



City Council Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: AUGUST 18, 2020
FROM: COUNCILMEMBER JIM PERRY, WARD 6 WARDS: ALL
SUBJECT: CITY COUNCIL MEETING FREQUENCY - UPDATE

ISSUES:

Consider this update on City Council meeting regularity and consider the recommendations regarding meeting schedule, frequency, and other procedural options for future City Council meetings.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council approve:

1. City Council meetings will be scheduled for each Tuesday of the month; and
2. No City Council meetings will be scheduled on the 5th Tuesday of the month; and
3. City Council meetings scheduled for the months of July, August and September will meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday; and
4. Afternoon meetings will begin at 1:00 pm; and
5. Individual City Council meetings lacking agenda items can be cancelled.
6. If approved, the changes will go into effect 30 days after this discussion.

BACKGROUND:

On April 9, 2019, City Council presented and introduced an ordinance amending Section 2.01.010 of the Riverside Municipal Code setting regular City Council Meetings. Pursuant to the ordinance, City Council meetings will be scheduled for the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each calendar month on a yearly basis. Afternoon session times will be at the discretion of the Agenda Conference members. Evening session start times will commence at 6:15 pm. Further, no City Council meetings will be held on the Tuesday after a Monday City holiday. City council also directed the City Attorney to prepare a resolution amending Section VIII. D. of Resolution No. 23344 City Council Rules of Procedure and Order of Business to reflect the updated City Council meeting schedule.

On April 23, 2019, the adoption of the ordinance was pulled from the consent calendar for further discussion. Following discussion, a motion was made and seconded to deny approval of the ordinance amending Section 2.04.010 of the Riverside Municipal Code revising the meeting schedule of the City Council reducing regular meetings, however, the motion failed for lack of five

(5) affirmative votes. Following further discussion, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 7464 amending Section 2.04.010 of the Riverside Municipal Code revising the meeting schedule of the City Council reducing regular meetings from Four (4) per month to the first and third Tuesdays of each month with no meeting held on any Tuesday immediately following a City observed holiday occurring on a Monday. Attachment 1 was authored by Council Members Mac Arthur and Conder.

On December 3, 2019, Councilmember Perry requested that a report be brought to the City Council to consider returning to weekly City Council meetings.

On Tuesday, June 2, 2020, following discussion and without formal motion, the City Council referred the City Council meeting schedule, frequency, and other logistical options to the Safety, Wellness, and Youth Committee.

On Wednesday, July 15, 2020, the Safety, Wellness and Youth Committee met and discussed the matter. The highlighted recommendations were approved 2-1, with Councilmembers Melendrez and Perry voting yes and Councilman Conder voting no. Committee Members also requested the report be brought to the City Council for full discussion.

DISCUSSION:

Up until April 2019, the City Council held public meetings every Tuesday with the exception of the fifth Tuesday of the month. In the latter part of 2018 through the early part of 2019, the City Council often found itself completing business and adjourning for the evening around 7:30 pm. This was a consideration in reducing the monthly meetings from four (4) to two (2).

Scheduling City Council meetings on the first four (4) Tuesdays of each month, can require additional time for City Council Members and City staff who are required to stay after hours nearly every Tuesday of each month. This includes staff time to research and produce completed staff reports and the City Clerk's Office who is responsible for the collection of documents, publication and distribution of the agenda. Additionally, there are meetings with very light agendas that only require an afternoon or an evening session. Ultimately, allowing opportunities to eliminate meetings when not required or to use the time for focused discussions or workshops related to limited specific topic(s).

By maintaining City Council meetings to two (2) regular meetings each month, it can result in organizational efficiencies as staff are not constantly in production mode and have more time to develop and implement ideas to improve efficiencies and services. However, fewer regular meetings without consistent times equates to less face-to-face public access to the Council Members, staff, and participation in the process of their local government- an accessibility concern residents have raised on multiple occasions.

In many instances the City Council has experienced an increase in agenda items per meeting. This includes an increase in discussion items, and in many cases, items added to the agenda the Friday prior to the Tuesday meeting. Furthermore, longer agendas have the potential for meetings lasting longer in duration and important policy topics to be discussed very late at night. Recently, several meetings have run for an extended period of time- from 8 to 13 hours. Attachment 2 outlines the duration of Council Meetings between January 2020 to June 30, 2020. The continued need to meet and discuss ongoing budget and COVID related policies demonstrates a further need to meet more frequently.

Attachment 3 outlines options for the potential schedule, frequency and conduct of future City Council meetings. It is requested that the Council consider the options provided, or discuss options of their own, and provide direction to staff on what would work best for the City Council and the residents of the City of Riverside.

Riverside Municipal Code Section 2.04.010 establishes the time and frequency of regular City Council meetings and Section VIII. D. of Resolution No. 23437 establishes the City Council rules of procedure and order of business. Upon direction, staff will prepare and return with an Ordinance amending Riverside Municipal Code Section 2.04.010 and a resolution amending Section VIII. D. Resolution No. 23437 to reflect input received from City Council during this meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no Fiscal Impact associated with this report.

Prepared by:



JIM PERRY
Councilmember, Ward 6

Certified as to

availability of funds: Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer

Approved by: Al Zelinka, City Manager

Approved as to form: Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney

Attachments:

1. April 9, 2019 City Council Memorandum regarding City Council Meeting Schedule and Frequency
2. City Council Meeting Duration Chart
3. Options for the potential schedule, frequency and conduct of future City Council meetings
4. Riverside Municipal Code Section 2.04.010
5. Resolution No. 23437
6. Presentation