

From: Carlos Ovalle [<mailto:csovalle@gmail.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, September 10, 2019 3:00 PM

To: Mayor <Mayor@longbeach.gov>; Council District 1 <District1@longbeach.gov>; Council District 2 <District2@longbeach.gov>; Council District 3 <District3@longbeach.gov>; Council District 4 <District4@longbeach.gov>; Council District 5 <District5@longbeach.gov>; Council District 6 <District6@longbeach.gov>; Council District 7 <District7@longbeach.gov>; Council District 8 <District8@longbeach.gov>; Council District 9 <District9@longbeach.gov>; Monique DeLaGarza <Monique.DeLaGarza@longbeach.gov>

Subject: Agenda Item 16 File # 19-0865

~PLEASE INCLUDE AS PART OF PUBLIC COMMENT~

Mayor, City Council:

I am writing to voice strong opposition to this ordinance on the grounds that it is in violation of the Brown Act of 1953 and does so under false pretenses.

The ordinance, as it stands today, reads as follows. The numbers in parentheses pertain to my comments below.

(1) WHEREAS, the City Council meets on a weekly basis except for the last Tuesday of each month; and WHEREAS, one-third of the City Council meetings in 2018 lasted six and a half hours or longer, and concluded at 11:30 p.m. or later; and
(2) WHEREAS, discussion of important public business in the late hours of long City Council meetings can potentially diminish public participation; and
WHEREAS, the City Council desires to adopt practices for streamlining the length of City Council meetings to foster public input and participation; and
(3) WHEREAS, the City Council believe this order of business will assist in efficient City Council meetings;
NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Long Beach ordains as follows:

(1) The solution is right in the problem statement. Council now skips one Tuesday each month, returning to weekly meetings increases the available meeting time by 23% which will result in less lengthy meetings without limiting the public's right of free speech.
(2) The solution is right in the problem statement. The council and city staff are perfectly capable of gauging the public sentiment by the social media each of the council members and their staff monitor. Hence items that are important for the public should be discussed earlier in the meeting. As it stands the perception and the effect is precisely the opposite of the stated intent, council is effectively diminishing public participation. Case in point, many of us wanted to comment on this issue but last week's meeting listed this item as #28 and was finally discussed just before midnight, even though at that meeting we were held to the new rules.
(3) Councilmembers are allegedly given five minutes each as a way to make the meetings more efficient, however we do not see the timer, and in reading the ordinance it appears they are allowed multiple presentations of five minutes each.

I respectfully request:

That the council maintain the speaking time as it currently stands. That members of the public wishing to speak shall not be required to identify themselves ahead of time. That council meetings be restored to a weekly basis.

Respectfully,

Carlos Ovalle