

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM REPORT FOR MEETING OF: September 17, 2024

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To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
From: Ad Hoc Committee for City Council Protocols and Procedures
Subject: Tasks, Timeline and Budget for City Council Ad Hoc Committee for City Council Protocols and Procedures Handbook

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RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council by Minute Order approve the tasks, tentative timeline and proposed budget for the City Council Protocols and Procedures Handbook.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The citizens of the City of Sebastopol are entitled to have fair, ethical and accountable local government. It is necessary that the public have confidence in the integrity of its government and in those who represent them. The purpose of protocols is to set forth policies and provisions, including rules of decorum beyond those required by state law.

City Council Members bear responsibility to make decisions that are in the best interest of the City. The City Council must be independent, impartial and fair in its judgment and actions and will conduct public deliberations and processes openly, in an atmosphere of civility. All City Council deliberations shall be conducted respectfully.

Tonight’s item is to begin the process of creating clear rules of decorum by establishing tasks of the ad hoc committee; timelines for completion of policies; and estimated costs to prepare policies for City Council discussion and deliberations.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

City Council Resolution and Policy originally adopted in 1991 and amended through November 2023 was adopted to approve Establishing Rules for the Conduct of Its Meetings, Proceedings and Business to provide an effective environment for the City Council to provide leadership to ensure that the business of the City is conducted in an orderly and efficient manner to facilitate sound City Council and public deliberation and decision making. The City of Sebastopol has adopted these formal rules of procedure to govern the conduct of our meetings in an effort to increase meeting efficiency and effectiveness, and to ensure the meetings run smoothly and follow an accepted format.

As the City Council does not have an official City Council Procedures and Protocols Handbook, the item tonight is to assign the tasks, timelines and budget with the final action of adoption of a City Council Protocols and Procedures Handbook. It is proposed that individual policies be presented to the City Council at upcoming public City Council meetings for discussion and deliberation and for inclusion into a final handbook.

The Committee has met, reviewed and recommends the tasks and timelines as well as key topics that should be addressed first. A copy of the tasks, timelines and estimated costs are attached to this report for information and consideration of approval.

STAFF ANALYSIS:

Certain state laws and other established regulations exist which govern various responsibilities of the City Council. It is staff’s recommendation that the protocols are not intended to be comprehensive in scope, but contain those

issues and topics generally not covered by other laws or statutes. As the ad hoc committee continues its review and recommendation, the document will grow to include new items as they are identified at the request of the ad hoc committee first; then upon approval of the Council.

The protocols are not intended to supersede any existing statutes or regulations, but policies included will increase its value as a tool for new Council Members as well as new Mayors or Vice Mayors as there will be clear and concise processes.

Even once approved, protocols may be amended by a majority vote of the Council Members. In the event of any conflict between protocols and applicable state or federal law, the applicable federal law, state law or own City Municipal Code shall control.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

This item has been noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to schedule meeting date. The City has also used social media to promote and advertise the City Council Meeting Agenda Items.

FISCAL IMPACT:

In addition to staff time, there will be a cost related to the City Attorney’s work related to developing the proposed protocols. It is estimated that as this falls within the general counsel of the City Attorney budget, and not as a special legal service, the estimated costs to prepare the first five policies is \$8,500. This is included within the General Counsel Fees.

RESTATED RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council by Minute Order approve the tasks, timeline and proposed budget for the City Council Protocols and Procedures Handbook.

CITY COUNCIL OPTIONS:

1. That the City Council approve the tasks, timeline and budget and provide recommendations for changes to tasks, timeline or budget; or
2. That the City Council deny the project at this time and re-assess it either at mid year budget review or during the 2025 City Council Goals and Priority Workshop to be held in February.

ATTACHMENTS:

Proposed Tasks and Timeline

APPROVALS:

Department Head Approval: Approval Date: 9-9-2024

CEQA Determination (Planning): Approval Date: 9-9-2024

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines.

Administrative Services (Financial) Approval Date: 9-9-2024

Costs authorized in City Approved Budget: Yes No N/A

Account Code (f applicable)

City Attorney Approval Approval Date: 9-9-2024

City Manager Approval Approval Date: 9-9-2024

CITY COUNCIL AD HOC COMMITTEE – CITY COUNCIL PROTOCOLS AND PROCEDURES

TASKS/TIMELINE/BUDGET

Tasks:

Address City Council Protocols for Inclusion into One City Council Protocols and Procedures Handbook.

Timeline: Timelines are tentative based upon Council direction on policies; as well as new policy will not be presented until the current policy before the Council is completed.

September 17, 2024 Approval of Tasks, Timelines and Budget and Key Policies

Policies in Priority below for Council Consideration:

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| October 1, 2024 | First & Second Policy to be presented to the City Council:

Selection of Mayor

Selection of Vice Mayor

Role of Mayor

Role of Vice Mayor

Seating of City Councilmembers Based upon Selections of Mayor and Vice Mayor

Required Trainings (Brown Act; Ethics; Work Place Violence; Sexual Harassment) |
| TENTATIVE: October 15, 2024 | Third and Fourth Policy to be presented to the City Council:

Placement of Items on an Agenda

Agenda Management / Format of Council Agendas: |
| TENTATIVE: November 5, 2024 | Fifth Policy to be presented to the City Council:

City Council Standing Committee Formation/Make up/Duties/Responsibilities/Selection of Chair/Vice Chair

City Council Ad Hoc Committee Formation/Duties

Role of City Council Liaison

City Council Committee, Staff Committee and Council Liaison Assignments Process/Selection |

It is recommended that upon approval of the above listed policies; additional policies may be directed to the ad hoc committee to be reviewed during January – June 2025.