



MEMORANDUM

To: Mark Rohr, City Manager
From: John Baumgartner, Deputy City Manager
CC: Rebecca Underhill, Assistant City Manager
Date: 9/27/2016
Re: **Overview of the City of League City Advocacy Program**

Comments: With issues that impact the City of League City being actively debated across multiple levels of government, the City's involvement in the legislative process may grow into a year round activity at the local, regional, state and federal levels. The City of League City's advocacy program is intended to establish policy direction for general topics that could affect the City of League City. The goal of the city's advocacy efforts is to use the city's program as a guide for city positions and to protect the city's municipal interests. This approach allows the Council and staff to act on a broad array of bills that address topics of interest on behalf of the City. The City Council of the City of League City has not recently adopted a formal advocacy program.

The 85th session of the Texas legislature will begin early in January 2017. Attached is a draft of the City of League City's Advocacy Program for 2017 which is intended to outline the city's positions and will allow staff to actively advocate on the City's behalf at all levels of government. The cities positions are divided into high and highest priorities to "support" or "oppose."

The City's efforts will be coordinated by city staff, Mark Rohr, John Baumgartner, and Rebecca Underhill; however each Department Director will be assigned bills and issues that could affect their area of expertise. Research, comments and requests for action on applicable bills will be made by departments and action will be taken based upon the priority of the topic and impact to the city. Possible city actions include taking a position for/against bills through:

- Testimony (oral or written)
- Letters
- Email
- Phone Calls
- Meetings

Additionally, the City will coordinate efforts when interests are aligned with partners including: Texas Municipal League, Galveston and Harris Counties, CCISD, Texas Coalition of Cities for Utility Issues, Houston-Galveston Area Council and the League City Regional Chamber. Most of the City's efforts will be dedicated to defeating legislation that would negatively affect the city. In addition, the City will attempt to increase our regional presence with these and other organizations in an attempt to benefit League City and with the hope of enabling available resources to be directed our way. Below are a few important dates for council to be aware of:

- Tuesday, January 10, 2017 (1st day) 85th Texas Legislature convenes at noon
- Friday, March 10, 2017 (60th day) Deadline for filing bills other than local bills
- Monday, May 29, 2017 (140th day) Last day of 85th Texas Legislature Regular Session

Maintaining communications with the legislative delegation during the session will be ongoing through visits, email, phone calls, text and reports. We will work closely with our delegation to assure they are aware of the impacts of legislation on the City of League City. Our delegation includes:

Federal:

- Senator John Cornyn
- Senator Ted Cruz
- Congressional District 14 Randy Weber (Galveston County)
- Congressional District 22 Pete Olson (Harris County)

State:

- House District 23 Wayne Faircloth (Galveston and Chambers Counties)
- House District 24 Greg Bonnen (Galveston County)
- House District 129 Dennis Paul (Harris County)
- Senate District 11 Larry Taylor

County:

- Galveston County Judge Mark Henry
- Galveston County Commissioner Precinct 1 Ryan Dennard
- Galveston County Commissioner Precinct 2 Joe Giusti
- Galveston County Commissioner Precinct 3 Stephen Holmes
- Galveston County Commissioner Precinct 4 Ken Clark
- Harris County Judge Ed Emmett
- Harris County Commissioner Precinct 1 Gene Locke

Lastly, we anticipate the 85th session to have several significant topics of concern to the city including:

- Appraisal Caps
- Tax Caps
- Transportation Funding
- Education Funding

Attached, is an outline of a draft Advocacy Policy and Resolution for Council discussion and consideration.

Attachments

Advocacy Program

Why develop an Advocacy Program?

- Raise the City's profile locally, regionally, statewide and nationally to better influence legislation and funding that affects our residents and business community.

How?

- Formally adopt an "Advocacy Program" to address issues important to League City (Council)
- Establish a working relationship with our elected representatives and their staffs; local, county, state and federal. (Council and Staff)
- Actively participate with regional planning organization HGAC including legislative, technical and policy committees. (Council and Staff)
- Actively participate in Texas Municipal League, its affiliates and legislative committees. (Council and Staff)
- Actively participate in professional organization and attend local, state and national activities. (Council and Staff)
- Actively participate in local chamber of commerce and their legislative committee. (Council and Staff)
- Provide Periodic Updates Regarding Legislative Issues (Staff)

A Resolution of the City Council of the City of League City, Texas, adopting the 2017 Advocacy Program for the City of League City, Texas; directing the City Manager or his designee to act with regard to the City's Advocacy Program; and providing an effective date.

WHEREAS, Legislative activities are ongoing in Congress and the State Legislature; and

WHEREAS, it is anticipated that many legislative issues affecting local government will be considered; and

WHEREAS, The City of League City's 2017 Legislative Program attached hereto as Exhibit "A" has been reviewed by the City Council of the City of League City; and

WHEREAS, the City Council is of the opinion that such Advocacy Program is in the best interest of the City and its citizens, should be adopted, and should be advanced for consideration by the Legislature; and

WHEREAS, the City Council is of the further opinion that the City Manager or his designee should be directed to take action with regard to the Advocacy Program as outlined below.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LEAGUE CITY, TEXAS, THAT:

Section I. The City of League City's 2017 Advocacy Program that is attached hereto as "Exhibit A" is hereby adopted and approved as the Advocacy Program for the City of League City.

Section II. The City Manager or his designee is directed to communicate the items included in the City's Legislative Program to members of Congress, the Texas Legislature, in general, and/or to the appropriate legislative committees, committee members and others designated by the City Manager.

Section III. For those items designated as "support", the City Manager or his designee is directed to actively pursue passage of the appropriate legislation if it is introduced by some other entity. The City Manager's efforts to obtain passage of the legislation may include drafting appropriate legislation, seeking a sponsor, and actively pursuing passage of such legislation by providing testimony and through other means.

Section IV. For those items designated as "oppose", the City Manager or his designee is directed to attempt to impede the passage of any such legislation.

Section V. It is recognized this policy will often be implemented in the context of great numbers of legislative proposals being considered within short time periods. City representatives, under the direction of the City Manager, shall be authorized to act on behalf of the City consistent with the necessary broad policy concerns set forth in this program.

Section VI. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its passage.

DULY PASSED AND APPROVED this 25th day of October, 2016.

Pat Hallisey, MAYOR

ATTEST:

Diana Stapp, CITY SECRETARY

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Nghiem Doan, CITY ATTORNEY

EXHIBIT "A"
THE CITY OF LEAGUE CITY 2017 ADVOCACY
PROGRAM

HIGHEST PRIORITY

Oppose:

Legislation that would erode or otherwise diminish home rule authority and local control

Legislation that would create an unfunded duty, responsibility or standard on local government

Support:

Transportation

- Support expanded regional transportation funding options
- Support expedited development of the Grand Parkway particularly in Galveston County

Hurricane Protection

- Development of the Ike Dike or similar hurricane protection system for League City and Galveston Bay

Specific Legislation

- Support amendment to HB 1943 from the 2011 Legislative Session that provided for the recreational use of land that the public utility owns, occupies or leases. This amendment would allow Galveston County to be covered and permit the construction of trails facilities in the Centerpoint rights-of-way by limiting their liability. This is similar to relief provided in Harris County in 2011.
- Legislation rebating State Hotel Motel Tax, State Sales Tax and State Alcoholic Beverage Taxes for up to 10 years to League City to support the construction of a convention center in League City

HIGH PRIORITY

Oppose:

Legislation that would erode or otherwise diminish local control over:

- Municipal finances and revenues
- Appraisal and revenue caps
- Rollback limitations
- Limitations of tax increment financing
- Limitations on certificates of obligation
- Operations
- Employment and post-employment benefits
- Local control over placement of electronic billboards
- Expansion of collective bargaining rights
- Annexation limitations

Support:

Truth in Taxation

- Support streamlining and clarifying mandatory property tax rate adoption language and publications

Economic Development

- Support fairness and equity in the application of sales and use taxes to good and services

- Support economic development bills that create jobs which benefit the region

Transportation

- Support a transportation bill which provides dependable multi-year funding consistent with mobility needs
- Funding for the expansion of IH45, FM270, FM517, and FM646

Water

- Support a water plan that encourages conservation through contracts and rate structures and keeps revenues within the region they are collected
- Successful management of the Brazos River as a sustainable and reliable water supply

Utilities

- Support the timely relocation of the utility facilities
- Endorse legislation that would create local option surcharges to fund undergrounding utilities
- Endorse a change in the use of video Public Educational and Government (PED) fees to allow use for operational expenses associated with running a cable television channel

Finance

- Support the tax exempt status of municipal bonds

Legislative programs of (except as they conflict with a City of League City position):

- Texas Municipal League
- Texas Coalition for Affordable Power
- Texas Coalition of Cities for Utility Issues
- Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC)
- Clear Creek Independent School District
- Dickinson Independent School District
- Santa Fe Independent School District