

REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Discussion and Possible Action to Modify or Confirm the Structure and Function of the Council Subcommittee to Discuss Items of Mutual Interest with Local School Districts (2x2 Subcommittee)

BACKGROUND

The 2x2 Subcommittee is a standing Council subcommittee for meetings with local school districts to discuss items of mutual interest.

At the December 18, 2018 Study Session to discuss City Council intergovernmental assignments for the 2019 term, Councilmember Hendricks proposed that a further discussion of the structure and purpose of the 2x2 Subcommittees be scheduled at a later date. As such, Council agreed that assignments to the 2x2 Subcommittee be postponed and a study session to discuss its structure and function be scheduled for 2019.

On March 19, 2019, the Council held a Study Session to review and discuss the current structure and possible alternate structures for the 2x2 Subcommittee. The purpose of this report is to summarize the Council's Study Session and to inform Council's discussion of the 2x2 Subcommittee.

EXISTING POLICY

Policy 7.4.13, Council Subcommittees and Council or Mayor-Created Advisory Task Forces

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The action being considered does not constitute a "project" with the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378 (b) (5) in that it is a governmental organizational or administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect changes in the environment.

DISCUSSION

The 2x2 Subcommittee was created as a standing subcommittee for Council to meet and discuss items of mutual interest/concern with board members and superintendents from the four school districts serving Sunnyvale. The current structure consists of two Councilmembers assigned to one of the four school districts, which selects two of their board members, to meet and discuss items of mutual interest every three months or as needed. As a standing subcommittee, the meetings are subject to the Brown Act, and must be noticed accordingly. Among the benefits noted by Council are that open meetings allow for transparency and dialogue with the public.

Council's noted issues with the current structure are the amount of staff resources needed to schedule and attend meetings, the noticing requirements that may deter school district board members from meeting, and the operational nature of some of the agenda items.

An alternate structure proposed was that of a Council liaison to the school districts. This structure would consist of one Councilmember assigned to one school district, with assignments rotating every six months or annually, as determined by Council. This format would consist of an informal meeting between the Council liaison and the school district without the need for noticing. Staff would not be required to coordinate or attend meetings, post agendas, or provide support for agenda items.

Under the Council liaison structure, Councilmembers would be responsible for the outreach and scheduling with their assigned districts. To provide transparency, reporting out on the informal meetings would be during the "Councilmembers Reports on Activities from Intergovernmental Committee Assignments" portion of the agenda.

Council's concerns with the liaison structure are that most meetings are held quarterly and therefore are not frequent enough that a rotation schedule of less than a year would not allow for relationship building and effective meetings with the board members. Other issues mentioned are that there are only four school districts for seven Councilmembers, meetings will not be open and transparent, and that having only one Councilmember meet with the board members will not be as effective as having two Councilmembers attend.

Under either format, the meetings will be subject to the school district meeting processes and noticing requirements, if any.

Additionally, Council expressed the desire to add Foothill-De Anza Community College and West Valley-Mission Community College Districts to the list of districts with whom they meet with under the subcommittee. The County Office of Education was also proposed by Councilmember Smith as a potential addition.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

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.
 - a) Maintain the Status Quo of the 2x2 Council Subcommittee;
 - b) Add Foothill-De Anza and West Valley-Mission Community College Districts; and
 - c) Appoint Councilmembers to School Districts for the 2019 term.
2.
 - a) Dissolve the 2x2 Council Subcommittee;
 - b) Create a Council Liaison Format to be Rotated at a Schedule Determined by Council During the Annual IGR process;
 - c) Add Foothill- De Anza and West Valley-Mission Community College Districts; and
 - d) Determine the Liaison Rotation Schedule and Appoint Councilmembers to School Districts for the 2019 term.

3. Other direction as provided by Council.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff makes no recommendation.

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