

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNAL OPERATIONS

Mayor Tim Grayson, Chair
Ron Leone, Committee Member

5:30 p.m.
Monday, July 14, 2014

Building A, Garden Conference Room
1950 Parkside Drive, Concord

- ANNOTATED AGENDA -

ROLL CALL: All present

STAFF PRESENT: Assistant City Manager Scott Johnson, City Attorney Mark Coon

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHO ADDRESSED THE COMMITTEE: None

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: None

1. **DISCUSSION** – Prayer/Inspirational Moment at Council Meeting. No staff report.

ACTION: Mayor Grayson stated that the purpose of the meeting was to consider an initiative by councilmember Helix to open Council meetings with a prayer. He noted that the entire City Council expressed support for referring the proposal to the Policy Development & Internal Operations Council Committee for review.

Mayor Grayson asked the City Attorney whether or not his vocation as a minister created a conflict of interest that would prevent him from considering Councilmember Helix's proposal. City Attorney Mark Coon advised that no conflict of interest exists.

Councilmember Leone stated that he has concerns regarding how establishing a moment of prayer before council meetings could be handled. He indicated that he would like a better understanding of the legal issues and constraints that would arise if a prayer process were adopted. Councilmember Leone would like staff to research the various frameworks that could be utilized.

Mayor Grayson asked that staff study the following: how the City could establish a rotation of prayer leaders from the various religious congregations and denominations in the City; how the content of the prayers would be decided; whether all of the multiple faiths can be accommodated; can we use volunteers to conduct the selection/rotation process; what was the historical background of prayers which used to be conducted in Concord before council meetings and why were they discontinued; what are the policies and practices of other cities who conduct a prayer before Council meetings; could the City legally facilitate a private prayer gathering before Council meetings, on City premises; and what are the legal restrictions, in light of the recent Supreme Court decision in *Town of Greece v. Galloway*.

Mayor Grayson stated that his overarching desire is a compromise that will satisfy those who would like a prayer conducted before council meetings without offending those who do not.

Mayor Grayson acknowledged that in light of the breadth of analysis that staff will need to perform, he anticipates that it will be at least October until the PD&IO Committee can reconvene on these issues. He would like staff to invite members of the faith community to attend that meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Memorandum from Edi Birsan
2. E-mail from Bob Barnes
3. E-mail from Barbara Farhner



2. ADJOURNMENT at 6:10 p.m.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and California Law, it is the policy of the City of Concord to offer its public programs, services and meetings in a manner that is readily accessible to everyone, including those with disabilities. If you are disabled and require a copy of a public hearing notice, or an agenda and/or agenda packet in an appropriate alternative format; or if you require other accommodation, please contact the ADA Coordinator at (925) 671-3361, at least five days in advance of the meeting. Advance notification within this guideline will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility.

Distribution: [REDACTED]
City Council
Valerie Barone, City Manager
Scott Johnson, Assistant City Manager
Mark Coon, City Attorney
Mary Rae Lehman, City Clerk
Joelle Fockler, Deputy City Clerk
Administrative Services