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City Council Discussion and Direction on Process for Selection of Vice Mayor

SUMMARY
At the City Council meeting of June 3, 2013, the Council agreed by consensus to schedule a discussion of the process for selection of Vice Mayor. This report provides information on past practice and methods for the selection of Vice Mayor in other cities in Alameda County.

BACKGROUND
Section 310 of the San Leandro City Charter specifies that, "At its first regular meeting in May of each year, the Council shall designate one of its members Vice Mayor, to serve for a period of one year and until a successor is elected and qualified." The City Council has no other written procedures or guidelines for Vice Mayor selection.

The City Council followed an informal policy of rotating the designation of Vice Mayor until 1989. In that year, the Council determined that the Vice Mayor position should not be just one of rotation, but should be elected by the City Council.

Cities generally make their Vice Mayor selections in the month in which their elections are held, or shortly thereafter. Until 2000, San Leandro held its General Municipal Election in April of even-numbered years, and made the Vice Mayor selection in May. In 2000, the City's General Municipal Election was moved from April to November, without a corresponding ballot measure to change the timing of the Vice Mayor selection.

To aid the Council's discussion of Vice Mayor selection, staff surveyed the other cities in Alameda County to determine how they choose their Vice Mayor. The results of the survey are provided below:

Berkeley, Dublin and Livermore - Similar to San Leandro, the City Councils in the Cities of Berkeley, Dublin and Livermore designate a vice mayor to serve for one year, and have no formal process for selection.

Oakland - The Oakland City Council President nominates a President Pro Tempore, who is confirmed by the Council.   The President Pro Tempore serves until replaced.

Hayward - The Council selects its Mayor Pro Tempore based on seniority. The Councilmember with the most seniority as a Councilmember, and who has not previously served as Mayor Pro Tempore, is selected. If two members are tied for seniority, the member receiving the highest number of votes in the election is selected. The member selected as Mayor Pro Tempore must have served at least two years on the Council. Mayor Pro Tempore is a one-year term.

Alameda - Vice Mayor selection is determined based upon the number of votes the Councilmembers

received in their election. Traditionally, the Councilmember receiving the highest number of votes in each election is selected as Vice Mayor. The Vice Mayor serves a two-year term, until the next election.

Fremont and Union City - The Vice Mayor position is rotated. These cities have a five-member Council, and all members serve one term as Vice Mayor.

Fremont - Elections are held in even-numbered years, with staggered four-year terms: the Mayor and two Councilmembers at one election; two Councilmembers at the following election.

- The Councilmember who received the highest number of votes during the previous general municipal election is appointed Vice Mayor for the first year following the next general municipal election (the 3rd year of that Councilmember's term).
- The Councilmember who received the second highest number of votes during the previous general municipal election is appointed Vice Mayor for the second year following the next general municipal election (the 4th year of that Councilmember's term).

Union City - Elections are held in even-numbered years, with staggered four-year terms: the Mayor and one Councilmember at one election; three Councilmembers at the following election.

- Even-year staggered elections; Mayor and one Councilmember at one election; three Councilmembers at the following election.
- In the year three Councilmembers are elected, the Councilmember elected in the previous election is selected as Vice Mayor (the 3rd year of their term). The Councilmember receiving the highest number of votes in the election is selected Vice Mayor in the 2nd year of their term, the Councilmember with the 2nd highest number of votes is selected Vice Mayor in the 3rd year of their term, and the Councilmember with the 3rd highest number of votes is selected Vice Mayor in the 4th year of their term.

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