



STAFF REPORT

SAUSALITO CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA TITLE:

Council discussion on procedure by which Proclamations and Certificates of Appreciation are presented to community members

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Give direction to staff regarding procedure for production of Proclamations and Certificates of Appreciation for presentation to community members

BACKGROUND

For a number of years, City staff has received requests for production of Proclamations and Certificates of Appreciation to be presented to members of the community. Those requests come to staff in several ways:

1. Requests are often made by a community member directly to a member of the Council, who would in turn request that staff prepare the document.
2. A Councilmember or staff member might decide that a Proclamation or Certificate should be presented based on an individual or group's service to a particular program or group in the community, or because of a momentous anniversary or event coming up in the community (e.g., 100th anniversary of the founding of the Star of the Sea Church). There has also been a tradition of presenting a Proclamation to long-term employees upon their retirement.
3. Some requests are submitted by members of the public directly to a staff member, particularly to the City Manager, who in turn might request that staff prepare the document.

There has been some recent discussion about the need to establish some process and parameters for the preparation and presentation of these documents.

ISSUES

How the request for a Proclamation or Certificate is originated:

One difficulty with the approach used in the past is that there has been no way in which the City Council or a subcommittee of the Council has been involved in the process of either

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suggesting to whom Proclamations and Certificates should be presented, or in reviewing and authorizing requests for such community commendations.

Timeframe in which staff must produce the requested document:

A second consideration is the timeframe in which staff is expected to produce a Proclamation. To write an effective Proclamation, the responsible staffer must first obtain information about the individual or group and the meritorious achievements to be acknowledged. That is typically obtained from: 1) the person or group making the request; 2) the person to be honored by the presentation of the Proclamation; and/or 3) other sources of research. The process can be time-consuming, so the ideal situation would allow staff to have adequate time to gather sufficient quality information and to write a concise compilation of that. Staffers with experience in this task feel that there should be at least 2-week notice to prepare Proclamations, if at all possible (noting that there are sometimes emergency situations that require quicker turnaround).

Certificates of Acknowledgement are less time-consuming, but advance notice of 3 to 4 work days would allow staff to fit the task into the workflow and would ensure production of a more attractive end product.

Criteria for selecting who will receive a Proclamation or Certificate of Appreciation:

Staff suggests that Council may wish to establish some criteria – whether specific or broad and general – on which to base the decision to present a Proclamation or Certificate.

Here are some possible questions to consider:

- *Should the person's/group's/organization's achievements significantly contributed to the welfare of the immediate and/or regional community?*
- *Should there be a clear nexus between the accomplishments and the local and/or regional community ?*
- *Are Proclamations awarded only for "serious" accomplishments (although they may be prepared with humor), or are they prepared for what might be considered more capricious events? (e.g., the 85th birthday of a community member's parent who does not reside in the community)*
- *Does Council wish to create a process whereby requests for these documents are reviewed on a case-by-case basis?*
- *Does the Council wish to review the requests or to create a subcommittee for such review?*
- *Does Council wish to continue to follow the process that has been in place in the past?*

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff seeks Council direction on whether it wishes to establish a process and/or criteria for the production of Proclamations and Certificates of Accomplishment.

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