



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

City Council Meeting times

Date:	January 8, 2008
To:	Striking Committee
From:	City Clerk
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report responds to a City Council request that the City Clerk report to the Striking Committee on possible changes to Council's meeting times.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Clerk recommends:

1. The Striking Committee consider various options for City Council meeting times outlined in Attachment 1 to this report.
2. The Striking Committee recommend a preferred meeting times option to City Council.

Implementation Points

If City Council decides to change its meeting times the City Clerk will advise the City's agencies and special purpose bodies. The City Clerk will also update the City's Web site as needed.

Financial Impact

There are no additional financial impacts associated with the meeting time options outlined in this report. The City Clerk's Office already provides dinner for City Council meetings at a cost of approximately \$1,300.00 per meeting day. In 2007, this totalled approximately \$23,000.00. The 2008 recommended Council budget includes sufficient funds to cover these costs. Should Council select an option that eliminates the dinner break, there will be a potential savings of approximately \$1,300.00 per meeting day.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

City Council at its meeting on September 26 and 27, 2007, approved the 2008 Schedule of Meetings. Council requested the City Clerk to report to the Striking Committee on potential modifications to the meeting times for City Council meetings. This report responds to that request.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

City Council meets monthly for two days. At the start of the term, Council’s meetings were scheduled until 10 p.m. each day with a one-hour lunch break. Some Members of Council were concerned that the shortened lunch break did not give Members enough time to attend other meetings. The later recess time also meant that Members and staff were getting home very late. In March 2007, Council decided to change its meeting times to the following:

- 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (3 hours)
- 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. (1.5 hour lunch break)
- 2:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. (4.5 hours)
- 6:30 to 7:00 p.m. (half hour dinner break)
- 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. (2 hours)

In approving the 2008 Schedule of meetings, City Council asked the City Clerk to report to the Striking Committee on potential modifications to these meeting times.

COMMENTS

To see whether a change to meeting times might impact the Council schedule, the City Clerk’s Office reviewed the City Council meetings for the first year of the term. The following table outlines the number of regular and special meetings and the number of days for each:

Council Meetings December 2006 to December 2007

Regular Meetings		Special Meetings	
1 day	-	1 day	3
2 days	4	2 days	2
3 days	3	3 days	-
4 days	3	4 days	-
Total:	10	Total:	5

There were 15 meetings in total during this period. The majority of meetings were completed in 2 days or less. Council continued meeting past the second day 6 times. In one instance Council was scheduled for 3 days (December 2007). That meeting was completed within the scheduled time period.

Attachment 1 contains several meeting times options, including the current (status quo) meeting times. These options are not significantly different from each other. There is limited flexibility to make drastic changes to the current meeting times. The meeting hours per day range from 8.5 hours (Option 4), 9 hours (Options 5 and 6) to 9.5 hours (Options 1, 2, 3 and 7). The difference per day is the result of:

- starting earlier
- finishing earlier
- a shorter lunch break
- eliminating the dinner break

or a combination of these factors.

Any of these options should give City Council the time it needs to complete its agenda business. Under any option, Council will continue meeting if it has not completed its agenda business.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Ulli S. Watkiss
City Clerk

ATTACHMENT

Attachment 1 – City Council meeting times options

City Council Meeting time options

Option	Times each meeting day
1. Status Quo	9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (3 hours) 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. (1.5 hour lunch break) 2:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. (4.5 hours) 6:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. (half hour dinner break) 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. (2 hours) <i>Total meeting hours each day: 9.5</i>
2. Earlier start time and earlier finish (with dinner break)	9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (3.5 hours) 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. (1.5 hour lunch break) 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. (4 hours) 6:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. (half hour dinner break) 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. (2 hours) <i>Total meeting hours each day: 9.5</i>
3. Earlier start time and earlier finish	9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (3.5 hours) 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. (1.5 hour lunch break) 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. (6 hours - sandwiches provided while meeting in session) <i>Total meeting hours each day: 9.5</i>
4. Regular start time and earlier finish	9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (3 hours) 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. (1.5 hour lunch break) 2:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. (5.5 hours) <i>Total meeting hours each day: 8.5</i>
5. Earlier start and earlier finish	9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (3.5 hours) 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. (1.5 hour lunch break) 2:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. (5.5 hours) <i>Total meeting hours each day: 9</i>

Option	Times each meeting day
6. Shorter lunch break and earlier finish	9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (<i>3 hours</i>) 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. (<i>1 hour lunch break</i>) 1:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. (<i>6 hours</i>) <i>Total meeting hours each day: 9</i>
7. Earlier start shorter lunch break and earlier finish	9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (<i>3.5 hours</i>) 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. (<i>1 hour lunch break</i>) 1:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. (<i>6 hours</i>) <i>Total meeting hours each day: 9.5</i>

Under any option, Council will continue meeting a third or additional days if it has not completed its agenda business.