



City of Culver City

Mike Balkman Council
Chambers
9770 Culver Blvd.
Culver City, CA 90232

Staff Report

File #: 25-1313, **Version:** 1

Item #: A-5.

CC - ACTION ITEM: (1) Recommendation from the City Council Governance Subcommittee to Consolidate Public Comment at City Meetings; (2) Discussion of How to Manage Recognition Presentations; and (3) Direction to the City Manager as Desired.

Meeting Date: November 10, 2025

Contact Person/Dept.: Jesse Mays, Assistant City Manager

Phone Number: City Manager's Office - (310) 253-6000

Fiscal Impact: Yes ☐ No ☒ **General Fund:** Yes ☐ No ☒

Attachments: Yes ☒ No ☐

Public Notification: (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - City Council (11/06/2025)

Department Approval: John Nachbar, City Manager (11/04/2025)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the City Council (1) consider a recommendation from the City Council Governance Subcommittee to consolidate public comment at City meetings; (2) discuss how to manage recognition presentations at City Council meetings; and (3) provide direction to the City Manager as desired.

BACKGROUND

At its April 30, 2025, meeting, the City Council Governance Subcommittee (Council Member McMorris and Council Member Fish) considered making a recommendation to the City Council to consolidate public comment at City Council meetings. The purpose would be to shorten the duration of City Council meetings, which frequently last past 11 PM until late in the evening or early morning hours. This is a barrier to public participation in City Council meetings, since meeting participants often need to wait until action items are heard late in the evening or early in the morning in order to comment on them and often leave the meeting prior to the item being called.

Currently, the public is given a chance to speak during the City Council meetings at the following times:

1. Joint Public Comment - Items NOT on the Agenda section: One opportunity at the beginning of the meeting and another opportunity at the end of the meeting.
2. Consent Calendar: at the beginning of this section, for all Consent items.
3. Public Hearing Items: during each Public Hearing, on that specific Public Hearing only.
4. Action Items: during each Action Item, on that specific Action Item only.

Additionally, at the City Council Meeting on October 27, 2025, consensus was received to consider recognition presentations, which are currently presented to recipients in the form of commendations, proclamations, and certificates at City Council meetings, prior to the start of the regular session. Currently, at the beginning of each new mayor's tenure, a list of recurring proclamations and other recognitions is provided to the mayor for approval for the following year. There is also an online request process for additional requests that come up throughout the year. The mayor reviews and approves recognitions, which are then added to agendas so that they are presented in a timely manner.

DISCUSSION

Consolidation of Public Comment

After discussion, to maximize the ability of the public to participate in City meetings, the City Council Governance Subcommittee recommends that the City Council direct the City Manager to change agenda formats to modify public comment periods at City meetings as follows:

- A. Public Comment is consolidated to two sections on the agenda:
 1. Joint Public Comment - Items on the agenda and items NOT on the Agenda section: The public can comment on items on Consent Calendar, Action Items, and items not on the agenda. This section would take the place of the existing "Joint Public Comment - Items NOT on the Agenda" section at the beginning of the meeting.
 2. Public Hearing Items: The public may comment during public hearings, as required by law.
- B. Each speaker has up to three (3) minutes to speak, at the discretion of the Mayor.
- C. Ceding of time is not permitted.
- D. The agenda will not list a total time limit for the Joint Public Comment section. Currently, agendas list a 20-minute time limit, but this is rarely enforced.
- E. No Public Comment section at the end of the meeting. All public comment will take place at the beginning of the meeting.

- F. Speakers are encouraged to submit Public Comments through the City's webpage or send emails or letters to the City Council and the City Clerk in advance of the meeting with additional comments that would extend beyond three minutes.

A survey of public comment formats in other California cities is attached (Attachment 1.)

Consideration of Recognition Presentations

Council Policy 3402 "Council Recognition: Procedures for Approval and Administration" (Attachment 2) provides for how recognitions are approved and the process but does not address how or when most are presented. While some recognitions are presented outside of council meetings, those recognitions that occur at City Council meetings are presented after the Closed Session and prior to the Regular, open session of the meeting, which is scheduled to start at 7:00PM.

While some meetings have no recognitions, there can be eight or more presentations which can increase the meeting time. Staff reached out to other cities to determine how recognitions are handled (Attachment 3.)

During the agenda's recognition presentation section, the Mayor and Council recognize and honor individuals, groups and/ or organizations for any of the following reasons:

- Special achievements by residents, businesses, or organizations
- Marking an organizational milestone or event
- Contributions to the local community

The recognitions generally presented at City Council meetings are in the form of a certificate, commendation, or proclamation. This portion of the meeting often highlights how the city is involved with certain causes, may encourage residents to get more involved with the community, and can celebrate achievements in the City. Recognitions provide residents with information on issues and topics that may not be common knowledge or may aim to place a smile on someone's face or deliver a learning opportunity. Some memorable recognitions in the past few years have included a commendation to Olympic Gold Medalist and Culver City High School Track Coach, Lashinda Demus, a performance from the Culver City Academy of Ballet in honor of World Ballet Day, and trip highlights from students who visited Culver City's sister city, Kaizuka, Japan.

Currently, recognitions are read aloud in the Council Chamber and recipients are free to provide brief remarks. There is also an opportunity for photos to be taken with the Council as well as receive public comments on the recognition items from members of the public.

Staff sent a survey to other cities to gather feedback on their recognition processes and management. The results of the survey (Attachment 3) found that Culver City's current practices align with the majority of the 24 cities that responded.

Below are notable results that stood out as ways to streamline recognition presentations:

- Keep recognition period between 5-20 minutes
- Limit recognition items to a maximum of three (3) items per agenda
- In lieu of reading the commendation or proclamation in its entirety, read a summary of the text

(no more than 100 words)

If it is the Council's desire to limit recognitions that take place during a City Council meeting, the City also has alternative resources available to provide the community with the information that would no longer be provided at council meetings, such as:

- Community Calendar - the community calendar is a place where residents can find upcoming events in the city. Significant events and special days, weeks, and months could be added to the calendar, along with any associated event in the city.
- Council Video Wall (before meetings) - Prior to the start of the council meeting, a list of recognitions could be displayed on the video wall, again, reminding residents of upcoming events and celebrations.
- Culver City Monthly Newsletter - An announcement of annual recognitions and observances could be included in the monthly newsletter which is sent out via GovDelivery.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

There is no fiscal impact from discussing or implementing this item.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2025-11-10 ATT 1 - Public Speaking Opportunities and Limits at Select CA Cities
2. 2025-11-10_ATT 2 - Council Policy 3402 Council Recognitions: Procedures for Approval and Administration
3. 2025-11-10_ATT 3 - Culver City Recognition Practices Survey Results

MOTIONS

That the City Council:

1. Direct the City Manager to modify the format of City Council meeting agendas and City commission, board and committee agendas as recommended by the City Council Governance Subcommittee;

OR

2. Direct the City Manager to modify the format of City Council meeting agendas and City commission, board and committee agendas as desired;

AND:

3. Consider how to manage recognition items and direct City Manager as determined by City Council.