

**MAYOR BOB FOSTER**

CITY OF LONG BEACH

December 11, 2007

MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

City of Long Beach

RECOMMENDATION:

Request that the City Attorney draft an ordinance amending Chapter 2.03 of the Municipal Code to create a new City Council Rule that requires agenda items to be announced twelve days prior to the meeting in which they are eligible to be considered.

DISCUSSION

Many of us in the City have contemplated ways that we might increase the transparency of our meetings and effective public participation. After careful contemplation and consultation with others, proposed is a new City Council Rule moving us in the right direction: the requirement that all items to be considered as part of a meeting's agenda be publicly announced 12 days prior to the meeting.

Under this proposal, the Council agenda will have a new section called "Upcoming Agenda Items." Before an item is placed on the Council agenda for consideration, it will first need to be listed in the "Upcoming Agenda Items" of a prior agenda. Items on the "Upcoming Agenda Items" section are then automatically placed on the agenda for the following City Council meeting. No action will be taken on the items listed under the "Upcoming Agenda Items;" these items are listed for public information only. Finalized council letters and supporting documents will continue to be due by the Thursday before the meeting in which the item is up for consideration.

In the event that a time-sensitive item arises that needs to be considered sooner than the 12-day notification period allows the sponsor of the item may place the item on a new section of the agenda called "Expedited Items." The items in this section of the agenda can only be acted on by the City Council if a majority of the Councilmembers present first vote to suspend this new Council Rule and allow items on the "Expedited Items" agenda to be heard.

This rule will provide the public additional notice of issues coming before the Council. Individuals interested in participating in public comment will have more time to consider the items and make room in their schedules to attend Council meetings. They will also have more time to contact the Mayor or Councilmembers prior to meetings to ask questions or make their opinions on issues known. This increase in public notification will markedly increase the transparency of Council meetings.

As part of this proposal, the deadline to add or revise items for the supplemental agenda will be set at 2:00 pm on the Friday prior to the meeting.

This new rule will be effective in February. The February 12 Council agenda will be the first agenda that contains the "Upcoming Agenda Items" section. On February 7 we will transition into the new process by allowing items to be placed on the February 12 Agenda for consideration at that meeting (per the old process) or on the February 12 Agenda in the "Upcoming Agenda Items" section for consideration at the February 19 meeting (per the new process). Please see the attached calendar for the new agenda timeline.

This proposed rule is a modest way that we can improve the transparency of our meetings and encourage effective public participation in municipal government.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

This is not a time-sensitive item.

FISCAL IMPACT

This proposal has no known fiscal impact.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,



Mayor Bob Foster



Councilmember Val Lerch



City Clerk Larry Herrera

Dated: December 6, 2007