

**CITY OF SANTA ANA
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

March 22, 2016

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:40 pm by Chair Vicente Sarmiento at City Hall Ross Annex, Room 1600.

ATTENDANCE

Members Present: Councilmember Angelica Amezcua
Mayor Pro Tem Vicente Sarmiento, Chair

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: David Cavazos, Robert Cortez, Alma Flores, Mark Lawrence, Jose Sandoval, Francisco Gutierrez, Hassan Haghani, Fred Mousavipour, Kelly Reenders, Gerardo Mouet, William Galvez, Jose Gonzalez, Jorge Garcia, Julie Castro, Manny Escamilla, Daniel Soto and Yasmin Vazquez. Also present were Tony Cardenas from League of California Cities, Chris Townsend (via phone), Cori Williams and Casey Elliot from Townsend Public Affairs and Leslie Pollner and Dan Maldonado from Holland & Knight.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Approval of Minutes of the October 19, 2015

MOTION: Approve minutes.

MOTION: Amezcua SECOND: Sarmiento

VOTE:	AYES:	Amezcua, Sarmiento
	NOES:	None (0)
	ABSTAIN:	None (0)
	ABSENT:	None (0)

2. Quarterly Federal Legislative Update from Holland & Knight - October 2015 to March 2016

Leslie Pollner commented the Empowerment Zone Employment Tax Credit was recently extended for another year.

Dan Maldonado mentioned President Obama's budget includes \$125 million for the Streetcar through the New Starts/Small Starts program. The project has the support of Senator Feinstein who is one of the senior appropriators on the Senate Appropriations Committee. Mayor Pro Tem Sarmiento added that during visits to Washington DC, the City of Santa Ana group along with Holland & Knight, met with staff from Senator Feinstein and Boxer's offices as well as Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez and thus they are well informed of the Streetcar project.

Leslie Pollner stated the City submitted an application for Promise Zone funding which will be highly competitive. Holland & Knight secured letters of support from Senators Feinstein and Boxer as well as Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez.

Leslie Pollner also mentioned Holland & Knight assisted the City in arranging congressional and agency meetings during the City advocacy trip to Washington D.C in October, 2015. Mayor Pro Tem Sarmiento was appreciative of Holland & Knight's efforts to bring national exposure to the City.

Leslie Pollner touched on several items. Holland & Knight worked in concert with the City of Santa Ana and several other cities impacted by the HOME Investment Partnership Program cuts to successfully increase funding levels in the final FY 16 Omnibus package. The City of Santa Ana received Urban Areas Security Initiative funding totaling \$5.43 million from Department of Homeland Security / Federal Emergency Management Agency. Lastly, although Holland & Knight was able to thwart efforts to pass the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act at the end of 2015 (which includes language from the Permanent Internet Tax Freedom Forever Act) by February 2016 the bill passed.

Mayor Pro Tem Sarmiento asked which grants the City has pending. Jorge Garcia mentioned the City has been successful in receiving Active Transportation funding and continues to pursue Federal funding through the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery grant. Also at the Federal level, it is important the City continue to search for funding for homelessness and veterans.

3. Quarterly State Legislative Update from Townsend Public Affairs - October 2015 to March 2016

Casey Elliot announced James Peterson has joined Townsend Public Affairs and along with himself and Cori Williams, James will be working to further the City's legislative agenda.

Casey Elliot provided the Committee with an update on the release of the Governor's budget in January noting strong revenues are expected and therefore entities are looking to increase their funding as a result.

Regarding the statewide regulatory framework for medicinal cannabis, Casey Elliot reported a package of three bills, AB 243, AB 266 and SB 643, was signed into law and is now in the process of being implemented by the State. He also mentioned the State's first Bureau of Medical Marijuana Regulation Chief was hired in February. Mayor Pro Tem Sarmiento asked if any of the new regulations impact the City. Casey Elliot responded the State is interested in keeping local control intact but some items, such as taxes, may put pressure on cities. He also mentioned the high likelihood of an initiative qualifying for the November ballot regarding recreational marijuana use.

Casey Elliot commented that in the wake of high profile violence involving assault weapons, numerous gun control bills have been introduced in Legislature with some receiving enough support to move forward. Mayor Pro Tem Sarmiento remarked on the relationship between the release of low or mid-level offenders due to Proposition 47 and the increase in crime in Santa Ana and wondered if realignment funds are available from the State. Casey Elliott stated the Governor has not proposed additional realignment funds in the current budget but rather may pursue a ballot initiative to provide more rehabilitation to offenders while they are incarcerated.

Cori Williams reviewed Townsend Public Affairs grant coordination efforts mentioning the City was awarded a total of \$13,674,000 in Active Transportation Funding; \$11,519,000 from the statewide Active Transportation Program and \$2,155,000 from the SCAG Active Transportation component. The next grant cycle in 2017 will have application deadlines in 2016 and Townsend Public Affairs will work closely with the City during the submittal process.

Cori Williams mentioned new funding available through the California Youth Soccer and Recreation Development Program by the Department of Parks and Recreation for heavily populated, low-income urban areas with high unemployment and youth crime rates. Qualifying projects must include a water conservation component. Executive Director of Parks and Recreation, Gerardo Mouet, commented the department is very interested in the grant and has determined Santa Anita Park would be the most competitive for this opportunity.

Casey Elliot stated Assemblymember Anthony Rendon was officially sworn-in as the new Speaker of the California Assembly in February and due to the new term limit rules he could be Speaker for the next eight years. Speaker Rendon has indicated he will not author any bills this year and instead will focus on the State budget and helping advance State priorities.

Casey Elliot mentioned several categories of legislation which have been introduced this year including affordable housing, medicinal cannabis, and gun control. This is the second year of a two-year session ending in August 2016 and there will be no hold-over legislation. Items will need to be voted on or be reintroduced in January 2017. Mayor Pro Tem Sarmiento asked Townsend Public Affairs to keep the City informed on affordable housing, gun control and redevelopment legislation.

In relation to water conservation, Cori Williams reported the State Water Resources Board voted in February 2016 to extend Governor Brown's conservation mandate until October 31, 2016. The only modifications to the mandate affect the total conservation adjustment credit and the supplier conservation standard.

Councilwoman Amezcua asked Townsend Public Affairs to keep the City informed as to the \$1.6 million earmarked in the Governor's budget for early education. Casey Elliot remarked the Governor is working on a proposal to consolidate several funding streams to develop a more comprehensive approach to early education.

4. League of California Cities Briefing - October 2016 to March 2016

Tony Cardenas stated the League of California Cities opposes AB 2614 which would allow the licensure of out-of-state felons to engage in specified activities relating to medical cannabis. The League has not taken a position on the Parker Initiative, a statewide ballot measure to legalize the use of recreational marijuana. SB 897 seeks to add an additional year of temporary disability to the two years already available to public safety employees. Any expansion of worker's compensation benefits will have a direct impact to local budgets. The League also opposes SB 876 which gives an individual the right to rest or sleep in any public space. Lastly, transportation continues to be a high priority in the State legislature.

5. Review the 2015 Legislative Platform Scorecard

City Manager David Cavazos thanked City agencies for their legislative efforts and briefly reviewed the Legislative Platform Scorecard. He mentioned the importance of preserving local control, ensuring fiscal stability, capitalizing on funding opportunities, and continuing to work in partnership with the region and other agencies. He noted the Platform is not all encompassing and changes can be made year to year. He commented on the progress made on the body camera program, the number of legal and illegal medical marijuana dispensaries, the numerous grants received by the City for safe mobility, and the items added last year relating to homelessness and veterans. He mentioned immigration reform has been a constant theme for the City, the focus on gang prevention, anti-gang and education programs, the recent improvements at the Santa Ana Zoo, the City's attention to affordable housing and Promise Zone funding, the decrease in unemployment and the City's work with the Department of Housing and Urban Development. He commented on the AA credit rating by Standard & Poor's, renewable energy funding opportunities, receivership actions taken by the City, water conservation efforts resulting in the meeting of conservation goals, and the approved bike lane project. Regarding the Santa Ana/Garden Grove Fixed Guideway, City Manager David Cavazos reported on the \$125 million in the President's budget for the project and the agreement with OCTA. He stated grade separation projects are important for transportation and redevelopment efforts, the Bristol Street project is progressing well and commented on the importance of infrastructure improvement such as the bridge projects throughout the City. Lastly, he remarked on Team Santa Ana's focus on an Open Data Platform, transparency and engagement and technology.

Mayor Pro Tem Sarmiento commented on the \$17.5 million in homelessness funding received by the County of Orange and his desire for staff to lobby for a proportionate allocation of the funds to be directed to the City's efforts. City Manager David Cavazos explained the City's practice of seeking a dollar-for-dollar partnership with the County to leverage funds.

6. Discuss Streetcar Project Funding Timeline

Mayor Pro Tem Sarmiento asked Holland & Knight to report on the Streetcar funding timeline which all agreed was discussed earlier in the meeting.

7. Discuss Holland & Knight Expanded Scope of Service

City Manager David Cavazos recognized the work of all the City's partners, especially the efforts of Holland & Knight. Due to the success achieved in Washington D.C. and the need to increase lobbying efforts, the City has requested Holland & Knight submit an expanded scope of work. Councilwoman Angelica Amezcua asked the cost to increase services and City Manager David Cavazos responded the cost would be an additional \$1,400 per month. Mayor Pro Tem expressed his support and would like to determine how the City can leverage its position at the State level as well.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

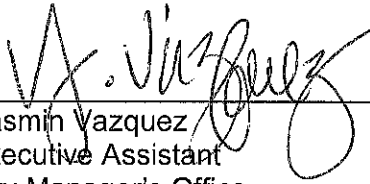
Councilwoman Angelica Amezcua thanked Townsend Public Affairs, Holland & Knight and the League of California Cities for attending the meeting and expressed her excitement about being a part of the committee.

Chair Sarmiento also thanked meeting attendees and specifically Councilwoman Angelica Amezcua for her willingness to join the committee.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None.

ADJOURNMENT - 4:03 pm – The next meeting of the Legislative Council Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, September 28, 2016 at 2:30 pm at City Hall Ross Annex, 20 Civic Center Plaza, Santa Ana California, Room 1600.



Yasmin Vazquez
Executive Assistant
City Manager's Office

