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**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON
REDISTRICTING**

May 27, 2021

**POLICY ON CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT
SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

TO: Honorable City Council Members

FR: Members of the Redistricting Special Committee

RE: Public Engagement by Consolidated Government Subject Matter Experts in Redistricting Process

Purpose

This policy defines the Redistricting Special Committee's recommendation on the manner in which consolidated government subject matter experts address public input and questions from the public and engage the public in the redistricting process.

Applicability

This policy applies to the consolidated government subject matter experts which have been tasked with assisting the Redistricting Special Committee in meeting with Council Members and School Board members to discuss the redistricting process, historical maps and trends in census information which may affect the next Council and School Board district maps.

Background

The Redistricting Special Committee (the "Committee") was established by the Council President pursuant to the requirements of Chapter 18, *Ordinance Code*, on October 1, 2020. At its first meeting on January 14, 2021, the Committee designated a number of people in City government who have been through the redistricting process or have special knowledge in certain areas, as consolidated government experts, including Jerry

For more information about the Special Committee on Redistricting and for previous meeting videos and minutes, go to: <https://www.coj.net/city-council/standing-committees/redistricting-special-committee>

Holland (Property Appraiser), Bill Killingsworth (Planning and Development Department Director), Mike Hogan (Supervisor of Elections) and General Counsel Jason Gabriel.

The role of these consolidated government subject matter experts would be to assist in the redistricting process by providing expertise, historical information and data which may assist the Committee in making its recommendations ultimately to the Rules Committee. See Office of General Counsel Memo regarding information gathering and Sunshine Law requirements, dated January 12, 2021, attached hereto as **Exhibit A**.

One of these individuals, Mr. Holland, was tasked at the first meeting with facilitating the Committee's work by meeting with Council Members one-on-one to discuss each Council Member's preferences as to any changes that may be necessitated by district map adjustments based upon anticipated changes in the district populations.

At the February 25th Committee meeting, the Committee discussed the role of the consolidated government subject matter experts in responding to questions and input from the public during the redistricting process and the Committee determined that a uniform written policy should be developed to direct the consolidated government subject matter experts in their interaction with the public.

Accordingly, this policy is issued to provide such guidance.

- 1. Public input and questions should be directed to the Redistricting Special Committee.** Public input and questions on the redistricting process directed at consolidated government subject matter experts should be referred to the Redistricting Special Committee at a noticed meeting. The questions or comments will then be discussed by the Committee at a noticed meeting or the Committee will give instruction to a consolidated government subject matter expert or staff on the appropriate response.
- 2. The public will be encouraged to submit questions and comments directly to the Redistricting Special Committee.** The public is encouraged to use the City Council page of the City website, particularly the City Council section on the Special Committee on Redistricting, to obtain the latest information and maps on the redistricting process. See <https://www.coj.net/city-council/standing-committees/redistricting-special-committee> The public can ask questions and provide comments through a designated email address, 2021redistricting@coj.net, monitored by the Research Division. The Research Division will also prepare a "Frequently Asked Questions" page on the redistricting process which can be found on the City Council website under the section for the Redistricting Special Committee.
- 3. A portion of each Redistricting Special Committee meeting will be reserved for public input and questions.** There will be a dedicated time during each noticed Redistricting Special Committee meeting for the public to comment and ask questions, subject to the scheduling of the Committee's business. In

addition, the Committee will schedule some of its meetings at alternate times to provide access to those who may not be able to attend meetings set during the traditional workday.

Should you have any questions on this policy, please direct them to the Redistricting Special Committee. Thank you for your cooperation.

cc: Council Members and Staff
Cheryl L Brown, Director/Council Secretary
Jessica Matthews, Chief of Legislative Services
Jeff Clements, Chief of Research
Kristi Sikes, Chief of Administrative Services
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ⁱ Note that this consolidated government subject matter expert designation would not prevent these individuals from performing their normal day-to-day duties or communicating with Council Members unrelated to non-redistricting matters. Further, individual Council Members may discuss redistricting matters at any time with Mr. Gabriel or other attorneys with the Office of General Counsel.