

THESE MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL
UNTIL APPROVED BY THE
CULVER CITY
STANDING GOVERNANCE SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE CITY COUNCIL

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
CULVER CITY STANDING GOVERNANCE
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

April 2, 2025
1:00 p.m.

Call to Order & Roll Call

The special meeting of the Standing Governance Subcommittee of the City Council was called to order at 1:00 p.m. in the Patio Meeting Room at City Hall.

Present: Bubba Fish, Council Member
Yasmine-Imani McMorris, Council Member

Staff Present: Jesse Mays, Assistant City Manager
Mike Bruckner, Assistant City Manager
Shelly Wolfberg, Assistant to the City Manager
Christina Burrows, Deputy City Attorney
Jeremy Bocchino, City Clerk
T'Ana Allen, Deputy City Clerk
Alicia Ide, Management Analyst

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Pledge of Allegiance

The Standing Governance Subcommittee of the City Council and meeting attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Public Comment – Items NOT On The Agenda

No requests to speak for Items NOT On The Agenda were received.

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Receipt of Correspondence

No correspondence was received.

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Order of the Agenda

No changes were made.

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Action Items

Item A-1

Discussion and Recommendation on Subcommittee Meeting Schedule, Format, Selection of Chair, and Other Guidelines

Jesse Mays, Assistant City Manager, introduced the item.

Discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding appreciation to staff for their work to create the Subcommittee; looking at ways to improve; meeting schedule and frequency; agreement to meet on the first Wednesday of every other month at 3:00 p.m.; Subcommittee Members alternating in the position of Chair; and Council Member Fish agreed to serve as Chair.

MOVED BY COUNCIL MEMBER MCMORRIN, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER FISH AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT COUNCIL MEMBER FISH SERVE AS CHAIR OF THE STANDING GOVERNANCE SUBCOMMITTEE.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding the importance of allowing virtual participation to provide accessibility for the public; potential platforms; use of Zoom; and availability of the link on the Culver City website.

The following member of the public addressed the Subcommittee:

Judith Martin Straw stated that there was no way to identify speakers on Webex and she felt that Zoom was a better platform.

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Item A-2

Discussion and Recommendations on Subcommittee's Work Plan

Discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding the focus on governance issues; looking at how motions get approved, how meetings are scheduled, and how quickly items come back for consideration; elections; transparency; disclosure laws; improving fairness and equity; ensuring opportunities in election processes; the actions of other cities; election financing; democracy vouchers; priorities; making e-comments more accessible to people; meeting processes; coordination with IT (Information Technology); money spent on local elections by PACs (Political Action Committees) to influence the elections; ways to make it clear to the public about spending; arming the public with information; the spotlight on Culver City; corporations and big money coming in to influence the City; changes to campaign practices in Berkeley to require additional disclosure; ensuring a more transparent process for 2026; the matching program done in Los Angeles; identification for campaign mailings; the repository of registered mailings made available online in Berkeley; agreement to prioritize election reform due to the 2026 election deadline; internal processes; appreciation for efforts of the City Clerk's team; continuing conversations regarding best practices around agendas and Council procedures; revisiting processes for public comment; public comment policy for the Culver City Unified School District (CCUSD); staff time; and specificity with new items.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding ensuring expectations are met; disclosures; public financing; the chart provided in San Francisco reflecting spending for and against each candidate for the candidate committee and PACs; matching funds; democracy

vouchers; parents who ran in the last election and did not win; providing support to grass roots candidates who have a lot of support in the community but do not have funding or connections; the San Francisco Public Campaign Financing Reports issued after each election; and staff agreement to provide a report on transparency ideas from other cities and public financing at the next meeting.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding workplans of other Commissions, Boards, and Committees (CBCs); differences with City Council Subcommittees; prioritizing Subcommittee focus on election reform over internal procedures due to the 2026 election deadline; clarification of work plan priorities on the next meeting agenda; the limit on how much people can donate to themselves in West Hollywood; and agreement on agenda items for the next meeting: A-1 Solidifying Workplan Priorities, A-2 Transparency and Disclosures, A-3 Campaign Finance Reform.

Chair Fish invited public comment.

The following member of the public addressed the Subcommittee:

Judith Martin Straw received clarification on democracy vouchers.

Discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding matching funding; efforts to support candidates who do not have deep pockets; allowing neighbors to support who they like; matching by the city of Los Angeles; and other cities engaging in similar processes.

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Item A-3

Discussion and Recommendations on City Council Agenda Format and Procedures, Including Tracking, Transparency, and Process for City Council

Jesse Mays, Assistant City Manager, provided a summary of the material of record.

Discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding appreciation for the responsiveness of staff to

create new processes for the City; procedures for adding and tracking agenda items; adding a repeat back on what is being asked for from the City Clerk on requested agenda items; avoiding past misunderstandings between what was asked for and what was brought back; time-bound agenda items; procedures used by other cities; being mindful of putting additional pressure on staff; allowing understanding of when items will be coming back; providing an update when items cannot be brought forward; public understanding of how long it can take to get things done; expectation; coming up with timeframes informed by staff; appreciation for the idea grid; submission of ordinances; the ability of the Mayor, City Manager, and City Attorney to add agenda items; the hold-over from the administrative form of government; and subcommittee recommendation that the City Council update the ordinance to be in compliance with current operations.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Council Members regarding previous implementation of reflecting who is supporting agenda items; concern that reflecting who is agreeing to agendize items on the screen could be perceived as an actual motion; clarification that agendized items appear in the minutes; the difference between consensus and a motion; providing clarity while avoiding the appearance of having a discussion and taking action; seeing the requested item in text form; meeting length; making mistakes late at night; balancing the work that needs to be done; meeting frequency; audio learners; visual learners; moving consensus items earlier in the meeting; making changes to policy; the Policy Subcommittee; staff agreement to return with additional information on agendizing items at the next meeting; limiting the number of items submitted by each Council Member; concern with discussion of items not on the agenda; allowing Council Members to submit items to staff before the meeting; items that are being reacted to at the meeting; the policy of CCUSD to take public comment all at the same time at the start of the meeting; clarification that Council Members would still be able to agendize items later in the meeting; restructuring the agenda all at once for efficiency; making meetings more accessible to the public; and the internal processes section of the work plan.

Discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding evaluating whether or not to have a new procedure where two Council Members can have items put on the agenda rather than three; practices of other cities; feedback

provided by staff; assistance with phrasing or ensuring there are not conflicts with other items staff is working on; Council Member requests that lead to staff being pulled in different directions; agenda length; issues with staff getting instruction from multiple places; the City Manager form of government where direction comes through the City Manager; scheduling; prioritization; the decision of the City Council on what items to consider or to have a subcommittee consider; and public comment on each item that elongates meetings.

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Recess/Reconvene

The Standing Governance Subcommittee of the City Council took a brief recess from 2:06 p.m. to 2:09 p.m.

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Item A-3
(Continued)

Discussion and Recommendations on City Council Agenda Format and Procedures, Including Tracking, Transparency, and Process for City Council

Discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding regular duties of staff; fitting in new requests from Council Members; concern with overloading staff; determining the best use of time; concern with impromptu items that are heard at the end of a meeting for the first time and Council Members having to make a determination on the spot; moving consideration of suggested agenda items earlier in the meeting; the current practice of not limiting suggested agenda items; placing items on an agenda with minimal staff collaboration and potential motions for review; allowing the public to make comment on potential agenda items; providing a single opportunity to make public comment as is done in other jurisdictions; instances where public comment is not required; Brown Act requirements that before the City Council takes action on an item, the item must appear on an agenda and public comment must be received; nodding heads vs. voting; clarification that items to be proposed cannot be provided to Council Members in advance; implications of public comment requirements and the need for a clear process for new items;

public comment that takes over the meetings; limiting how often items can be brought back for consideration; the practice of the City of Santa Monica that directs the City Attorney to write ordinances; concern with creating work for the City Attorney; using the City Attorney to create an ordinance when the policy has not yet been approved; the current practice to have a discussion; limiting requests to report backs and discussion; the Homeless Emergency declared by the City Manager; having individual Council Members provide requests to the City Manager to be presented as items from the City Manager's Office; items to be heard from the City Manager but not agendized; avoidance of public comment; the deadline to submit items to the City Manager; allowing the public to see initiatives that the City Council is working on; providing context for items to be considered for discussion and who is asking for the item; the public as an important part of the process; increasing transparency with Council summary emails; concern with confusing the public with things that have been approved or not approved; providing a link to an explanation; putting future agenda items online; precedent with other cities; support for providing an easily accessible written record of future initiatives for the public; providing an additional opportunity to submit items at the end of public comment; initiatives and agenda items sponsored by individual Council Members; and the requirement that items given to the City Council also be made available to the public.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding being prepared for items brought forward by colleagues; a suggestion to move forward with a version of the Santa Monica policy with changes; the number of times an item comes before the public; the ability to request the same things with three nodding heads listed in the agenda; report backs; acknowledgement that an ordinance cannot be requested in the report back; support for listing requests in the agenda and providing opportunity for public comment; a suggestion for one public comment period with the Mayor to respond with requests to agendize items, and Council Members bringing forth items at the following meeting; giving the Mayor the authority to run the meeting; adding a standing agenda item with pre-submitted requests and a publicly available rolling list for agenda items in the staff report; concern with putting one more layer that people have to go through; keeping the agenda compact; further consideration of issues; listing items on the agenda vs. in a staff report; improvements upon

current processes; having the item go to the City Council for consideration; a suggestion to provide a sample; Subcommittee agreement that the item be brought to the City Council with options; the recommendation to try something different; City Council consideration of public comment and agendized items to improve efficiency and transparency; separating out the issues of consolidating public comment and agendizing items; ensuring that comments are made before City Council actions; the separate public comment period for Public Hearings; practice vs. policy; bringing forth the item on the soonest possible agenda; concern with limiting the number of times a person can speak on different items; different ways to approach changes to public comment including allowing extra time to speak for those speaking on multiple items; and staff agreement to research and return with additional information.

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Public Comment - Items NOT on the Agenda

No requests to speak were received.

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Members Requests to Agendize Future Items

None.

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Public Comment for Items NOT on the Agenda (Continued)

None.

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Items from Subcommittee Members/Staff

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding the date for the next meeting and agreement to meet on June 4, 2025 at 3:00 p.m.

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Adjournment

There being no further business, at 2:49 p.m., the Standing Governance Subcommittee of the City Council adjourned to June 4, 2025 at 3:00 p.m. for a hybrid meeting.

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Shelly Wolfberg
SECRETARY of the Culver City Standing Governance
Subcommittee of the City Council, Culver City, California

APPROVED

Bubba Fish
COUNCIL MEMBER, Standing Governance Subcommittee of the
City Council, Culver City, California