



Item No. 1 Town of Atherton

CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT – STUDY SESSION

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: GEORGE RODERICKS, CITY MANAGER

DATE: OCTOBER 5, 2016

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION OF THE FIRE FISCAL SERVICES REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE AND PROVIDE FEEDBACK TO THE MAYOR REGARDING SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

RECOMMENDATION

Discuss the Fire Fiscal Services Review Subcommittee Assignments and provide feedback to the Mayor for possible modification to the Subcommittee membership.

BACKGROUND

On September 7, the Council discussed the issue of engaging a consultant to review fiscal issues related to the provision of fire services in Atherton. At the meeting, the Council was in receipt of a letter from the Fire District, dated September 6, that requested among other things, to: "...have a meeting in which a representative from LAFCo, a Fire Board and Council member, or two, meet with you (the City Manager) and I (Fire Chief) to jointly discuss all of these issues..." *Note: In reviewing this request with the Fire Chief in preparation of this report, the Chief advised that the suggestion of a joint sub-committee was contingent on the Town postponing or continuing the item under review at the September 7 Study Session.* In addition, staff requested that if the Council moved forward with consideration of hiring of a consultant that a subcommittee be formed to work with staff and the Fire District on the mutual issues.

In response, the Council assigned Council Member Wiest and Vice Mayor Lempres to serve as the designated subcommittee to meet with the Fire District, focus on the fiscal issues related to the provision of fire services in Atherton and work with staff. The Council assigned Council Members Wiest and Lempres since Wiest (primary) and Lempres (alternate) serve as the liaisons to the Fire District Board of Directors.

FINDINGS/ANALYSIS

Subsequent to the forming of the Town's Subcommittee on September 7, on September 20, the Fire Board met to "Consider, Discuss and Provide Direction to Staff Regarding a Request from the Town of Atherton to Discuss the Fiscal Evaluation of Fire Services."

At that meeting, the Board provided a response to nine (9) separate options provided by District

staff:

- 1) Maintain the Status Quo - Continue to post information to the District's website and direct people to the website. This option was supported by the Board.
- 2) The Board President and Town Mayor meet to discuss mutual issues and concerns. This option was supported by the Board.
- 3) Select a Board Subcommittee to work with the Town's Subcommittee on the issue. This option was not supported by the Board.
- 4) Provide mutually acceptable dates for a joint Board/Council Meeting (non-topic specific). This option was supported by the Board.
- 5) Have the Fire Chief continue to meet with the Town Manager. The Board took no action/direction on this option.
- 6) Choose not to meet with the Town on this topic. The Board took no action/direction on this option.
- 7) Allow Fire Chief to retain own consultant on the topic. The Board took no action/direction on this option.
- 8) Jointly select a consultant on the topic. The Board took no action/direction on this option.
- 9) Actively participate in the Civic Center Process to see if there is some way to find operational advantages. The Board took no action/direction on this option.

Since the Board did not support or assign a subcommittee but instead asked that the Mayor and Board President meet to discuss mutual issues, this raises a participation issue for the Town since the Town already has an assigned subcommittee that does not include the Mayor.

To eliminate confusion, reduce the potential for cross or mixed messages/purposes, prevent the potential for a Brown Act violation, accommodate the District's request of meeting with the Mayor, and the Council/staff's need for a Council Subcommittee, staff recommends that the Council discuss the membership of the Subcommittee and consider reassigning one member of the Committee to be the "Mayor" of Atherton. In this way, whoever is in the Mayoral role for the Town can not only serve on the Town's Council Subcommittee but can also meet the District's request of meeting with the Board President.

Following tonight's meeting clarifying the membership of the Subcommittee, staff will begin convening the Subcommittee to discuss the possible scope of work for the consultant. The Fire District will be invited to all Subcommittee meetings. Staff will also connect with the Fire District to attempt to setup another Joint Meeting between the Council and Board. As the Council is aware, several attempts were made to schedule a joint meeting earlier this year, but Council Member schedules did not permit one to occur. While a quorum could be obtained for a particular date, not all members of the Council were able to participate and given the importance of joint meetings,

convening the entirety of the Council is important.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

None.

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting in print and electronically. Information about the item is also disseminated via the Town's electronic News Flash and Atherton Online. There are approximately 1,200 subscribers to the Town's electronic News Flash publications. Subscribers include residents as well as stakeholders – to include, but be not limited to, media outlets, school districts, Menlo Park Fire District, service providers (water, power, and sewer), and regional elected officials.

ATTACHMENTS

None.