



CITY OF PALM DESERT

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

MEMORANDUM

From: Anthony J. Mejia, City Clerk
To: Civic Engagement Committee
Date: March 21, 2025
Subject: **Updates to Civic Engagement Committee Structure and Meeting Procedures**

The City Council recently adopted updates to the Palm Desert Municipal Code affecting all boards, commissions, committees, and task forces, including the Civic Engagement Committee (CEC). These changes were made to ensure that appointed bodies remain aligned with City priorities, operate efficiently, and serve their intended purpose effectively. If you have any questions or need further clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out.

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Changes to Meeting Schedule

Previously, the CEC met quarterly. Under the new ordinance, CEC will now meet semi-annually (twice per year) following each session of the Civic Academy.

Calling a Special Meeting

The City's standard practice is to provide approximately one week's advance notice for meetings to ensure members have sufficient time to plan for their participation and to provide the public with adequate notice. A special meeting may be called in one of two ways:

1. **By the Chairperson** – The chairperson may request a special meeting by contacting the staff liaison.
2. **By a Majority of Appointed Members** – A majority of the committee may request a special meeting, but members must do so individually and without discussing or coordinating their requests with each other.

To ensure compliance with the Ralph M. Brown Act, members may not discuss amongst themselves whether to call a special meeting. Additionally, members may not ask staff to poll other members or relay messages regarding their interest in holding a meeting.

Process for Requesting a Special Meeting:

- Members who believe a special meeting is needed must submit their request individually to the staff liaison.
- The staff liaison will not act on a request from a single member but will track requests.
- If requests from a majority of appointed members are received, the staff liaison will notify the chairperson and proceed with scheduling.
- The agenda will be set by the staff liaison in consultation with the chairperson and will be strictly limited to the topics requested.

Important Note: Special meetings will only be held when there is a clear and appropriate purpose that aligns with CEC's established mission and responsibilities. Requests for meetings that fall outside the committee's scope will not be accommodated. Meetings should occur only when City business warrants committee input—not for personal projects, advocacy, or general discussions.

Updated Committee Membership

To improve consistency across all appointed bodies, the Civic Engagement Committee will now be composed of seven members. This is a reduction from the previous twelve-member structure.

Important Note: No current members will be removed before their terms expire. The reduction in membership will occur gradually through attrition, meaning some incumbent members may not be reappointed when their terms end.