

REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Consider Requirements for Budget Issue Sponsorship Similar to Study Issue Sponsorship

BACKGROUND

Mayor Griffith requested this be added as an agenda item. In 2010, Council modified Council Policy 7.3.26 to require co-sponsorship of study issues. At that time, no consideration was given to applying the same co-sponsorship requirement to budget issues.

EXISTING POLICY

Council Policy 7.3.26 Study Issues Process

DISCUSSION

In 2010, Council modified Council Policy 7.3.26 to require co-sponsorship of all proposed study issues. This action was done in part to reduce the number of study issues, in reaction to a significant number of proposed study issues in one year, and in part to ensure that a study issue had a minimal amount of Council support. Study issues require staff time to research and draft, and co-sponsorship ensures that this time is not wasted on an issue lacking serious council support. At the time this change was made, there was no discussion of applying the same standard to proposed budget issues, despite the fact that budget issue and study issue papers require comparable amounts of staff time to prepare.

When this issue was investigated further, it was discovered that while there exists a Council policy governing study issues (7.3.26), Council has no existing policy governing budget issues.

It is proposed to do the following:

1. Adopt a Council Policy governing budget issues, similar in nature to the Council Policy on Study Issue Sponsorship.
2. Change the existing practice and adopt a policy requiring co-sponsorship of budget issues.

The lack of a Council policy governing budget issues is an obvious hole that needs to be addressed.

Note that discussion with staff identified an issue with placement within Council Policy. Council Policy governing Study Issues exists as a separate section, 7.3.26, and this would suggest that a new Budget Issue policy should likewise exist as a separate section. However, the broader issue of the City budget is addressed in the Fiscal section of Council Policy, suggesting that a new Budget Issue policy should be added as a subsection to an existing policy document. Should a new Budget Issue policy be approved, direction should be given as to where to place the new policy.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall, at the Sunnyvale Senior Center, Community Center and Department of Public Safety; and by making the agenda and report available at the Sunnyvale Public Library, the Office of the City Clerk and on the City's website.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the addition of a Council Policy on Budget Items and direct staff to draft the policy, based on the language provided in Attachment 1.
2. Approve the addition of a Council Policy on Budget Items and direct staff to draft the policy, based on the language provided in Attachment 1 with modifications.
3. Approve as part of the new policy a change to require co-sponsorship of Budget Issue papers.
4. Take no action.

RECOMMENDATION

Mayor Griffith requests approval of Alternatives 1 and 3: 1) Approve the addition of a Council Policy on Budget Items and direct staff to draft the policy, based on the language provided in Attachment A; and 3) Approve as part of the new policy a change to require co-sponsorship of Budget Issue papers.

Prepared by: Mayor Jim Griffith

ATTACHMENTS

1. Proposed Budget Issue Process Policy