



## Agenda Report

19-061

Agenda Date: 2/19/2019

### REPORT TO COUNCIL

#### SUBJECT

Action on Summary of the December 13, 2018 City Council Governance Session

#### BACKGROUND

On December 13, 2018, the City Council held a Session on Governance to discuss the necessary components of a high performance governing body, assess the impacts of the new district election system, and enhance and strengthen the teamwork between the Council and staff. A full summary of that session is attached to this report (Attachment 1).

The City engaged two highly-qualified facilitators for this session:

- Dr. John Nalbandian is a professor at the University of Kansas and also a former Mayor. He has presented to city councils throughout California, including at the League of California Cities conferences, and has recently facilitated discussions with both the City's management and executive leadership teams.
- Jan Perkins is a former city manager and Senior Partner with Management Partners, the firm that assisted the City during the council districting process. Jan facilitates many city council workshops throughout the state, as well as consults on other issues.

The workshop objectives were designed to establish a consensus on how governance within the new district election system would look and create a shared understanding of high performance governance and what it means for the City of Santa Clara. It also provided the new Council and staff an opportunity to discuss key guiding principles and processes around the new governance system.

The Council's goals for the day were as follows:

- Clarity of how we will govern - clear consensus
- Establish practical guidelines, including details
- Refresher of protocols so the Council knows what continues and what changes
- Recognize we are one City
- Recognize the City has a Council-Manager form of government
- Know that each Councilmember will have the tools to be successful representatives of their districts *and* of the whole city
- Understand what level of staff support will be available
- Assume each Councilmember is trying to do what is best for Santa Clara
- Improve working relationships on Council

**DISCUSSION**

At the City Council Session on Governance, the Mayor opened the workshop and City Manager Deanna J. Santana provided opening comments about her goals for the session. The City Manager emphasized that staff is eager to serve the Council well and has already begun discussing the governance shift to better assist with the transition. She outlined how the district structure will change the overall governance structure of the City and underscored the importance of being intentional.

Dr. John Nalbandian led the Council and staff through a discussion regarding high performance governance including the roles of elected and appointed officials and how elected and appointed officials can all be bridge-builders. Following this, the Council discussed ways in which the City of Santa Clara is already a high-performing City. Then, the Council identified what community members may expect from Councilmembers elected by district and what potential improvements could be realized due to the new district election system. The Council confirmed that the following principles would guide governance in Santa Clara:

- We all care about and will govern for the entire Santa Clara community.
- We will follow our Santa Clara ethical values.
- We will follow our Council-Manager form of government.

After establishing their guiding principles, the Council addressed a number of questions regarding protocols and processes that may be impacted by the transition to district elections and discussed how to move forward in these cases. Ultimately, the Council agreed that they serve and represent the entire city and constant communication will be key to ensuring a smooth transition. A summary of this discussion is attached to this report (Attachment 2).

At the end of the session, the Council discussed what their next steps will be regarding the guiding principles and any specific protocols. They reached a consensus to conduct a six-month check-in in order to provide an opportunity to assess governance, make adjustments as needed, and then determine if a formal Council policy is needed. This check-in will be scheduled for September 2019.

During the Council's discussion on current protocols and procedures, the City Council considered how Councilmembers' names would be listed on printed materials and on the City's website. They considered whether the listing should be prioritized by seniority, district, alphabetically, or by seat and if the Councilmembers' districts should be listed as well. At the end of the discussion, the City Council unanimously agreed that Council districts should be reflected in a visible way and that the listing will be determined by the City Manager. Given the absence of clear Council direction and the multiple options to select from, the City Manager will seek further input regarding the presentation of the Mayor and Councilmembers in City facilities, on letterhead, and the City's website from the Governance and Ethics Committee at the February 21 meeting.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The action being considered does not constitute a "project" within 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.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact other than staff time.

**PUBLIC CONTACT**

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall Council Chambers. A complete agenda packet is available on the City's website and in the City Clerk's Office at least 72 hours prior to a Regular Meeting and 24 hours prior to a Special Meeting. A hard copy of any agenda report may be requested by contacting the City Clerk's Office at (408) 615-2220, email [clerk@santaclaraca.gov](mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov) <<mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov>> or at the public information desk at any City of Santa Clara public library.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Note and file Reports related to the December 13, 2018 City Council Governance Session

Reviewed by: Nadine Nader, Assistant City Manager

Approved by: Deanna J. Santana, City Manager

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Report on Council Session on Governance
2. Discussion Summary from Council Session on Governance