Legislation Details (With Text)

File #:	22-0854	**Version:** 1	**Name:**	072222-CAC/CC-Water/Gas Consolidation
Type:	Agenda Item		**Status:**	Approved
File created:	7/14/2022		**In control:**	Joint Meeting of the Charter Amendment Committee and City Council
On agenda:	7/19/2022		**Final action:**	7/19/2022
Title:	Recommendation to receive and file comments from the community and receive and file supporting documentation into the record regarding the proposed consolidation of the City's existing water, sewer and gas utilities into a single publicly-owned utility, governed by the existing independent Water/Public Utilities Commission, for the purposes of improving customer service through better coordination of street pipeline and infrastructure repairs; and refer to the City Council to consider adoption of all required resolutions to place the Charter amendment on the November 8, 2022 General Election Ballot. (Citywide)			
Sponsors:	City Manager			
Indexes:				
Code sections:				
Attachments:	1. 071922.cac-cc.item3.pdf, 2. 071922.cac-cc.item3 PowerPoint.pdf			

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
7/19/2022	1	Joint Meeting of the Charter Amendment Committee and City Council	approve recommendation	Pass

Recommendation to receive and file comments from the community and receive and file supporting documentation into the record regarding the proposed consolidation of the City's existing water, sewer and gas utilities into a single publicly-owned utility, governed by the existing independent Water/Public Utilities Commission, for the purposes of improving customer service through better coordination of street pipeline and infrastructure repairs; and refer to the City Council to consider adoption of all required resolutions to place the Charter amendment on the November 8, 2022 General Election Ballot. (Citywide)

On May 17, 2022, the Long Beach City Council voted to convene the Charter Amendment Committee of the City Council to consider placing a City Charter amendment before voters to combine City Charter Article XV (Department of Public Utilities) with Article XIV (Water Department) to merge the existing water, sewer and gas utilities into a single publicly-owned utility, governed by the existing independent Water/Public Utilities Commission, for the purposes of improving customer service through better coordination of street pipeline and infrastructure repairs. A copy of the Council letter associated with that vote is attached (Attachment A).

The Charter Amendment Committee held its first public hearing on June 14, 2022, received and filed supporting documentation into the public record, took public comment and moved to convene a second public hearing on the matter.

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Expectations are that a merger of the existing water, sewer and gas utilities into a single publicly-owned utility will:

- Reduce impacts to streets through coordinated utility pipeline street repairs;
- Improve customer service by coordinating all utility services as one department;
- Eliminate duplicative costs and operations;
- Achieve costs savings through greater economies of scale; and,
- Increase transparency in utility budgeting and rate setting.

The proposed changes to the City Charter are detailed in Attachment B.

Under State law, a majority of Long Beach voters must approve any City Charter Amendment. The next available date to place this Charter amendment on the ballot will be November 8, 2022.

To consider this amendment for the November 8, 2022 election, State law requires there be three public hearings/meetings over the next 60 days. At each of these hearings/meetings there will be opportunities for discussion, receiving community input, and making changes to the Charter amendment language.

The full Charter Amendment Committee hearing/meeting dates are as follows:

- June 14, 2022 - First public hearing: Receive staff presentation, hear public comment, direct staff to gather any further information or implement changes.
- July 19, 2022 - Second public hearing: Receive any updated information, hear public comment, direct staff to gather any information or make amendment changes.
- August 9, 2022 - Final meeting: Receive any updated information, hear public comment, make any final amendment changes, and if the City Council so chooses, adopt the required resolutions to place the Charter amendment on the November 8, 2022 General Election ballot.

Charter Committee Action is requested on July 19, 2022.

Discussion of proposed amendments has no fiscal impact.

Approve recommendation.

THOMAS B. MODICA
CITY MANAGER