

City of Culver City, California
City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: 08/8/05		Item Number: <u>A-2</u>	
AGENDA ITEM: Consideration of a Policy to Guide the Interaction Between Councilmembers and Staff on Agenda Items.			
Contact Person/Dept.: Nick Kimball, Management Analyst		Phone Number: (310) 253-5682	
Fiscal Impact: Yes ☒ No ☐		General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☒	
Public Hearing: ☐		Action Item: ☒ Attachments: ☒	
Public Notification: Master Notification List on 8/03/05			
Department Approval: Jerry Fulwood 7/28/05		CAO Approval: Jerry Fulwood 8/1/05	
City Controller Approval: Marlee Chang 8/1/05			
<u>RECOMMENDATION:</u> Staff is seeking Council direction regarding the policy for Councilmembers contacting City staff on agenda items prior to a City Council meeting. <u>BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:</u> At the December 15, 2004 City Council meeting, current Mayor Vera requested that the issue of Councilmembers contacting staff prior to Council meetings to obtain information be agendized for discussion. Currently, if a Councilmember has a question regarding an agenda item, staff is either contacted prior to the meeting or asked the question during the meeting. Council Policy Statement No. 3203 (Attachment 1), passed on January 23, 1995 by Resolution Number 95-R005, establishes a policy regarding the relationship between individual members of the City Council and appointed employees of the City. This policy is not specific to agenda item inquiries; however, it does address the flow of information, including routine requests of facts and figures, between Councilmembers and staff. The policy states that, "individual Councilmembers should feel free to give staff information and to request routine facts and figures which currently exist from a City employee at any time." Therefore, Councilmembers may directly contact staff with inquiries regarding information that is routine and readily available. Inquiries for information which may require additional tasks, studies or reports shall be addressed to the attention of the CAO. The CAO may then refer the inquiry to the appropriate department or departments.			

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The current policy also states that if the CAO ascertains that the request is appreciably time-consuming, the matter is then referred to the next Council meeting for discussion.

Occasionally, Councilmembers may need additional clarification on a particular Agenda item or have a related question that is not significant in nature. The purpose of visiting this Council Policy is to allow Councilmembers the opportunity to contact staff with these types of questions prior to the Council meeting.

The following options are presented for Council consideration to address the issue of Councilmembers contacting staff on Agenda items prior to a Council meeting:

Option 1: The policy may be amended to include language that states; If a Councilmember requires clarification on an agenda item or has a question that is routine in nature, they may contact the appropriate Department Head and/or the CAO prior to the Council meeting at which the agenda item will be discussed;

Option 2: Keep the existing policy as-is; or

Option 3: Additional amendments to the existing Policy as directed by the Council.

Staff is requesting Council provide direction regarding the options listed above; or provide direction on additional options not listed but desired by the Council.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

Amending Council Policy Statement No. 3203 to include Option 1 would require approximately 2-3 hours of staff time. Staff time is included in the departmental budget; therefore, the appropriation of additional funds is not required.

Option 2 has no fiscal impact.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Council Policy Statement No. 3203

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MOTION:

That the City Council:

Provide staff direction regarding the policy for Councilmembers contacting City staff on an agenda item prior to a City Council meeting.