

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
SUBJECT: MAYOR'S OPEN GOVERNMENT TASK FORCE REPORT

STAFF PRESENTER: PETER STANLEY, TASK FORCE MEMBER
BRUCE KYSE, TASK FORCE MEMBER

AGENDA ACTION: DISCUSSION AND DIRECTION

ISSUE(S):

Shall the City Council, by motion, accept the Mayor's Open Government Task Force Report, and direct staff to provide information regarding implementation of the Task Force recommendations to the Council for consideration at Council's Goal Setting session in January?

BACKGROUND:

In January 2014, Mayor Bartley appointed a 11-member Open Government Task Force to evaluate the City's current policies and procedures in order to provide recommendations to the City Council on how to improve openness and transparency in Santa Rosa.

Vice Mayor Swinth and Council Member Carlstrom were appointed as the co-chairs of the Task Force. The Task Force met twice a month from April through November 2014, during which time they heard presentations from staff, a presentation from the Communications Director of San Jose, and a Community Engagement presentation from Matt Leighninger, Executive Director of the Deliberative Democracy Consortium. The Task Force conducted two community forums and reviewed and discussed the Sunshine Ordinances of a number of other cities. Meetings of the Task Force were open to the public and recorded for viewing on the City's website.

The Task Force formed two Subcommittees: A Policy Subcommittee and a Community Engagement Subcommittee that spent additional time researching and discussing recommendations that were presented to the full Task Force.

The Task Force submits its report to the City Council which contains recommendations to improve transparency, open government, and community engagement in Santa Rosa including recommendations on how to better inform and involve the citizens in the decision making process.

ANALYSIS:

Openness and Transparency should be an important goal of the City. The Mayor's Open Government Task Force Report makes numerous recommendations on how to improve openness and transparency in the City's decision making process and how to better engage the community in the City's programs, services and projects. A copy of the report is attached hereto as Attachment 1.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended by the City Manager that the Council, by motion, accept the report of the Open Government Task Force and direct staff to provide information regarding implementation of the Task Force recommendations to the Council for consideration at Council's Goal Setting session in January.

Author: Caroline L. Fowler, City Attorney
Terri Griffin, City Clerk

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – Mayor's Open Government Task Force Report