City of Culver City, California

Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: 08/08/11	Item Number: C-3
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM: Adoption of a Resolution Amending City Council Policy 4101 for Travel, Attendance at Conferences and Special Meetings or Events, and Reimbursement for Expenses.	
Contact Person/Dept.: Jeff Muir/Finance	Phone Number: (310) 253-5865
Fiscal Impact: Yes [] No [X]	General Fund: Yes [] No []
Public Hearing: [] Action Item: []	Attachments: [X]
Commission Action Required: Yes [] No [x]	Date: ________________
Public Notification: (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas – City Council (08/03/11)	
Department Approval: Jeff Muir (07/20/11)	City Attorney Approval: Carol Schwab (by H. Baker) (08/03/11)
Chief Financial Officer Approval: Jeff Muir (07/20/11)	City Manager Approval: John M. Nachbar (08/03/11)

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt a Resolution amending City Council Policy 4101 for Travel, Attendance at Conferences and Special Meetings or Events, and Reimbursement for Expenses.

BACKGROUND:

In 1995, the City Council originally adopted City Council Policy 4101 (Policy) on Travel, Attendance at Conferences and Special Meetings or Events, and Reimbursement for Expenses. This Policy was last updated in 2005. The purpose of the Policy is to establish the criteria and authorization for City Official and employee travel outside the City on City business, and payment or reimbursement for authorized expenses incurred.

DISCUSSION:

The Policy has been updated to change references to the Chief Administrative Officer to City Manager, as well as references to the City Treasurer to Chief Financial Officer. Additionally, the proposed Policy changes the method of reimbursement for meals while traveling on City business to a daily per diem amount.

The current Policy provides for up to $60 per day for meals ($10 for breakfast, $20 for lunch, and $30 for dinner), but requires receipts for each meal. The time taken in having employees track all meal receipts, preparing them for reimbursement upon return, and the review performed by the Accounts Payable Division is of limited value. Many jurisdictions provide a daily per diem amount for meals and do not require receipts to be submitted. This is an accepted practice by the IRS. Staff completed a survey, and of forty-eight jurisdictions responding, eighteen still required receipts and thirty provided a fixed per diem.

Staff is recommending a daily per diem for meals of $50 ($10 for breakfast, $15 for lunch and $25 for dinner). This amount is consistent with the per diem amounts approved by the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training, the basis by which many of the training events attended by the Police Department are reimbursed. The proposed Policy also dictates that any meals that are provided as part of the training or conference event are to be deducted from the daily per diem. The proposed Policy further elaborates the per diem amounts for travel days based on departure or arrival times. Converting to the per diem amount will be a more efficient means of handling travel and training reimbursements.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with the adoption of this City Council Policy. The total daily allowance for meals is reduced by $10, which could result in very minor savings. Staff time will be saved for both the individual that traveled and the Finance Department.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Proposed Resolution
2. City Council Policy 4101 for Travel, Attendance at Conferences and Special Meetings or Events, and Reimbursement for Expenses

MOTION:

That the City Council:

Adopt a Resolution amending City Council Policy 4101 for Travel, Attendance at Conferences and Special Meetings or Events, and Reimbursement for Expenses.