

INDIAN WELLS CITY COUNCIL

May 18, 2023



To: City Council
From: City Manager Department
Prepared by: Chris Freeland, City Manager
Subject: **Request to Place Discussion Regarding Governance on a Future Agenda**

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Council **DISCUSSES** and provides **DIRECTION** to staff on Council Member Bruce Whitman request for a future agenda item on Governance.

DISCUSSION:

At the April 6, 2023, City Council Meeting, Councilmember Bruce Whitman requested a staff report on Governance be added to the May 18, 2023, City Council agenda.

The institutional structures of California cities provide guidance on how cities are governed. Cities are typically categorized as either being a general law or charter city framework, operate under the city manager-council or mayor-council form of government, and provide services to the community either independently (e.g., own police and fire department) or as a contract city. Indian Wells is a charter city that operates under the city manager-council form of government and provides many services to the community through various contracts (e.g., Riverside County Sheriff for police and CalFire for fire services). This structure in Indian Wells, along with numerous documents, policies and procedures, and norms all influence how Indian Wells is governed.

As a city manager-council form of government, the Indian Wells City Council serves as the policy makers who are responsible for establishing the priorities and strategic goals of the community. The city manager is responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the city, implementing city council policies, and recommending changes to programs and projects to the city council for their consideration.

In its article on governance, the Institute for Local Government (ILG) states that "when elected officials and top management professionals' partner and govern efficiently, municipal agencies can more effectively serve their constituencies. ILG is a non-profit organization that works closely with cities, counties, and special districts to promote good

government at the local level. Attached are tips for success in leadership and governance from ILG that outline the functions, roles, and suggest best practices for cities.

As a new councilmember, Councilmember Whitman asked to have this matter agendaized to provide the community with a better understanding of the roles of the council and city manager, but to also encourage a discussion between stakeholders on various governance matters.

The City of Indian Wells is subject to several governing and operational documents, including:

- California State Constitution and various State codes
- Indian Wells Charter
- Municipal Code
- City Council Policy Manual
- Employment Agreement with the City Manager
- Employment Agreement with the City Attorney
- Other various contracts (e.g., Troon Golf, Riverside County Sheriff's Department, CalFire, etc.).

From time to time, it is appropriate for the City Council as the governing body of the City to review its governing documents. Councilmember Whitman is seeking the City Council's guidance on how to educate the community on the role and importance of each of these governing documents and determine if the City Council has an interest in reviewing and making possible revisions. Is there merit to a Governance Study Session of the City Council? Perhaps a City Council Ad-Hoc Committee to address Governance?

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Institute for Local Government-Leadership and Governance