehensive manner since the origination of this Chapter.

7. If the purpose is still needed, do any of your board or commission's functions overlap or duplicate those of another State board or commission or federal or State agency? If so, is your board or commission still the best entity to fulfill the purpose?

There is currently an overlap with Act 250, Criterion 8 (Aesthetics); John Kessler, the Chair of the TIC, recently engaged with the Natural Resources Board to offer a training to District Coordinators regarding Chapter 21 to reduce any potential conflicts between the two programs. Local sign ordinances may also be more stringent than the requirements in Chapter 21, in which case the more stringent language applies. In either case, there are gaps in jurisdiction (Act 250) and coverage (local ordinances) which are covered under the

requirements of Chapter 21 – which provides the broadest oversight.

8. Does the board or commission's enabling law continue to correctly reflect the purpose and activities of the board or commission?

As noted above, an update of Chapter 21, bringing it into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, would aid in the Council's effort to implement the requirements while recognizing the changing nature of communications in the today's context.

9. Provide a list of the board and commission's last fiscal year expenditures including staffing costs. How are these funded?

Per diem and expenses for the qualifying Council members was under \$500.

10. Is the board or commission required by law to prepare any reports or studies for the Legislature, the Governor, or any State agency or officer? If so, have those reports or studies been produced? Does the board or commission have ongoing reporting obligations?

No, only as requested by the Legislature. The last request came seven years ago and was related to the development of a rule to address flashing and intermittent signs and signs which were exempt from Chapter 21 oversight.