



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

DATE: JULY 14, 2015

**FROM: CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE
CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE**

WARDS: ALL

SUBJECT: OPEN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

ISSUE:

The Charter Officers announce three open government initiatives and request City Council consideration of implementing resolutions.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council:

1. Receive and order filed the report on open government initiatives;
2. Request the City Attorney to draft a resolution amending the City Council Rules of Procedure and Order of Business to provide for publication of City Council and Standing Committee agendas twelve days in advance of meetings; and
3. Request the City Attorney to draft a resolution extending the retention of City Council and other public meeting video from 90 days to five years.

BACKGROUND:

Transparency builds trust in government, supports the spirit of open meeting laws and encourages citizen participation. Riverside elected officials and staff continuously seek opportunities to improve local government. The City Manager, City Attorney and City Clerk propose further opening local government processes and records with three new initiatives.

Public Records Advocate and Record Request Automation

Across North America and internationally, the growth in demand for access to public records outpaces existing staffing. The City Council responded to this expanded need for service by funding a Public Records Advocate (Advocate) in the City Clerk's Office in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2015/16 Budget. The Advocate will use a new software tool to ensure prompt response to public records requests. As someone familiar with Departments and City operations, the Advocate helps identify records matching the requestor's interest. An online portal available to citizens in the next few months automates processing through Departments and allows viewing of all records requests and responses. The new process administered by the City Clerk's Office replaces the current decentralized model. Simultaneous requests to multiple

Departments for similar information will be consolidated. An employee expressly dedicated to proactive assistance and production of records increases responsiveness and improves communication between City Departments. Funding the Public Records Advocate position in the City Clerk's Office demonstrates the City Council's understanding that the public's interest in government documents remains a continuing service demand now and into the future.

Twelve-Day Agenda Publication

The City Manager proposes increased lead time for publication of agendas and backup materials by an additional week. With confirmation of the City Council by resolution, beginning in September, the City Council and Standing Committee agendas and supporting materials will publish twelve days before the meeting. The City Manager plans similar earlier publication of agenda materials for the Planning Commission, Community Police Review Commission and Board of Public Utilities. Earlier publication offers officials and constituents additional time to review documents and become familiar with issues in advance of public meetings. Transparency means that the City Council and the general public get the time they need to review what City staff is proposing to have the City do. This additional time will promote stronger policy debate and decisiveness.

Videotaping of Public Meetings – Video Retention Extension

Relocation of City Council Standing Committees and several board and commission meetings to the Art Pick Council Chamber improves public access and videotaping capability. Video production staff currently videos and live-streams meetings of the City Council, City Council Standing Committees, Planning Commission and Cultural Heritage Board. Video of Board of Public Utilities and Community Police Review Commission meetings will now also be streamed live and be archived. The Charter Officers recommend that the City Council extend retention of public meeting video from the current 90 days to five years. The City's current contract with Granicus for streaming and archiving of video accommodates storage of the new video content at no additional cost. The City Clerk and supporting City Departments for boards and commissions post public meeting agendas, supporting documents, minutes and meeting video at EngageRiverside.com.

All three open government initiatives align with the City Council's Riverside 2.0 Strategic Priorities of Enhanced Customer Service and Improving Teamwork and Communication.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The City Council approved \$114,335 in salary and benefits for 1.0 FTE Deputy City Clerk position to serve as the Public Records Advocate and \$15,000 for software in the FY 2015/16 Budget. There is no fiscal impact for earlier publication of agendas and extended video retention in the cloud. The City Council also approved staffing costs in the FY 2015/16 Budget for videotaping of Standing Committees. Department Budgets will absorb board and commission video services as shown below.

City Council Standing Committees	\$22,950
Planning Commission	8,160
Cultural Heritage Board	3,060
Community Police Review Commission	3,997
Board of Public Utilities	<u>8,160</u>
Total	\$46,327

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