

GOVERNANCE, TRANSPARENCY, AND LABOR RELATIONS POLITY COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS

Friday, January 15, 2021

Zoom

[Governance, Transparency, and Labor Relations Policy Committee Slides](#)

ATTENDANCE

Members: Lori Ogorchock (Chair); Rick Bonilla (Vice Chair); Michael Allawos; Gary Alpert; Dana Anderson; Bill Baber; Melanie Bagby; Darlene Berber; Lisa Blackmon; Dan Buckshi; Jennifer Cervantez; Aram Chaparyan; Richard Constantine; Katherine Cooley; Elisa Cox; Den Domer; Kerri Dorman; Leon Garcia; Raymond Hamada; Sue Higgins; Linda Hollinsworth; Peggy Huang; Randi Johl; Kathleen Kelly; Paolo Kespradit; Jelani Killings; Dawn LaBar; Joe Lillio; Sue Long; Joe Lopez; Frank Luckino; Steve Martin; Aaron Meadows; Alexandra Orogas; Cynthia Owens; Aaron Palmer; Gaudenz Panholzer; Glenn Parker; Jamie Patino; LaVonda Pearson; Karen Pinkos; Mary Ann Reiss; Daniel Sanchez; Jesse Sandoval; Reina Schwartz; Rhonda Shader; Corey Sianez; Renata Sos; Bruce Soublet; Isaac Suchil; Kim Summers; Anthony Tave; Hans Uslar; Erica Vega

League Partners: Alicia Berhow; Michael Kashiwagi

Staff: Bijan Mehryar, Legislative Representative; Johnnie Pina, Legislative Policy Analyst

I. Welcome and Introductions

Immediate Past President John Dunbar, Mayor, Yountville, welcomed everyone to the first policy committee meeting of the year and thanked members for their service to all California cities. Mayor Dunbar explained that policy committees are vitally important and are directly connected to Cal Cities' core mission of advocating for the common interests of cities. He explained that this year has been challenging for city officials, as cities are facing public health and economic challenges due to the pandemic and the shutdown of local economies. Cities are also responding to nationwide calls for equity and justice and endeavoring to root out discrimination and racism in their communities.

Mayor Dunbar emphasized that Cal Cities, now more than ever, is committed to providing resources and information to help cities make informed decisions for their communities during these challenging times. He closed by thanking everyone in attendance for their work as a policy committee member.

Mayor Dunbar then introduced Carolyn Coleman, Cal Cities Executive Director. Ms. Coleman thanked committee members for all their work. She explained that at a time when cities needed help, they have stepped up and have been problem solvers.

Ms. Coleman said that the work of the policy committees is central to Cal Cities advocacy, which is at the heart of the organization. She thanked committee members again for serving on the committee and wished them a great meeting.

Chair Lori Ogorchock, Council Member, Antioch, and Vice Chair Rick Bonilla, Council Member, San Mateo, welcomed committee members and provided an introduction.

II. Public Comment

Chair Ogorchock asked if there was any public comment. There was no public comment.

III. **General Briefing**

In accordance with the customary practice of convening all policy committee members for a general briefing prior to the start of policy committee meetings, the Cal Cities advocacy team compiled a [General Briefing Update Document](#), which includes the latest on legislative and budgetary matters affecting cities.

IV. **Overview of Parliamentary Procedure and Robert's Rules**

Cal Cities staff briefly reviewed Parliamentary Procedures and Robert's Rules. This document is designed to provide examples of common procedural matters encounter by Cal Cities policy committees. This includes how to make a motion, vote on a motion, and determine if there is a quorum. Members were directed to the informational packet for more comprehensive detail.

V. **Committee Orientation**

Cal Cities staff provided a brief overview of the purpose of policy committees and the appointment process. This document details key committee roles and responsibilities such as adding agenda items, taking positions on bills, and the committee schedules and processes, among other things. Members were directed to the informational packet for more comprehensive detail.

VI. **Existing Policy and Guiding Principles**

Cal Cities staff explained the importance of the guiding principles. This document contains Cal Cities policies that reflect positions taken by the policy committee and Cal Cities Board and is used as a reference tool for Cal Cities staff when reviewing legislation. Members were directed to the informational packet for more comprehensive detail.

VII. **Cal Cities 2021 Strategic Priorities**

The committee was updated on the Cal Cities 2021 strategic priorities. Cal Cities staff discussed the virtual League Leaders retreat and explained the process by which strategic priorities are established. The Cal Cities 2021 strategic priorities are as follows:

1. **Secure state and federal funding for local COVID-19 public health response and economic recovery for all.** Secure direct and flexible funding and resources for cities of all sizes so they can continue to protect residents from the pandemic, deliver essential services, support small businesses, and lead the recovery in our communities. Improve communication and coordination with regional, state, and federal governments on public health orders and programs to stimulate equitable economic recovery.
2. **Secure funding to increase the supply and affordability of housing and resources to assist individuals at risk of – or already experiencing – homelessness while preserving local decision making.** Secure additional resources to increase construction of housing, particularly affordable housing, workforce housing, and permanent supportive housing, and ensure cities retain flexibility based on the land use needs of each community. Increase flexibility and resources to provide navigation assistance and emergency shelters, and strengthen partnerships and collaboration with stakeholders to ensure mental health, substance abuse treatment, and wraparound services are available for adults and youth at risk of – or already experiencing – homelessness in our communities.

3. **Improve state-local coordination and planning to strengthen community disaster preparedness, resiliency, and recovery.** Pursue additional resources and support to mitigate the effects of climate change, sea level rise, catastrophic wildfires, and flooding in our communities. Promote community disaster preparedness, resiliency, and recovery in collaboration with the state and federal governments. Increase availability and access to the National Flood Insurance Program to include other natural disasters.
4. **Protect and modernize critical infrastructure.** Seek increased state and federal resources for critical and sustainable local infrastructure projects including roads, public transit, active transportation, water availability, and broadband deployment that enhance workforce and economic development and improve quality of life.

VIII. COVID-19 Roundtable Discussion

Chair Ogorchock provided an opportunity for committee members to have a COVID-19 roundtable discussion. Many committee members shared information about what their city is doing in the COVID-19 space. Specifically, members emphasized the desire to help local businesses, aid in vaccine distribution, address rent relief, and re-open schools.

IX. Adoption of 2021 Work Program

In order to produce the committee's work program, committee members were asked to respond to an online survey illustrating the top priorities for the committee to focus on in the coming year.

Cal Cities staff reviewed the results of the survey, and a discussion ensued. Committee members expressed interest in including pension modernization and elections into the work program. After a thoughtful discussion, those items were included in the work program, which was approved unanimously.

The committee adopted the following items as their work program:

1. **Pensions:** The committee will discuss engagement on the Asset Liability Management process. The committee will discuss different strategies such as pension modernization for cities to manage their obligations along with what policy recommendations should be advocated for at the state level.
2. **Labor Relations:** Staff will advocate to protect cities from unworkable mandates and unreasonable expansions of the workers' compensation system.
3. **Transparency and Technology:** Advocate for modernization of the Brown Act to enable the use of modern technology for city councils and local boards and commissions. Advocate for more resources and coordination on cybersecurity issues for local governments
4. **Elections:** The committee will engage on bills that change or alter the elections system to make sure state policymakers are aware of concerns or challenges at the local level.

X. Legislative Agenda

Cal Cities staff briefed the committee on bills that have been introduced and what they are expecting to see in this year's legislative session. Cal Cities staff discussed the following measures: [AB 37](#) (Berman) Vote-By-Mail Ballots, [AB 53](#) (Low) Election Day holiday, [SB 29](#) (Umberg) Elections: Vote by Mail Ballots, and [SB 46](#) (Stern) Contact

Tracing. Cal Cities staff also provided an update on Brown Act reform efforts. One committee member highlighted that elections with vote by mail are very expensive, and cities need additional funding to support those efforts.

XI. Budget Update

The committee was updated on the Governor's record-breaking \$227.2 billion budget proposal for the 2021-22 fiscal year. The proposed budget includes a \$164.5 billion General Fund and projects \$34 billion in total reserves and surplus. The budget significantly restores the state's rainy day fund and economic support reserves that were diminished last year. A surplus of \$15 billion, largely in one-time funds, is available for spending to address COVID-19 and support resilience and recovery. Additional information on the budget can be found in the [General Briefing document](#).

XII. CalPERS Update

Cal Cities staff then provided a CalPERS update. It was noted that CalPERS returned 4.7 percent in the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2020. Additionally, CalPERS has begun the Asset Liability Management Process whereby they will determine the discount rate for the next four year cycle. Cal Cities will prioritize providing more information on this process at the April policy committee meeting.

Committee members contributed to the CalPERS conversation. Members explained that they are having recruitment issues and that public entities need to find a way to sweeten the pot if they are to pull people away from the private sector. They explained that they would like to have a more extensive conversation about the need for skilled labor in California.

Next Virtual Meeting: Friday, April 16, 2021, 1:30 pm – 4:30 pm