



City Council Agenda Item

City Council Meeting Date: July 6, 2021

TO: Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM: Jim Throop, City Manager
j_throop@ci.lompoc.ca.us

SUBJECT: Consider Issuing Business Cards to City Commissioners Upon Request

Recommendation:

Staff recommends the City Council consider whether to issue business cards to members of City commissions upon request, with the following two suggestions:

1. Business cards with only the name of the commission, the email address and phone number for the department responsible for the commission, or
2. Business cards with the commissioner's name and personal email and phone number.

Background:

On May 4, 2021, Mayor Pro Tem Vega made a Council request for an agenda item to consider authorizing commissioners to receive business cards from the City upon request. City commissioners do not currently receive business cards, badges, or any other items issued by the City indicating their commissioner status.

Members of the City Council do have business cards indicating their council member status. The Handbook for Commission, Committee, and Board Members does not discuss issuance of business cards to commissioners.

Discussion:

Potential Benefits

Issuing business cards to commissioners could potentially have several benefits including giving commissioners an easy way to officially identify themselves as commissioners and giving commissioners an easy way to give out their contact information to Lompoc residents interested in an issue within the jurisdiction of a commission. Issuing business cards might also increase a sense of professionalism and officiality among commissions

that could give commissioners more of a sense of ownership and pride in their work on their commission.

Potential Drawbacks

Issuing business cards to commissioners could potentially create confusion if it gives the public the impression that a commissioner speaks or acts on behalf of the City or the commission when, in fact, they do not. Commissioners, in their individual capacity, do not speak or act on behalf of the City, and only act on behalf of their committee when they vote with the majority on an item on the commission's agenda.

In response to this potential risk, the City Council might consider adding the following language, or something similar, to the Handbook:

Representing the City

Commissioners are not authorized or empowered to take any action on behalf of the City in their individual capacity. Commissions can only act by a majority vote of their members. Consequently, commissioners shall not represent to the public that they speak for, or can act on behalf of, the City. When speaking with the public, Commissioners should fairly present their commission's collective decisions, while also retaining the right to express their own differing point of view.

Commissioners should always remember that they may be perceived as representing the City when acting in public and should not take any actions that would reflect negatively on the City.

This language is modeled in part of the language from Section C13 (Representing City) from the City Council Handbook, which reads as follows:

A Council Member should always remember he/she will be perceived as representing the City at any event, whether or not the City is involved or the Council Member's participation is paid by the City. Therefore, each Council Member should ensure the City will not be seen in a disparaging light by that Council Member's actions or words. In addition, each Council Member should fairly present the City Council's collective decision on matters within the City Council's jurisdiction, while also retaining the right to express that Council Member's differing point of view.

Commissioner Handbook

If the City Council decides to issue business cards to commissioners, then staff will bring back a future agenda item to add language to the Handbook concerning business cards, in addition to any other language the City Council may wish to add.

Fiscal Impact:

Cost and Content

The City has 53 commissioner seats, including the four alternates on the Youth Commission. Staff does not know how many commissioners would request business cards if they were available. A set of 250 business cards costs approximately \$60.00. So if each commissioner requested business cards, the cost would be approximately \$3,180 and an additional cost would be incurred each time a new commissioner was appointed. However, if only a few commissioners request business cards, the cost would be substantially less.

Unless otherwise directed by the City Council, the business cards would include the City logo, the name of the commission, the name of the commissioner, and contact information for the commissioner.

Conclusion:

Staff recommends the City Council consider whether to issue business cards to commissioners and provide direction to staff.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Throop, City Manager