



City of Arts & Innovation

Inclusiveness, Community Engagement, and Governmental Processes Committee

**TO: INCLUSIVENESS, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
AND GOVERNMENTAL PROCESSES COMMITTEE**

DATE: AUGUST 3, 2022

FROM: CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

WARDS: ALL

**SUBJECT: FORMATION OF AD HOC COMMITTEE WITH BOARD OF ETHICS FOR REVIEW OF
RIVERSIDE MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 2.78 – CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT
COMPLAINT HEARING PROCESS**

ISSUE:

Appoint a member of the Inclusiveness, Community Engagement, and Governmental Processes Committee to an ad hoc committee which will include Board of Ethics members to review the Riverside Municipal Code Chapter 2.78 – Code of Ethics and Conduct (Code) complaint hearing process.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Inclusiveness, Community Engagement, and Governmental Processes Committee (ICGC) appoint a member of the Committee to an ad hoc committee comprised of Board of Ethics members to review the Code of Ethics and Conduct complaint hearing process.

BACKGROUND:

From August 2020 through June 2022, a total of seven Code of Ethics and Conduct complaints were filed with the City Clerk's Office. Six complaints were forwarded to Board of Ethics Hearing Panels for pre-hearing conferences and one was dismissed based on the opinion of outside legal counsel.

In light of the Code of Ethics and Conduct complaint hearing process being applied and practiced as it is currently written in the Code, it became evident to staff, the Board of Ethics, and the City Council that an in-depth review of the process is necessary.

Riverside Municipal Code Section 2.78.110 (Oversight and Monitoring) requires an annual review of the Code of Ethics and Conduct to determine its effectiveness. While the Board of Ethics had active complaints pending, the ICGC refrained from making recommendations for revisions to the Code of Ethics and Conduct until all the complaints were finalized and closed.

DISCUSSION:

On July 7, 2022, ICGC Vice Chair Perry requested formation of an ad hoc committee to include a member of the ICGC and members of the Board Ethics to conduct a detailed review of the Riverside Municipal Code Chapter 2.78 – Code of Ethics and Conduct (Code) complaint hearing process and procedures.

The Board of Ethics will meet on August 4, 2022 and appoint members of the Board to the ad hoc committee as requested by the ICGC.

Staff recommends that the ad hoc committee consider including the City Clerk and City Attorney and/or their designee(s) to participate on the ad hoc committee to advise on the functional anomalies that exist while administering the current Code process and procedures.

The ad hoc committee will convene to review the Code and forward any recommendations for revisions to the Code to the Board of Ethics for consideration during its annual review of the Code of Ethics for its effectiveness pursuant to the Riverside Municipal Code (RMC) 2.78.110 – Monitoring and Oversight:

C. Prior to the end of September of each year, the ICGC shall agendaize and discuss at a regular meeting the effectiveness of this Code of Ethics and Conduct, recommendations of the Board of Ethics and other boards and commissions and instruct the City Manager to present a report to the City Council for its discussion and consideration.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

The annual review of the effectiveness of the Code of Ethics and Conduct contributes to the following City Council's Envision 2025 Strategic Plan Priorities and Goals:

Community Well-Being – Ensuring safe and inclusive neighborhoods where everyone can thrive with the following:

Goal 2.4 Support programs and innovations that enhance community safety, encourage neighborhood engagement, and build public trust: and,

High Performing Government – Providing world class public service that is efficient, accessible, and responsible to all, with the following goal:

Goal 5.3 - Enhance communication and collaboration with community members to improve transparency, build public trust, and encourage shared decision-making.

The Board of Ethics and the ICGC reviewing and bringing forth recommendations for revisions to the Code of Ethics and Conduct aligns with the Envision 2025 Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – Riverside's annual review of the Code of Ethics and Conduct is transparent, the involvement of the City Boards and Commissions and public input creates sound policy, and inclusive community engagement builds community trust.

2. **Equity** – Outreach efforts were taken encouraging community input which consisted of website displays and community group flyers and posters throughout the city advising the public members how to provide recommendations for consideration which allows for a fair and unbiased revision process.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – Riverside is a prudent steward of public funds and ensures responsible management of the City's financial resources while providing quality public services to all. The City Clerk's Office annual budget includes funding to support the annual code review and outreach efforts.
4. **Innovation** – Riverside's annual review of the Code of Ethics and Conduct through collaborative partnerships and adaptive processes brings new perspectives and ideas helping to meet the Board of Ethics ever-changing needs for implementing the Code of Ethics and Conduct.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – Riverside is committed to meeting the present needs without compromising the needs of the future and ensuring the City's capacity to persevere, adapt and grow during fluctuating times alike. It is essential to review the Code of Ethics and Conduct on an annual basis to maintain sustainable and resilient processes and monitoring promoting innovation for a more sustainable future.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by: Donesia Gause, City Clerk

Approved as to form: Phaedra A. Norton, City Attorney

Attachment: RMC Code of Ethics and Conduct