

# Agenda Report

**TO:** CITY COUNCIL **DATE:** September 14, 1998  
**FROM:** CITY CLERK  
**RE:** CHARTER REFORM TASK FORCE ON SCHOOL DISTRICT GOVERNANCE ISSUES

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council:

- (a) Adopt a resolution relating to the Pasadena Unified School District and establishing a Task Force to review governance of the Pasadena Board of Education;
- (b) Determine the number of members to be appointed to the Task Force and the time line for beginning and completing the charge to the Task Force. The City Clerk recommends the size of the Task Force be comprised of 11 members; and respectfully requests the start-up of the Task Force be delayed until after Pasadena's municipal elections in March and April 1999, due to the City Clerk's workload impacts in administering these elections and staffing the Task Force.
- (c) Authorize the reappropriation of \$3,000 from the FY 1998 City Clerk Budget to City Clerk Budget Account 8114-101-261000 for staffing costs for the months of April-June in FY 1999.

## **BACKGROUND:**

On July 6, 1998, the City Council approved a motion to form a new Task Force to review governance issues of the Pasadena Unified School District and recommend to the City Council the best method of electing the Board of Education that is more accountable and more responsive to the electorate. The Pasadena Board of Education, the City Council of Sierra Madre, and Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael Antonovich (representing the Altadena area) will each be invited to make an appointment on this Task Force. Also, as part of this action, is direction that we communicate with our State legislative representatives the above motion, and alert our representatives to the fact that one issue (among others) to be studied by the Task Force is the possibility of changing the "at-large" method of electing School Board members to a "district" method of election. State law, for the most part, prohibits "district" methods of electing school boards (by geographic sub-areas). Councilmembers expressed a desire to have our legislative representatives lead an effort to change the State Education Code provisions that prohibit district elections for

school boards, so that local communities can decide for themselves which is the best method of electing their school boards. As part of Council's action, our legislative representatives will be invited to share their thoughts on how we would implement a district method of election if that should come to pass as a recommendation of the Task Force.

Staff was directed to draft and present a formal resolution to Council incorporating the above actions, which resolution will be forwarded to the new Task Force as its charge. While City Council authorized the formation of a new Task Force, issues pertaining to the size, time line for the Task Force, budget, and staffing need to be addressed.

#### Size of the Task Force

It is recommended the Task Force be comprised of eleven members -- seven Council district appointments, one Mayoral appointment, plus the three appointments from the School District, the Sierra Madre City Council, and Supervisor Michael Antonovich. A body of this size would be able to conduct its meetings in the Council Chambers which are easily accessible to the public and which already have all the amenities (microphones/PA system, screen, lighting for video recording (if needed), etc. A body larger than eleven members would be more expensive to staff and find adequate accommodations to conduct meetings, and a larger body may result in delays in getting through its agenda within a specified time period.

#### Staffing/Time Line for the Task Force

Assistant City Attorney Larry Newberry and City Clerk Jane Rodriguez staffed the former Charter Reform Task Force, and it is anticipated they will also staff this new Task Force. Mr. Newberry attended meetings and provided legal advice to the former Task Force, and is familiar with State Education Code provisions pertaining to school board elections. The City Clerk is the elections official for both City and School District elections, thus it is important that she personally staff and be a resource of information to the Task Force, as well as become educated along with Task Force members on preferential voting methods (which have not yet been used in California state or local elections).

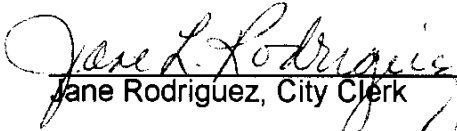
Due to the increased workload in preparing for and administering our regular municipal elections next Spring, and the need to coordinate with the County the five measures on the upcoming November 3 ballot, the City Clerk is requesting that City Council delay the start-up for the Task Force until after our March/April elections. This will also allow additional time to solicit interest from members of the community to serve on the Task Force. In addition, by delaying the start-up of the Task Force, the Task Force will not be competing with local elections and races for public attention/participation and press coverage of its meetings.

It is estimated the time line for the Task Force to do a thorough study would be approximately 7-9 months.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

If City Council delays the start-up of the Task Force to April 1999, there is a fiscal impact of \$3,000 in the FY 1999 City Clerk's budget to staff the Task Force for the period April through June 1999. Funds are not budgeted in the City Clerk's FY 98 budget to cover these costs. Based upon current financial information, it appears that the \$3,000 will be available from unspent Election Account FY 1998 appropriations. This will increase the City Clerk's budget to cover the cost of staffing the Task Force for three months -- April through June 1999. Total costs to staff the Task Force are estimated at \$9,000 (\$3,000 for this fiscal year and \$6,000 for the next FY 2000 budget for the period July through approximately December 1999). The \$6,000 for staffing costs in the following fiscal year 2000 will be requested at the appropriate time when the City Clerk's Department prepares its FY 2000 budget.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Jane Rodriguez, City Clerk