



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: November 16, 2010

ITEM NUMBER: VIII-4

SUBJECT: Membership in the Association of California Cities – Orange County

DATE: November 12, 2010

FROM: City Manager's Office

PRESENTATION BY: Allan L. Roeder
City Manager

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Allan L. Roeder, City Manager
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RECOMMENDATION:

Determine whether the City of Costa Mesa should support, join and pay membership dues to the Association of California Cities – Orange County.

BACKGROUND:

This subject was before the City Council at its regular meeting of October 19, 2010 at the request of Mayor Pro Tem Leece. The Mayor Pro Tem provided the City Council with an overview of the concept behind establishment of the Association of California Cities – Orange County, followed by a more detailed explanation by the City Manager. The item was continued by the City Council with direction to the City Manager to bring the matter back at such time as more information was available and action required. A copy of the staff report from the meeting of October 19, 2010 is attached as Exhibit A.

ANALYSIS:

Before providing the updated analysis of the Association of California Cities – Orange County (AOCC-OC) since this matter was last before City Council, an explanation is due as to the urgency in bringing the matter forward at this time.

Following distribution of the proposed Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws for the AOCC-OC, 6 cities have taken action to join the new organization and 10 more have scheduled the matter for City Council action in November. As the City Council will recall from the prior presentation on this subject, one of the concerns raised was the potential for both the existing Orange County Division of the League of Cities and the proposed AOCC-OC to be financially incapable of effectively operating should membership be split among OC cities. Exhibit B depicts this possibility although that is not to say that all cities that have scheduled the AOCC-

OC matter for action will approve membership. Because both the OC Division of the League of Cities and the AOCC-OC operate on calendar year budget cycles with dues

payable in January, time is extremely short in which a decision needs to be made regarding the future of both organizations.

A point-by-point summary of the key issues is included in Exhibit C. This exhibit also addresses the optional means by which a contractual relationship may be established between AOCC-OC and the League of Cities should that be desired for specific purposes.

What is most significant to this subject is whether or not there is value to the City of Costa Mesa in being a member of AOCC-OC? As of January 1, 2011, the City will no longer be a member of the League of Cities based upon the decision to eliminate dues from the adopted FY 2010-11 Budget. This means that as of the same date, the City will no longer be eligible to be a member of the Orange County Division of the League of Cities. As such, the City will no longer belong to any forum or organization of cities – either within OC or within in the State – for the purpose of establishing positions on legislation, regional representation, information collection and sharing with other cities, involvement in the development of “Best Management Practices” for model ordinances and the like.

For budget purposes, the City has eliminated the positions of Legislative & Public Affairs Manager and Management Analyst so the capacity to monitor legislation, draft position letters and coordinate efforts with other cities is critically limited. The City has long relied on the Orange County Division of the League to provide the basis of this effort with staff tailoring responses on the City’s behalf at the direction of the Mayor and City Council. In combination with the elimination of professional memberships from Department budgets – while a necessary step to reduce expenditures – Costa Mesa will effectively have no role in governance in Orange County or legislation at the State level. That is not to suggest Assembly and Senate officials representing Costa Mesa in Sacramento cannot accomplish the same without the City’s involvement – simply that given the breadth of issues taken up by the State, local matters do not always receive the level of attention they merit.

The AOCC-OC does provide the City the ability to retain membership in an active regional organization at a substantially reduced cost. The issues before the AOCC-OC are many of those which are of importance to the City – pension reform, homeless issues, green building initiatives, energy conservation, day labor, medical marijuana, housing and a variety of local control issues. Even without the reduced staffing levels of present, the City has received a great degree of value by its participation in the Orange County Division of the League and would likely do so as a member of the AOCC-OC. Perhaps the best, most recent example of this for Costa Mesa was the support garnered in a very short period of time almost one year ago in opposing the sale of the OC Fairgrounds. Within a matter of weeks with the Orange County Division of the League’s help, the City was able to gain support from the majority of cities in Orange County. While unsuccessful in ultimately stopping the State’s efforts to sell the property, the City could not have

garnered this level of support in such a short period of time had it not been for the participation of the League. Many of the other cooperative efforts in Orange County - such as the Model Landscape Irrigation Water Ordinance as adopted by the City last year – demonstrate the efficiency and effectiveness of OC cities working together.

FISCAL REVIEW:

The FY 20010-11 budget includes an appropriation of \$20,897 for membership in the Orange County Division of the League of Cities. Dues for the AOCC-OC are the same as for the Division. This appropriation is from the General Fund so the \$20,897 is a candidate for elimination as part of the City's efforts at closing the current operating budget shortfall of approximately \$6 million.

LEGAL REVIEW:

Should the City Council choose to become a member of the AOCC-OC, the City Attorney will review the Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws for compliance with applicable State law.

CONCLUSION:

It is timely for the City Council to make a determination as to whether it will become a member of the AOCC-OC. The City Council may also choose not to participate and utilize the existing appropriation as part of its budget reduction efforts. Current staffing reductions already impact the City's ability to participate in legislation and regional governance. A decision not to participate in the AOCC-OC will further reduce the City's capacity in these areas. However, the decision whether to become a member or not is unlikely to have any direct impact on the provision of services to the public.

ALLAN L. ROEDER
City Manager

- ATTACHMENTS: A [October 19 Council Report](#)
 B [City Council Votes-OC Div vs. AOCC-OC](#)
 C [Summary of Key Issues](#)

