



CITY OF COMMERCE AGENDA REPORT

TO: Honorable City Council

FROM: City Administrator

SUBJECT: General Municipal Election – March 7, 2017

MEETING DATE: October 4, 2016

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council consider whether consolidate with the County of Los Angeles Special election scheduled for March 7, 2017 or have a standalone election.

And adopt the following resolutions:

1. Resolution Calling and Giving Notice of the Tuesday, March 7, 2017, General Municipal Election;
2. Resolution requesting the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles to render specified services relating to the General Municipal Election to be held on March 7, 2017.
3. Resolution consenting to an election consolidation with the City of Los Angeles, including the Los Angeles Community College District, and ordering that the three (3) seats on the Board of Trustees of the Los Angeles Community College District appear on the ballot of the General Municipal Election to be held on Tuesday, March 7, 2017;

BACKGROUND

The Board of Supervisors approved a motion for Countywide Special Election on the March 7, 2017 ballot. The County's intent is to have all cities consolidate their local elections with the County (whether the County Ballot Measure is placed on the ballot or not, the budget has been already allocated for the countywide election). However, consolidation is not mandatory and the City has an option to evaluate pros and cons and decide to maintain its stand-alone election.

Cost of the election: The City of Los Angeles had been consolidating with the City of Commerce Los Angeles Community College Board of Trustees, Los Angeles Community College District, and Los Angeles Unified School Board. As a result, the City of Commerce

gets reimbursed almost half of the cost of the election. Generally, the cost of the election runs between \$50,000 to \$55,000, and the City's portion would be around \$30,000.

Should the City decide consolidate with the County of Los Angeles, the estimated cost provided by the Registrar-Recorder Office is \$13,988.87.

Consolidated Election—The City Clerk's Office would conduct candidate filing (nomination period), publish election notices, but most of the elements of the election would be administered by the County. There three main factors to consider: (1) cost; (2) what is in the best interests of the City of Commerce voters; and (3) turnaround time for certification of election results.

Pros:

Voter clarity improved – all information in one sample ballot and one polling place to go to. Avoiding duplication services - instead of two polling places that voters would have to go on March 7, 2016, would be one polling place. Even if both polling places are located in one facility, there would be two ballots voter would need to fill- out
Cost Efficiency –election cost for the City is reduced in half by consolidating with the County

Cons:

Certification of Results –could be a delay of up to six weeks. Therefore, the new Council may not take office until final certification of results.
Loss of Autonomy –the City will have no say or control over election
Ballot Counting will take place at the County's Registrar of Voter's Office, not at the City Hall.
Vote by mail (VBM) requests could only be issued through the County.
Candidates would have to request their lists of voted VBM ballots from the County.

The City Council have three options:

1. Consolidate with the County;
2. Conduct Stand-alone Election;
3. Change the date of the Election to April 11, 2017 (to eliminate confusion of two elections on the same day)

Resolutions:

In compliance with the California Elections Code, the following resolutions require City Council approval to conduct the Tuesday, March 7, 2017, General Municipal Election for the election of three members of the City Council for the full term of four years. These resolutions must be adopted by October 17, 2016. Based on the decision the City Council to consolidate or request specified services from the Los Angeles County (resolution would be adjusted):

- Call and Give Notice of Election;
- Resolution consenting to an election consolidation with the City of Los Angeles,
- Request specified services from the Los Angeles County relating to the conduct of the General Municipal Election, or
- Request Consolidating election with the County of Los Angeles

Calling for the Election and Filing Period: In order to hold an election for City Councilmembers, the City is required to officially, by resolution, “call and give notice” of a General Election.

Once the election process has been initiated with the adoption of the resolution, the next steps are the public noticing of the election and opening of the Nomination Period. The candidate filing period for the March 7, 2017, election will be November 14, 2016, through December 9, 2016. If any incumbent does not file by the filing date on December 9, 2016, the filing period will be extended to December 14, 2016.

During the Nomination Period, any registered voter residing in Commerce who is not disqualified by the laws of the State of California from holding a civil office can request and file papers for candidacy.

Los Angeles County to provide specified services for Commerce: Resolution authorizing the City of Commerce to request the assistance of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles to render specified services to the City relating to the General Municipal Election (ballot cards, registered voters roster, etc.)

Consolidating Election with the City of Los Angeles: The City of Los Angeles City Council is requesting that the City of Commerce consolidate a portion of Los Angeles’ Primary Nominating Election with the General Municipal Election to be held on Tuesday, March 7, 2017.

By consenting to the consolidation, the City’s ballot for the General Municipal Election will include three seats of the Commerce City Council and three seats of Board of Trustees of the Los Angeles Community College District.

This consolidation will be beneficial for the City of Commerce, the City of Los Angeles and Commerce voters for the following reasons:

- Allow voters in Commerce to vote one ballot, as opposed to two separate ballots.

- The election workers will be responsible for one ballot versus two separate ballots, which, at the close of the polls, will need to be delivered to two separate counting centers.
- The change in election date eliminates the need for voters to go to the polls in both March (for municipal elections) and April (for LACCD) and for the election workers to work back-to-back elections.
- The City of Los Angeles will reimburse the City of Commerce a proportionate share of the costs for conducting the consolidated election, which reduces Commerce's cost for the election by half.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve staff's recommendation; or
2. Provide alternative direction.

RELATIONSHIP TO 2012 STRATEGIC GOALS:

This agenda report relates to the strategic planning goal: "*Protect and Enhance the Quality of Life in the City of Commerce*".

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost for the March 3, 2015 General Election is estimated to be \$50,000 and was included in the City's Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Budget. If the City adopts the proposed resolution, there is no additional fiscal impact to the City since candidates pay for their Candidates Statements. Should the City Council decide to consolidate with the County of Los Angeles, the cost if estimated, would be no more than \$20,000.

Respectfully submitted by: Jorge J. Rifá, City Administrator

Recommended by: Lena Shumway, City Clerk

Reviewed for Fiscal Impact by: Vilko Domic, Finance Director

Reviewed by: Eduardo Olivo, City Attorney