

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: TERRI A. GRIFFIN, CITY CLERK  
SUBJECT: AMENDMENTS TO CITY COUNCIL MANUAL OF PROCEDURES  
AND PROTOCOLS

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

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RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the City Clerk that the Council, by resolution, amend the City Council Manual of Procedures and Protocols to revise the protocol for election of Mayor and Vice Mayor and incorporate other minor revisions to reflect current Council practices.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On July 30, 2013, the Council adopted a revised Manual of Procedures and Protocols, which establishes procedures and guidelines for the conduct of Council meetings and Council business. On August 18, 2015, the Council directed the City Clerk to revise the City Council Manual of Procedures and Protocols to incorporate a new protocol for selection of a presiding officer during the election of the Mayor. The Council further directed the City Clerk to include a vote by ballot process for voting on nominees, similar to the procedure used by Council when appointing applicants to City boards and commissions. In addition to these revisions regarding the election of the Mayor, changes have been made to reflect the Council's current practices with regard to (1) placement of items on agenda by Council members; (2) agenda headings and order; and (3) distribution of communications to Council members.

BACKGROUND

City Charter Section 15 requires the Council to select one of its member as Mayor at the meeting at which Council members are installed following a general or special municipal election or when there is vacancy in the office of Mayor. Section XII(C) of the Council's Manual of Procedures and Protocols establishes the protocol for election of the Mayor however, the current protocol does not outline a process for conducting the election for Mayor in the absence of a presiding officer, as was the case following the November 4, 2014, election.

### PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

On May 12, 2015, Vice Mayor Coursey requested a future agenda item to discuss development of a written policy for election of a Mayor in the event there is no sitting Mayor or Vice Mayor. Council Member Combs concurred with the request.

On June 2, 2015, the Council directed staff to bring forward proposed written protocols for the election of Mayor in the event there is no sitting Mayor or Vice Mayor to conduct the election.

On August 18, 2015, the Council considered options for selection of a presiding officer during the election of the Mayor in the absence of the Mayor and Vice Mayor and for voting on nominees and directed the City Clerk to incorporate the selected protocols into the Council's Manual of Protocols and Procedures for approval by the City Council.

### ANALYSIS

The Council considered two options for selection of a presiding officer for election of the Mayor in the absence of the current Mayor or Vice Mayor. Under both options, the Council member with the longest continuous service would function as the presiding officer during the election of the Mayor. The options differed in how the presiding officer would be determined in the event there are two or more Council members with equal length of service. The Council selected the option whereby the Council member who received the highest number of votes in the election would function as the presiding officer for the election of Mayor.

The Council also considered and selected an alternate method for voting on nominees. Under the current protocol, nominations are voted on in the order received. The first nominee to receive a majority vote is elected. The Council considered an alternative voting method that would mirror the voting procedure used by Council for selecting applicants for City boards and commissions. Under the alternate method, the Council would vote by ballot for a number of nominees equal to one less than the total number of nominees. Any nominee receiving one vote or less would be eliminated in subsequent rounds of voting. Subsequent votes would be taken by ballot with each Councilmember voting for one less nominee than voted for in the previous round. Once a single nominee receives a majority vote, the Presiding Officer would declare that individual to be elected Mayor.

Changes to the election of Mayor and Vice Mayor are reflected in Attachment 1, pages 18-19.

Staff also identified three other provisions in the Manual of Procedures and Protocols that need minor revisions based on Council's current practices.

1. Section II(B), Placement of Items on Agenda, has been revised to reflect the Council's current practice for placing items on a future agenda. A Council member wishing to place an item on a future agenda makes the request under Mayor's and Councilmembers' Reports. If one other Council member concurs with the request, the item is added to a subsequent agenda. At that time, the Council may discuss and vote whether to place the item on a future agenda for deliberation and action. (See Attachment 1, pp. 2-3.)
2. Section II(E), Agenda Contents, has been revised to reflect recent changes to the order of certain agenda items and the addition of a second public comment period. (See Attachment 1, pp. 4-6.)
3. Section XIV(B), Communications, has been revised to reflect the current practice of not identifying the Council member who requested information when the information is distributed by staff to the full Council. (See Attachment 1, p. 21.)

#### FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of this action does not have a fiscal impact on the General Fund.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15378.

#### BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

#### NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

#### ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – City Charter Section 15
- Attachment 2 – Redlined Sections II(B) and (E) (Agenda), XII(C) (Election of Mayor and Vice Mayor) and XIV(B) (Communications) of the City Council Manual of Procedures and Protocols
- Resolution/Exhibit A (Amended Sections)

#### CONTACT

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