

**CITY OF LODI
INFORMAL INFORMATIONAL MEETING
"SHIRTSLEEVE" SESSION
CARNEGIE FORUM, 305 WEST PINE STREET
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2007**

An Informal Informational Meeting ("Shirtsleeve" Session) of the Lodi City Council was held Tuesday, October 2, 2007, commencing at 7:01 a.m.

A. ROLL CALL

Present: Council Members – Hitchcock, Katzakian, and Mayor Johnson
Absent: Council Members – Hansen and Mounce
Also Present: City Manager King, City Attorney Schwabauer, and City Clerk Johl

B. TOPIC(S)

B-1 "Presentation of the City of Lodi Internet Website Policy"

City Manager King provided a brief introduction of the subject matter.

Communications Specialist Jeff Hood provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the proposed website policy. Specific topics of discussion included current practices, lack of a formal policy, federal General Services Administration (GSA) registration, proposed link policy, alternatives to proposed policy, links to nonprofits, website as potential revenue source, and the future of the website.

In response to Council Member Hitchcock, Mr. Hood stated the likely reason for cities having multiple domain names is so that they can utilize all the basic domain names through which the public can locate and further access the City.

In response to Mayor Johnson, Mr. Hood stated many cities provide business links to provide information about their community. He stated the service is an enhancement of their websites with links to various businesses and organizations.

In response to Mayor Johnson, Mr. King stated the need to have any links is a part of the policy discussion. Mr. King also discussed the current and former process associated with providing links to the City's website, departmental input and review, reasonable exceptions, and the options for links to other organizations with ties to the City.

In response to Council Member Hitchcock, Mr. Hood stated the likely source for revising outdated information on the website will be the departments themselves.

In response to Mayor Johnson, City Attorney Schwabauer stated a disclaimer provides some legal protection, but he was unsure of its protection for GSA compliance purposes. He also stated that he prefers the ".gov" domain name with the email address tie in. Mr. Hood stated the GSA discourages advertising and commercial endorsements.

City Manager King provided an overview of the commercial business model for city websites and stated the model must be balanced carefully with the need of the citizens to do business over the Internet. He also stated the library, which is in the business of providing information, is not subject to the proposed policy due to the nature of its services, which will likely need to be reviewed separately as well.

In response to Council Member Hitchcock, Mr. Hood stated the links that provide links to other commercial businesses, such as Hutchins Street Square with links to various shows and performers, will likely be removed.

In response to Council Member Hitchcock, Mr. Hood confirmed that holders of various domain names that are similar to the City's domain name likely purchased those names to sell them at a later date.

In response to Mayor Johnson, Mr. Hood stated he does not believe that Stockton generates more than a few thousand dollars per year from its website advertising. He stated that, in talking to the individual who maintains the website, it is difficult to maintain and they face challenges with the location, length, and timing of the advertisements.

In response to Mayor Johnson, Mr. King stated an electronic complaint tracking system could be a great advantage tool for comment and complaint processing purposes and provided examples of how such a system could be used.

In response to Council Member Hitchcock, Mr. King stated the level of City communication could go up, the tone may be different, and the program would better manage existing complaints that are received by various departments.

In response to Myrna Wetzel, Mr. Hood stated the program would be similar to the UPS tracking system as far as checking status on a complaint.

In response to Mayor Johnson, Mr. Hood stated the electronic program will provide effective monitoring and tracking of complaints and provided an overview of the status check process of the program and the ability to have internal tracking and discussion.

City Manager King also discussed the ability to provide commonly used forms online and options available through a kiosk at City Hall.

In response to Mayor Johnson, Mr. King stated he is not sure if there is a need for a part-time person to oversee and manage the website. He stated the primary purpose for bringing forth the proposed policy is to create awareness of how the website is currently being used and to make it a more effective communication tool.

Discussion ensued between Council Member Hitchcock and Mayor Johnson regarding the need to allocate more resources to the Internet to make it more user-friendly for the public.

Council Member Hitchcock stated she preferred contact information be provided for individuals submitting comments and/or complaints electronically for follow-up purposes.

C. COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None.

D. ADJOURNMENT

No action was taken by the City Council. The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 a.m.

ATTEST:

Randi Johl
City Clerk