



Legislation Text

File #: 11-0310, **Version:** 1

Recommendation that City Council review and adopt the proposed City of Long Beach Open Government Policy, which includes provisions for the continuance of existing open government actions currently implemented by the City Clerk Department and certain advisory bodies, as well as the reporting of transparency, participation, collaboration, and flagship initiatives of City departments on an annual and biennial basis.

On January 4, 2011, the City Council directed the City Clerk Department to completed three assignments: [1] development of an open government policy; [2] creation of an open government steering committee; [3] online look up of executed City contracts; and [4] a method by which residents and voters could comment on City Council agenda items, and where possible, extension of the same to other Council committees and advisory boards. The sections that follow address each of the foregoing tasks.

Open Government Policy

After a survey of open government policy in Salt Lake City Utah and the White House's Open Government Initiative website, City Clerk staff has drafted the attached policy with the

The main points of the proposed policy are that the City will:

- Identify transparency as a core function of local government;
- Act to disclose information rapidly, subject to privacy, confidentiality, security, and budget constraints, and will provide foreign language interpreters during public meetings as may be appropriate;
- Continue to provide searchable online agendas, staff reports, and videos for City Council, Planning Commission, and Redevelopment Agency meetings;
- Provide for the view of executed contracts and submittal of public comment on agenda items over the Internet;
- Conduct municipal elections with the highest level of transparency as specified;
- On a biennial basis beginning in July 2012, request that departments report on their transparency efforts, with annual highlights in their annual budget narratives, each year their after;
- Annually recognize selected City department open government achievements.

In sharing this the proposed policy with City management, concern was expressed concerning workload impacts of the biennial and annual reporting of departmental open government initiative and possible impact of on-line public comment.

Consistent with the proposed policy, the City Clerk Department is collaborating in a pilot project with Granicus (and 15 other cities) to develop an iPad application that will allow Councilmembers manage

their agenda packets. The City Clerk anticipates that the application could save up to \$15,000 per year in the cost of paper. The application will also be made available to the public at no cost, similar to the GoLongBeach application.

Open Government Steering Committee

At this time, it is recommended that the Elections Oversight Committee and Governance Committee be charged with reviewing matters related open government and transparency.

Contracts On-Line

The City Clerk Department has worked with the Technology Services Department and LaserFiche to provide for the on-line view of all executed contracts filed with the City Clerk Department after January 1, 2011.

eComment - City Council Agenda Items

The City Clerk Department has worked with the Technology Services Department and Granicus to provide residents and voters with the ability to submit their comment on Council agenda items for regular and special meetings of the City Council.

The eComment program will be implemented in mid-April according to the attached informational brochure and eComment Policy and User Requirements. The aim of the eComment policy is to promote the submittal of civil, respectful and relevant comments. Comments that do not conform to the eComment Policy will not be accepted. A overview of eComment will be provided when the recommendations contained in this letter are presented to the City Council.

Approval of the foregoing recommendations will permit the City Clerk Department to implement Contracts On-Line and eComment by May 1, 2011.

The existing and proposed transparency functions are funded by the FY 11 City Clerk Department budget.

Approve recommendation.

LARRY HERRERA
CITY CLERK