

Commissions Merge and Efficiency Improvements

Introduced During the 8/1/2018 Library Commission Meeting

Working Draft

Cost Savings (Alternately, Liberate Staff from Commission Responsibilities)

Premise: Lower total commission costs relative to other costs by freeing staff from commission responsibilities, so they are able to work on other projects.

Cost Savings/Efficiency Improvement Ideas: Commissioners assume the in-person meeting responsibilities assigned to staff today. Commissioners take turns taking the responsibility of secretary. Commissioners use an audio recording app to record the meeting, so that any missed items can be recaptured from the audio recording. Record attendance and all resolutions considered by the commission with votes recorded. Secretary shares the draft minutes with the staff liaison within one week of the meeting. Consider options for posting the audio recording online. Secretary takes responsibility for all meeting materials and returns them to the next meeting for delivery to the next secretary in the rotation.

Recommendation: If support, consider a resolution adopting the “rotating secretary” role with a schedule for the remainder of the 2015-2019 term.

Brown Act

Premise: Some Parks and Recreation Commissioners and the “Merge Commissions” Staff Report available in the meeting agenda packet for the 7/31/2018 meeting cited, for lack of a better word, the “burdensome” requirement for commissions to be regulated by the Ralph M. Brown Act as a reason to merge the Library functions within the Parks and Recreation Commission or to some other TBD reporting structure.

Recommendation: Consider refuting the “Brown Act is Burdensome” narrative by asserting in a resolution that the Library Commission supports and complies with the Ralph M. Brown Act and does not believe that the Cupertino community will be served better if library service needs are considered within an organizational structure that is outside the purview of the Brown Act. (For example, if the Library Commission were to report to the City Manager, not to Council.)

Commission Work is Not Aligned with the Goals of a Majority of Council Members

Premise: The Library Commission has failed to inform the Council of its work plans. As a result, work plan items are not aligned with the goals of the majority Council. Commission minutes do not include sufficient detail, so it is impossible to determine what was decided during a meeting or what work was completed.

Recommendation 1: Consider a resolution to assign a commission sub-committee to the task of writing a letter to reintroduce the current October 2017 work plan to Council. Recognize Library Commission meetings as community engagement forums that are an essential outlet for library patrons to voice concerns regarding library services and facilities. Consider that it would likely be ineffective for Council to dictate service needs or work plan items to the commission without attending commission meetings and gathering data from library patrons and library staff. Regarding the concern about brief or insufficiently detailed minutes, please see the item under “Cost Savings/Efficiency Improvement Ideas”.

Recommendation 2: Assign a rotation for commission members to attend Council meetings 3 or 4 times per year (total) to give an update of Library Commission work plan status or progress during oral communications. Include informative advertisements for library services and upcoming library programs. Include a written handout for Council Members to be included in the public record for each Council meeting when library commissioners speak. Include a progress update for highest priority work plan items. Consider replacing lengthy annual presentation to Council with the 3-4 spoken and written comments offered during oral communications each year.

Insufficient Public Interest in Commission Activities

Premise: Library Commission meetings are poorly attended and not recorded for the public to view later.

Public Engagement Idea 1: Circulate an attendance sheet at each meeting. Community members are free to sign in or not. Record attendee names in the meeting minutes. Discuss whether or not it is acceptable to install a fixed (but removable when not in use) camera in the Story Room for use to record the Library Commission meetings for later posting to a public online channel.

Public Engagement Idea 2: Assign a rotation for commission members to attend sibling commission meetings 3 or 4 times per year (total) to give an update of Library Commission work plan status or progress during oral communications. Focus on work plan items that could lend themselves to collaborative efforts with the host commission. Encourage further engagement opportunities with host commissions.

Recommendation: No resolution suggestions at this time.