

## **SULTAN CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET**

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ITEM NO: Discussion D 1 A  
DATE: January 14, 2010  
SUBJECT: Proposed Council Sub-Committee Meetings  
CONTACT PERSON: Laura Koenig, Clerk/Deputy Finance Director

### **ISSUE:**

The issue before the City Council is to discuss the Council sub-committee structure and membership for 2010 and set meeting dates.

### **SUMMARY:**

In 2009 the Council established sub-committees based on topics. The most common issues referred to the sub-committee were requests for utility charge relief and that committee met on a regular basis. The problem that occurred in 2009 was that since the sub-committee was meeting all issues were referred to one group and the other sub-committee group rarely met.

The purpose of prescheduled meetings is to provide opportunities for in-depth understanding of City issues prior to bringing the issues forward for discussion by the full Council.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The staff recommends maintaining the sub-committees based on topic and establishing a set meeting date each month. The meetings would be scheduled for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday and staff would be responsible for contacting the sub-committee if a meeting was not necessary. The two committees would be:

1. **Government Services, Finances and Public Safety** (i.e. Policy, personnel, budget and public safety)
2. **Community Development and Public Works** (i.e. utility relief, planning and development regulations, public works capital projects and equipment).

Each committee has three Councilmembers and an alternate.

### **DISCUSSION:**

Council Subcommittees are working groups within the Council that focus on particular areas of concern and interest to the Council and the community.

The City Council Rules of Procedure include the provision for Council Committees. Standing committees include Government Services, Public Safety, Community Development Public Works, and Policy. There are no Ad Hoc Council committees at this time.

Although the Council's Rules of Procedures do not specifically address Council subcommittees, many elected bodies divide into subcommittees to study specific issues. Elected bodies may have both standing and ad hoc subcommittees. Subcommittees generally facilitate the decision-making process by allowing Councilmembers time to understand a project in greater detail.

Normally, if a council subcommittee meeting is only to discuss an issue and report back to the full council with a recommendation, then the meeting is not a formal meeting under the Public Records Act (Act) and minutes do not have to be kept. If the subcommittee is taking public testimony or has been delegated to take action on behalf of the council, then it is subject to the Act.

#### **ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Accept the staff recommendation to continue with the two Council subcommittees based on topics.
2. Recommend a modified schedule. A decision to reduce or eliminate proposed meetings could result in more time and energy informing both the City Council and the public about important topics at the end of the decision making process rather than at the beginning when input and direction are most valuable.
3. Do not make a decision and direct staff to areas of concern.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

There may be a small fiscal impact in the form of overtime costs for additional subcommittee meetings if hourly employees need to attend (e.g. Utility Clerk).

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

1. Discuss the proposed sub-committee structure and membership for 2010 and provide direction to staff.