



Open Government Commission

CONSENT CALENDAR
July 24, 2018

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Open Government Commission
 Submitted by: Chairperson Dean Metzger, Open Government Commission
 Subject: Proposing time requirements for Commission and Board meeting minutes

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the recommendation and insert it into the Commissioners' Manual the following:

Chapter III. COOPRDINATION WITH COUNCIL, STAFF AND OTHERS

B. Coordination With Staff

1). Duties of Secretary

In the first paragraph add the objective in a) - prepare commission agendas and minutes pursuant to the Brown Act and City procedures, **draft minutes shall be completed and posted within two (2) weeks after the commission meets.**

SUMMARY

To make the posting of commission meeting minutes mandatory within two (2) weeks after the commission meeting

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

None

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

There have been several complaints from citizens of Berkeley that commission and board meeting minutes are either not available or are only available when the next commission meeting agenda is posted. This practice does not allow either council members, commissioners nor citizens time to review them or act in a timely manner. While the secretaries of the commissions are busy people, one of their jobs is to write up the minutes. it seems that when the minutes are written, the time required to do so does not change. This proposal just puts a time line on that task.

BACKGROUND

Enabling Legislation

OGC Meeting of November 16, 2017

7. Staff report regarding information request regarding proposal to impose deadline for posting draft commission minutes; discussion and possible action.

Public Comment: 2 speakers.

Commission discussion and action: Motion to make recommendation to City Council that Council request that draft minutes by City boards and commissions be posted within two weeks of the board or commission meeting.

(M/S/C: Metzger/ Callahan; Ayes: Metzger, Callahan, Harper, O'Donnell, Soichet, Sridharan; Noes: Smith; Abstain: O'Donnell; Absent: McLean (excused); Tsui (excused)

The staff report solicited comments from many of the commission secretaries and found that some of them objected, claiming they had other tasks to do while others thought it would not be a problem. In other words, there was no overwhelming consensus either way. Ref: Staff report, OGC packet of November 16, 2017, Item No. 7

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

No environmental issues are connected to this recommendation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

If citizens are to participate in local government, they must have access to information that will enable them to do so. The minutes of the Boards and Commissions are the heart of that information.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None

CITY MANAGER

The City Manager agrees that posting of final, adopted minutes in a timely manner is an important practice to keep residents informed of commission actions. However, the commission's proposal presents challenges as the extra staff burden of adding an interim step of posting draft minutes will pull resources away from baseline duties and Council priorities. In addition, the posting of draft minutes that have not been reviewed or approved by the commission is premature and may cause unnecessary confusion for the public, particularly if edits and revisions to the minutes are made by the commission prior to approval.

The City Manager recommends that specific direction to staff that requires final, adopted minutes to be posted within one week after commission approval will accomplish the goal of timelier reporting of commission actions.

CONTACT PERSON

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