



CITY of CALABASAS

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

DATE: FEBRUARY 14, 2023

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBERS

FROM: MICHAEL RUSSO, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: CONTINUED CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF THE FUTURE FORMAT OF COMMISSION MEETINGS

MEETING
DATE: FEBRUARY 22, 2023

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

On March 17, 2020, the Governor issued an Executive Order suspending certain provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act in order to allow for local legislative bodies to conduct their meetings completely telephonically or by other electronic means. The City has conducted Commission meetings over technology platform Zoom since that time. The Calabasas City Council held remote meetings via Zoom starting in April 2020. In October 2022, the City Council held its first hybrid meeting, allowing members of the public, staff or Council members to participate either in person or remotely. However, meetings of all City Commissions have continued solely via Zoom.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

On February 8, 2023 staff made a presentation to Council on the cost of producing all City Commission meetings in a hybrid format – where some participants are remote and some in Chambers. The amount of Communications staff required to produce a meeting varies depending on the type of meeting involved – a traditional meeting where all participants are in Chambers; a Zoom-only meeting where all

participants are remote; or a hybrid meeting where some participants are remote on Zoom and some are in Chambers.

Part of the February 8, 2023 presentation to Council included results of a simple survey of City Commission members to gauge support for each of the three meeting formats. However, the survey was conducted without providing information regarding AB 2449, which mandates that all legislative bodies must meet in person, unless certain strict criteria are met. AB 2449 does not stipulate that the public needed to attend in person and left open the possibility of a hybrid format where the public can still participate remotely via Zoom.

In summary, the net effect of new state laws and expected actions by the Governor and public health officials is that we are likely only to be able to maintain a purely Zoom [Commissioners and public] through March/April or so. After that – the choices are whether to return to a pre-pandemic, traditional meeting, with everyone in person, or a hybrid model, with Commissioners in person by default and remote Commissioner attendance by Zoom possible, but only on a limited basis, and the public present by Zoom if desired. A “hybrid-lite” option exists too – with most meetings held in person and certain meetings, such as those expected to draw high attendance, adjusted to have the public able to join by Zoom.

Last week, staff conducted another simple poll of commissioners – providing information regarding AB 2449– and were able to gauge their new responses. These are the results:

Traditional In-Person (pre-Pandemic): 20

“Hybrid Lite”: 13

Zoom only (if allowed): 4

FISCAL IMPACT:

As a review, the following is a recap of the staffing costs presented during the February 8, 2023 Council meeting.

The more staff time involves equates to higher costs. Looking at the required staff involved for each of the three scenarios, it’s plain to see which is the most expensive:

Traditional (Pre-Pandemic):

Staff: 2 Senior Media Specialists

COST: \$104.54/hr. (1 FT + 1 PT)

Example: 40 hours of meetings = \$4,181.60

*Excluding any overtime

~~Zoom only:~~ **NOW MOOT**

~~Staff: 2 Senior Media Specialists~~

~~———— (or 1 Sr. Media Specialist + 1 Department staff)~~

~~COST: \$104.54/hr. (1 FT + 1 PT)~~

Hybrid Meeting:

Staff: 2 Senior Media Specialists

1 IT Specialist

1 Media Supervisor

1 Department staff (if needed)

COST: \$248.81 plus cost of the 5th staff person from another department (if needed)

Example: 40 hours of meetings = \$9,952.40

*Excluding any overtime

REQUESTED ACTION:

Discuss and provide direction on Commission meetings. Staff recommends only the Planning Commission utilize the “hybrid lite” model when substantial items are discussed ... and return to in-Chamber pre-pandemic traditional meetings for all other Commissions and, perhaps, utilize “hybrid lite” only when substantial items are discussed.

ATTACHMENTS:

PowerPoint Presentation