



Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL

DATE: March 15, 2004

FROM: CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: **IMPLEMENTATION OF STUDENT INTERN OPPORTUNITIES WITH CITY COMMISSIONS**

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that City Council adopt the program noted below to offer local high school students the opportunity to serve as interns on City commissions.

BACKGROUND:

At the City Council meeting of February 2, 2004, a proposal to add student intern positions to City commissions was presented by a group of students from "A Young Woman's Voice" program of Mustangs on the Move at John Muir High School. The purpose of the proposal was to create learning opportunities for local students in the 11th and 12th grades to learn about and work directly with City advisory bodies by serving as volunteer interns with such bodies. After discussion of the proposal, Council referred the item to staff for review and development of a recommended implementation plan.

Student Internships with City Commissions

Creating positions for student interns with City commissions offers local high school students a hands-on learning experience in local government and public participation in their local communities. Such positions also bring a youth perspective to the work of an advisory body. Students would learn how commissions work, how public meetings are conducted, and add a youth voice and perspective to the advisory body process. While student interns would not be voting members, they would be encouraged to participate actively in the discussion and decision-making process. Each commission would accommodate up to two student interns, to encourage the opportunity for students to work in teams and to reduce the potential isolation that may occur with just a single student intern on a commission. Internships would run concurrent with the school year (generally, September to June), and could be renewed for a second year, where appropriate. While staff would provide an initial orientation to the work of commissions, commission chairs would be the primary mentors for the student interns. Commission chairs will be encouraged to assure that student interns have ample opportunity to participate in commission activities.

While student intern opportunities are expected to be available on all City commissions, those commissions that meet during weekday school hours may be problematic and such a schedule may prevent student participation.

The proposed program would operate as follows.

1. A notice of the student intern opportunity will be circulated at local high schools and organizations serving high school-age youth. Eligible students would be those in the 11th or 12th grade who live and/or attend school in Pasadena, with an interest in this volunteer activity.
2. Similar to the current process for Commission applicants, interested youth would complete and submit to the Mayor's office the following information:
 - a. an abbreviated "Application for Commission" form, indicating area(s) of interest for potential commission assignment;
 - b. a written recommendation from one teacher;
 - c. a brief agreement signed by both the applicant and his/her parent or guardian, verifying their understanding of the basic responsibilities to regularly attend the meetings, read the commission material, abide by the applicable rules, etc.
3. Completed forms from eligible applicants would be forwarded to the applicable commission chair for review and selection of up to two interns per year.
4. Commission chairs would notify the Mayor's office within 45 days regarding the outcome of the applications. Applicants not selected would be notified and their applications returned to the Mayor's office, for possible reassignment, where appropriate.
5. Once assigned to a student intern position with a commission, the intern will sign a brief agreement indicating the student understands and agrees to attend a training session, read commission agendas and materials, regularly attend meetings, etc.
6. Student interns would be required to attend a Commissioner Training Workshop, to be offered in late September or early October annually and providing a general introduction to commission roles, responsibilities, work plans, minutes, rules of order, etc.
7. Staff will provide the interns with copies of relevant materials, including key documents that summarize that specific commission's mission, purpose, roles and responsibilities, meeting schedule, etc.
8. Should the intern be eligible for any type of community service, academic or related credit from his/her high school for this experience, the student will be responsible to provide the appropriate school approval or verification form to the commission chair and staff at the start of the internship. Internship hours will be recorded by the student and regularly verified by signature of the chair.
9. Commission chairs will promote the participation of interns in commission work, and will assure that intern assignments are appropriate for full-time high school students.
10. The internship would conclude at the end of the school year. Any student interested in and eligible for a second year would resubmit an application to the Mayor's office for a second placement.

This student intern opportunity will be offered as a pilot program for the first year, and will be reviewed and evaluated for appropriate modifications, with input from both students and commission chairs, at the conclusion of the first year of operation (approximately June 2005).

FISCAL IMPACT:

There will be a minor fiscal impact projected for this activity, with additional commission-related costs for copying and mailing materials, printing of business cards, staff training time and related items. Costs are not projected to exceed \$100 per year per student intern, and would be included in the applicable City department budget for support of the applicable commission.

Respectfully submitted,



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