DATE: September 9, 2019

SUBJECT

Proposed City Council policy on selection of Mayor and Vice Mayor

RECOMMENDATION

By motion, approve the proposed City Council policy for Selection of Mayor and Vice Mayor.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Government Operations

BACKGROUND

Section 14 of the City Charter states that the City Council shall select one of its members to serve as Mayor and one as Vice Mayor each for a two-year term. In the past, the City Council has selected the Mayor and Vice Mayor by majority vote without reference to established criteria. The City Council Governance Sub-Committee requested that staff provide information on how other municipalities select their leadership positions.

Staff reviewed data from the League of California Cities, the Institute of Local Government, and directly from 10 municipalities. Staff did not find a uniform approach or best practice; however, there is consistency of agencies having an established policy stating the practice used in the selection process.

On June 17, 2019, staff provided the City Council Governance Sub-Committee with a proposed policy that establishes a formal rotation based on seniority of City Council service. The Committee considered the draft policy, requested several changes, and directed that staff bring the revised policy to the City Council for consideration.
ANALYSIS

The proposed policy provided in Attachment A establishes a formal rotation for the selection of the Mayor and Vice Mayor based on seniority of City Council service. Each Councilmember will hold a specified position in the rotation sequence based on Council seniority. The first in rotation will be selected Mayor and the second in rotation will be selected Vice Mayor. Establishment of seniority for purposes of rotation consider the following factors:

- When a Councilmember is newly elected the new Councilmember goes into position in the rotation after all incumbents who have not served as Mayor, and before all incumbents who have served as Mayor.
- Incumbent members, when re-elected, retain their position in rotation
- Break in service of a Councilmember is treated in the same manner as a newly elected member
- Two or more members elected at the same time will be assigned in rotation based on receiving the highest percentage of votes cast
- A member appointed/elected due to a mid-term vacancy on the City Council will be placed at the end of the rotation
- If a Councilmember declines to serve as either Mayor or Vice Mayor when it is the Councilmember’s turn to serve, the declining Councilmember will be placed at the end of the rotation list.

The policy would be effective with the selection of the Mayor and Vice Mayor beginning in December 2019. Attachment B illustrates the rotation of the current Councilmembers based on the provisions of the proposed policy.

The City Council Governance Sub-Committee noted that an alternative process may be appropriate if the Mayor or Vice Mayor served for one year instead of two.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementation of the proposed policy is not anticipated to have any significant fiscal impact.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This activity is not a project under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as defined in CEQA Guidelines, section 15378, because it has no potential for resulting in either a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with the agenda items being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.
ALTERNATIVES

The City Council could continue with the current practice of selecting the Mayor and Vice Mayor. The City Council could add a provision to the policy that permits a 5/7 vote of the Council to disregard the rotation policy and select the Mayor or Vice Mayor with different rationale.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Election of Mayor and Vice Mayor Proposed Policy
Attachment B: Illustration of Rotation based on the Proposed Policy

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