

CITY OF PALM DESERT STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: February 27, 2025

PREPARED BY: Anthony J. Mejia, City Clerk

SUBJECT: ORDINANCE AMENDING THE PALM DESERT MUNICIPAL CODE TO UPDATE, CLARIFY, AND CODIFY BYLAWS AND GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR THE CITY'S BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, COMMITTEES, AND TASK FORCES

RECOMMENDATION:

Introduce an Ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA, AMENDING THE PALM DESERT MUNICIPAL CODE TO UPDATE, CLARIFY, AND CODIFY BYLAWS AND GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, COMMITTEES, AND TASK FORCES."

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

The City Council Subcommittee on Boards and Commissions, composed of Councilmember Pradetto and Mayor Harnik, met with staff on January 17, 2025, to discuss proposed updates to the municipal code governing the City's appointed bodies. The subcommittee expressed support for the recommended changes, which aim to ensure alignment with priorities, improve efficiency, and address concerns raised by staff liaisons.

The ordinance updates several key areas, including:

- **Finance Committee** – The updated language clarifies that the Finance Committee may review and provide recommendations on fiscal and investment policies only when specifically referred by the City Council. This change resolves previous conflicts where members introduced investment policy discussions that were not within the intended scope.
- **Resource Preservation & Enhancement Committee (RPEC)** – The Environmental Sustainability Plan and Greenhouse Gas Inventory referenced in the committee's bylaws are outdated and no longer used by staff. Additionally, the committee had been meeting without clear agenda items, leading to discussions outside its intended scope. To improve focus, RPEC will now meet on an as-needed basis, convening only when the City Council refers specific items or when staff determines committee input is beneficial.
- **Eligibility Requirements** – To prevent potential conflicts of interest, the ordinance prohibits relatives of City employees and officials from serving on any appointed body and establishes a 12-month waiting period after an employee leaves City service before their relatives may be eligible to serve.

- **Standardized Membership** – The ordinance establishes a seven-member standard for most appointed bodies to improve consistency and efficiency. This affects the Civic Engagement Committee (reduced from 12), Library Advisory Committee (increased from five plus two alternates), and Parks and Recreation Committee (reduced from nine). The Planning Commission remains at five members. No current members will be removed; reductions will occur gradually through attrition, which may result in some incumbent members not being reappointed when their terms expire.
- **Meeting Schedules** – Several committees have adjusted their meeting schedules based on workload and necessity. Below are the changes:

Committee	Current Schedule	New Schedule
Public Safety Committee	Monthly	Every other month
Civic Engagement Committee	Quarterly	Semi-annually
Homelessness Task Force	Every other month	Semi-annually
Cultural Resources Preservation Committee	Monthly	Every other month
Library Advisory Committee	Monthly	Quarterly
Resource Preservation & Enhancement Committee	Quarterly, up to every other month	As-needed

These changes ensure that meetings occur only when necessary, improving efficiency while maintaining transparency and community engagement.

Legal Review:

This report has been reviewed by the City Attorney’s Office.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is minimal fiscal impact associated with the publication of the ordinance. Adjustments to meeting schedules may result in minor cost savings related to staff time and administrative expenses.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Ordinance – Redline Version
2. Draft Ordinance – Clean Version