



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: FEBRUARY 17, 2015

ITEM NUMBER: NB-3

SUBJECT: STAFF DIRECTION REGARDING THE CITY REJOINING THE LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES

DATE: February 3, 2015

FROM: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

PRESENTATION BY: DANIEL K BAKER, PUBLIC AFFAIRS MANAGER

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: DAN BAKER @ (714) 754-5156

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council discuss and provide direction to staff regarding the City of Costa Mesa reactivating its membership with the League of California Cities.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

Currently, the City is an active member of the Association of California Cities Orange County, (ACCOC), which provides advocacy on behalf of the City for the protection of local control through legislative advocacy and education.

With the upcoming budget process quickly approaching, Council Member Genis is seeking council support regarding the City becoming, once again, an active member of the League of California Cities, which also provides protection of local control through legislative advocacy and education.

The League is an association of cities formed in the late 19th century to enable local communities to share best practices and knowledge and to discuss public policy, legislation, and other issues that may have positive or adverse impacts to local governments. Today, the League includes over 473 members (98% of all California cities) and provides policy advocacy services on behalf of cities regarding a wide assortment of issues such as the protection of local government revenues and the retention of local control.

All except five cities of the 34 in Orange County (Anaheim, Costa Mesa, Orange, Tustin and Yorba Linda) are members of the League.

Over the past ten years, the League has utilized its presence and influence in Sacramento to initiate or lead campaigns to protect local government revenue by directly participating in efforts to pass propositions (e.g., Propositions 90, 98, and 99.). Most recently, the League played an instrumental role in ensuring the passage of Proposition 22, a constitutional amendment preventing the State of California from seizing certain local funding, such as transportation funds, from local governments.

Presently, the League continues its legal efforts to address issues such as the dissolution of redevelopment agencies and the protection of local sales and property tax authority (*LCC v. Cohen*).

Under certain circumstances and generally when legislative compromise cannot be achieved, the League may elect to file an amicus brief or seek judicial remediation through the court system. Over the past year, the League has filed approximately 47 amicus briefs or letters with the court on behalf of all cities. Additionally, the League also tracks numerous bills during each legislative cycle. Staff utilizes this information to formulate initial recommendations regarding bills that may interest the City Council and are consistent with the City's adopted Legislative Platform. Along with its legislative advocacy and legal efforts, the League also provides leadership regarding various issues affecting local governments, such as public pension reform, through its policy committees.

The League is proud of its history of advocacy and recent accomplishments and believes its services render substantial public benefits to its members. The League provides an annual assessment of its activities and a customized Investment Report to illustrate the net financial benefits its efforts have rendered. Specifically, the Investment Report details the City's return on investment, defined as local revenues protected by the League's advocacy efforts. By way of example, these efforts include, among others, local funds protected by the Vehicle License Fee Tax Swap, Proposition 22, and Proposition 42. Attached is the League's generated data regarding the City's potential recent return on investment if the City should renew its membership with the organization (Attachment 1).

Membership in the League also provides the City with opportunities for enhanced education and participation relating to several policy issues. The League holds an annual conference and hosts various webinars and training seminars that act as venues for elected officials and staff to exchange ideas regarding policy problems and solutions. Examples of the training currently offered by the League include: performance management; ethics training; cross-cultural communication; organizational leadership; conflict resolution; and, strategic planning. The League also works to create resources (e.g., The Institute for Local Government) wherein elected officials and staff may access case studies and white papers regarding a variety of public policy issues to inform potential future decisions on a particular matter.

In addition, the League also is divided into several departments based on professional disciplines; one such department is dedicated to City Clerks. This department resource provides the City Clerk's Office with important information relating to changes in election law, including an annual seminar dedicated to providing education regarding pertinent updates. Also, the City Clerk listserv, which is only available to members, provides a great wealth of information to the City Clerk relating to best practices. If Costa Mesa reinstated its membership, the City Clerk would have access to these (among other resources) offered by the League, or the City would be required to pay increased fees to participate in these training events. In addition, several times a year staff is attending League training sessions and paying much higher registration fees that would reduce if we were members. The League's membership 2014 annual report is attached for the City Council's broader information (Attachment 2).

The City recently received an invoice from the League for its 2015 membership dues. The City's projected annual membership dues total \$25,288 an amount that has not changed since Fiscal Year 2007-2008. The City's annual dues are calculated by a formula that considers population as the basis for assessment. In addition, the League

requests \$606.91 for litigation and legal expenses associated with its current efforts, specifically relating to ongoing litigation relating to redevelopment (League of California Cities v. Matosantos) and Senate Bill 71 (*City of El Centro, et al. v. David Lanier, et al.*).

FISCAL REVIEW:

The City's 2015 Membership Dues total \$25,288 excluding an optional surcharge, totaling 2.4% of the membership dues (\$606.91), which funds the League's legal efforts. If authorized, funding of \$25,895 will be used from the contingency account for this fiscal year and funds would be budgeted in the City Council's proposed Fiscal Year 2015-2016 professional development budget.

LEGAL REVIEW:

There is no legal review required for this item.

CONCLUSION:

It is recommended that the City Council discuss and provide direction to staff regarding the City of Costa Mesa reactivating its membership with the California League of Cities.

DANIEL K. BAKER
Public Affairs Manager

THOMAS R. HATCH
Chief Executive Officer

ATTACHMENTS: 1 [League Investment Report](#)
 2 [2014 League Annual Report Handout](#)