

# City of Brisbane

## Agenda Report

DATE: Meeting of February 4, 2016  
TO: Mayor & City Council  
FROM: Sheri Marie Spediacci, City Clerk  
SUBJECT: Councilmember Rotation Policy

### RECOMMENDATION

Consider results of Councilmember Rotation Survey of San Mateo County Cities and provide direction to staff

### BACKGROUND

Brisbane's current *written* policy regarding the election of Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem was adopted in 1990 by Resolution No. 90-15 which adopted the Regulations and Guidelines for the Conduct of Public Meetings. That portion states:

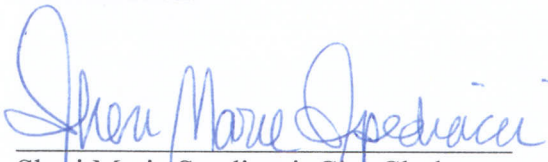
*"The Mayor and Mayor Pro Tempore shall be chosen annually by the City Council from among its members by the affirmative vote of three or more of the Councilmembers."*

There has been an unwritten policy though in the last few years generally agreeing that all Councilmembers shall have an opportunity to serve as Mayor during their first term on the City Council, whenever possible.

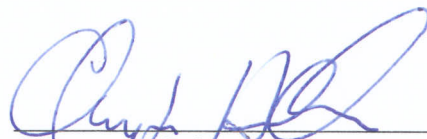
### DISCUSSION

Councilmembers recently referred this subject to the Council Subcommittee to possibly bring back a change to the current *written* policy. The Fiscal & Administrative Policy Subcommittee met and decided to it would be best to have a Council Study Session to discuss this issue.

Attached is a survey of San Mateo County Cities giving information and possible wording for your consideration.



Sheri Marie Spediacci, City Clerk



Clayton Holstine, City Manager

## Councilmember Rotation

Atherton	Majority Vote – see below
Belmont	Majority Vote – see below
Burlingame	Rotation Policy – see attached
Colma	Rotation Policy – see below
Daly City	Majority Vote – nothing written
East Palo Alto	Majority Vote – see below
Foster City	Majority Vote – nothing written
Half Moon Bay	Majority Vote – nothing written
Hillsborough	Majority Vote – nothing written
Millbrae	Rotation Policy – see attached
Menlo Park	Rotation Policy – see below
Pacifica	Majority Vote – see below
Portola Valley	Majority Vote – nothing written
Redwood City	Majority Vote – nothing written
San Bruno	Mayor is Elected by the citizens
San Carlos	Majority Vote - see below
San Mateo	Rotational Policy – see attached
South San Francisco	Rotational Policy - see below
Woodside	Majority Vote – nothing written

### Atherton:

#### *2.04.030 Mayor and vice mayor—Appointment.*

*The city council shall meet at least annually to choose one of its members as mayor and one of its members as vice mayor.*

#### *2.04.040 Mayor and vice mayor—Term.*

*The term of office of the mayor and vice mayor shall be one year. No member shall serve as mayor or vice mayor for consecutive terms.*

### Belmont:

#### *MAYOR/VICE MAYOR SELECTION*

*The Mayor and Vice Mayor shall be chosen at the first regular meeting in December in even numbered years, and at the meeting certifying the election of new council members in odd numbered years unless a special meeting is scheduled to install the mayor and vice mayor.*

*The Mayor and the Vice Mayor shall be selected each year by a majority vote of the City Council.*



## Councilmember Rotation

### Colma:

#### *Selection of Mayor.*

*(d) It is tradition in the Town of Colma for the City Council to select its mayor and mayor pro-tempore on the basis of seniority. As used in this subsection, the seniority of a council member shall be determined first, from the most recent date such member commenced a term of service as mayor, and then from the date such member first assumed office as a member of the City Council, if such member has never served as mayor; provided that, if any member, being the then senior or next senior member of the City Council, announces his or her desire not to serve as mayor or vice mayor, respectively, then the seniority of such member shall be counted from the date he or she would have commenced a term of service had it not been for such announcement.*

### East Palo Alto:

*The Mayor shall be elected, by majority vote, from among all members of the City Council.*

### Menlo Park:

*Council Policy shall be to rotate the mayor annually. The Council shall select as mayor an elected member of the Council who has served a minimum of one year and who has not served as mayor. If all eligible members have served as mayor, then the member with the longest elapsed time since serving as mayor shall be selected as mayor. In the event there are two or more eligible members having equal seniority, the Council may select any eligible member as mayor.*

### Pacifica:

*The following policy is hereby established for the selection of Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem*

*1. The City Council shall select one of its number as Mayor and one of its number as Mayor Pro Tem at a Council meeting scheduled to be held as soon as the election results are certified by the County Clerk or on a non-election year on the fourth Monday in November.*

### South San Francisco:

#### *Selection of Mayor and Vice Mayor*

*As set forth in the City Council Handbook, the Vice Mayor is usually selected as the Mayor. The City Council believes the community benefits by ensuring the positions of Mayor and Vice Mayor are held at various times by all council members. The City Council also believes the experience as a council member will assist those who ultimately serve as Mayor or Vice Mayor. To that end, the following process is hereby adopted for the future selection of Mayor and Vice Mayor. This process will remain in effect until modified by a subsequent City Council.*

*Commencing at the end of the present Mayor's term, the Vice Mayor will become Mayor and the most senior council member who has not within the previous three (3) years served as Mayor of*

## Councilmember Rotation

*Vice Mayor, will serve as Vice Mayor. This process for selection will also apply in subsequent years, provided that a council member will first become eligible for service as Mayor or Vice Mayor once he or she has served for two (2) years as a council member. In the event new council members are elected in the same year, the ranking of the newly elected council members amongst themselves will be in the order of the highest number of votes received to the lowest number.*

### San Carlos:

#### *Mayoral & Vice Mayoral Selection Process*

*Serving as Mayor or Vice Mayor is considered to be a privilege, not a right. The Mayor and Vice Mayor serve at the pleasure of the City Council and may be replaced at any time by a majority vote of the council. At the time of selection (as described in the Municipal Code), any member of the City Council may be nominated to serve as Mayor or Vice Mayor. Individuals who are elected to serve as Mayor or Vice Mayor should be chosen because of their ability to fulfill the roles and responsibilities of these positions, establish a respectful and collegial working relationship with the Council, and ultimately, serve the community.*

Burlingame

**RESOLUTION NO. 117 -1999**

**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BURLINGAME  
ADOPTING CITY COUNCIL POLICY ON ROTATION OF COUNCIL OFFICERS**

**WHEREAS**, Section 36802 of the Government Code requires the City of Burlingame have a Mayor and Vice Mayor; and

**WHEREAS**, by Council tradition the Council has rotated the office of Mayor and Vice Mayor annually at the second meeting in November of each year; and

**WHEREAS**, the Council desires to insure an equitable rotation of officers amongst all persons elected to the City Council,

**NOW, THEREFORE**, be it **RESOLVED and DETERMINED** by the **CITY COUNCIL of THE CITY OF BURLINGAME** that the following procedure shall govern the appointment of Council officers:

1. Rotation of the office of Mayor and Vice Mayor shall occur annually at the second City Council meeting in November of each year.

2. The Vice Mayor shall become Mayor if eligible and a new Vice Mayor shall be appointed from the remainder of the councilmembers next in order of position on the rotation list described below. If the Vice Mayor is ineligible, unable, or declines to serve as Mayor, then councilmembers next in order of position on the rotation list described below shall fill both the offices of Mayor and Vice Mayor.

3. A rotation list based on seniority of consecutive years in the office of councilmember and this resolution is established pursuant to Exhibit A.

4. As changes in Council membership occur, the rotation list shall be updated as follows:



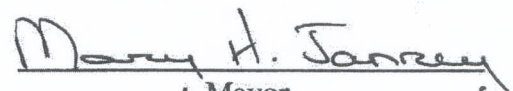
A. The outgoing mayor shall be placed ahead of any councilmembers newly elected in the November general election, if any, but below all continuing and re-elected council-members.

B. A newly elected or appointed councilmember shall be placed at the bottom of the rotation list upon taking office. If more than one councilmember is elected or appointed at the same time, the newly elected or appointed councilmembers shall draw straws to determine their position relative to each other at the bottom of the rotation list.

C. If a councilmember declines to serve as either mayor or vice mayor when it is that councilmember's turn to serve, the declining councilmember shall be placed on the rotation list ahead of any councilmembers newly elected in the November general election, if any, and below all continuing and re-elected councilmembers. If however, more than one councilmember at the same time declines to serve as either mayor or vice mayor when it is their turn to serve, the declining councilmembers shall be placed in the same relative order to each other as before but below all other councilmembers on the rotation list.

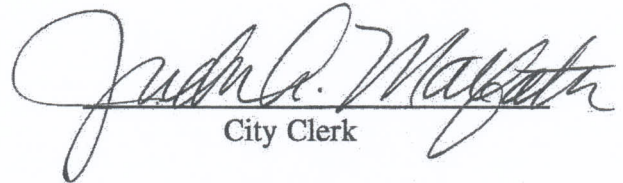
5. The same process for rotation of officers contained in this resolution shall be used if the office of mayor or vice mayor becomes vacant at a time other than the second Council meeting in November of each year. However, if the vacancy occurs because the mayor or vice mayor is no longer able or willing to serve in that office, the outgoing officer shall be placed below all other councilmembers on the rotation list.

6. For purposes of this resolution, "the November general election" refers to the City general election that has occurred on the first Tuesday of November immediately preceding the second Council meeting for that November.

  
Mayor

I, Judith A. Malfatti, City Clerk of the City of Burlingame, do hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council held on the 1st day of November, 1999, and was adopted thereafter by the following vote:

AYES: COUNCILMEMBERS: GALLIGAN, JANNEY, KNIGHT, O'MAHONY, SPINELLI  
NOES: COUNCILMEMBERS: NONE  
ABSENT: COUNCILMEMBERS: NONE

  
City Clerk

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**EXHIBIT A**

**ROTATION LIST FOR OFFICES OF MAYOR AND VICE MAYOR  
(November 1, 1999)**

1. Mayor Mary Janney
2. Vice Mayor Marti Knight
3. Councilmember Rosalie O'Mahony
4. Councilmember Joe Galligan
5. Councilmember Mike Spinelli (Immediate Past Mayor)



## VIII. ROTATION OF THE OFFICES OF MAYOR AND VICE MAYOR

### 1. Rotation of the Offices of Mayor and Vice Mayor.

- a. The term for Mayor and Vice Mayor shall be one year commencing with the meeting of the Council reorganization which takes place at the first regular Council meeting in December of each year, i.e., the second Tuesday of December.
- b. The office of Mayor and Vice Mayor shall rotate each year. No one may serve in the office of Mayor for two consecutive terms. No one shall serve as Mayor more than one time in a four (4) year election term.
- c. The rotation for Mayor and Vice Mayor shall be determined by the number of votes a Councilmember receives in his/her election or re-election in the manner described in paragraph d. below.
- d. Following each election, the Councilmembers elected in that election shall be placed in an existing rotational line-up for Mayor and Vice Mayor. The order of placement of these Councilmembers shall be determined in descending order based on the number of votes each elected Councilmember received in that election. Thus, the Councilmember receiving the highest or higher number of votes shall be placed before other Councilmember(s) receiving less votes in said election.
- e. The person at the top of the rotational line-up shall be Mayor. The person immediately following the Mayor in the rotational line-up shall be the Vice Mayor provided that person (1) intends to serve as Mayor the subsequent year and (2) is available to remain on the Council that subsequent year either by the continuation of his/her current term or by election to another term. If these conditions are not met, the person next in the rotational line-up who satisfies these conditions shall assume the office of Vice Mayor. The Vice Mayor shall then rotate to the office of Mayor the following year and the person immediately behind that new Mayor becomes the new Vice Mayor assuming that person meets the conditions described above.
- f. When a Council office becomes vacant during the course of a term, the person filling that office either by a special election or by appointment shall be placed at the end of the existing rotational line-up. The permanent placement in the rotational line-up for the person in this Council seat shall be established at the General Election for that seat in accordance with paragraph (e).
- g. In the event that any two or more Councilmembers receive the same number of votes in the same election, the Councilmember who has not previously served as Mayor shall be placed in the rotation before the other Councilmember(s). If there is a tie in votes between or among Councilmembers who have all previously served as Mayor, then the order shall be determined by length of continuous service on the Council; if there is no distinction in seniority, then the order shall be established by determining when the subject Councilmembers previously served as Mayor and placing the



Councilmember who most recently served as Mayor behind the other Councilmember(s).

- h. In the event that the Mayor or Vice Mayor does not complete his/her term, the vacant office shall be filled in accordance with the existing rotational line-up as described in paragraph (e). Thus, if the office of Mayor becomes vacant, the Vice Mayor shall rotate into that office. If the office of Vice Mayor becomes vacant, the Councilmember next in order in the rotational line-up who meets the conditions described in paragraph (e) shall step into the office of Vice Mayor. Each newly rotated Councilmember shall serve for the balance of the respective vacant term of that office and the subsequent following term of that office unless the Mayor desires to rotate out of that office at the next Council reorganization.

2. **Procedures to Confirm the Rotation for Mayor and Vice Mayor Each Year.**

At the first regular Council meeting in October of each year, the City Clerk shall place an informational report on the consent calendar of the agenda advising the City Council as to who is in line to serve as Mayor and Vice Mayor at the next Council reorganization. If any Councilmember has a question or desires to solicit discussion among the Council about the proposed rotation, that Councilmember may request that the report be removed from the consent calendar. If the Councilmember presents a question or seeks a clarification that can easily be addressed at that meeting, the Council may determine to proceed with confirmation of the rotation noted in the report at that meeting. If the Councilmember seeks discussion of the proposed rotation, the item shall be continued to the subsequent regular Council meeting for placement on that agenda as an item of business.

3. **Council Reorganization Reception.**

The City will reimburse up to \$500 for the Mayor and \$250 for each Councilmember assuming a council office for an initial or a second term to cover expenses related to a single City reception hosted by the incoming Mayor and Councilmembers.

## Chapter 4. Selection of Mayor and Deputy Mayor

1. City Council reorganization, including rotation of the office of Mayor and Deputy Mayor occurs annually at the regular meeting in December.
2. The City Council believes that experience as a Council Member will assist those who are selected to serve as Mayor or Deputy Mayor, and that it is in the City's best interest that these selections be made in a manner that permits the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to gain that experience in cycles of governing and to acclimate themselves to the jobs, tasks, and roles prior to assuming their respective offices.
3. It is appropriate to base such succession on rotation, seniority and election results according to the following:
  - A. Each Council Member has a specified position in the rotation sequence. In any year, the first person in the sequence is typically selected as Mayor, and the second in the sequence as the Deputy Mayor.
  - B. After serving as Mayor, that Council Member moves to the end of the rotation sequence, and the other four Council Members move forward.
  - C. When a Council Member is newly elected or appointed (as the result of a cancelled election), that new Council Member goes into the fourth position in the rotation, after all incumbents, but before the current outgoing Mayor.
  - D. If two or more Council Members are newly elected at the same time, the number of votes received in the election determines the position in the sequence, with the new Council Member receiving the highest number of votes being the first among the new Council Members.
  - E. If two or more Council Members are newly appointed at the same time, (as the result of a cancelled election), the newly appointed Council Members shall draw straws to determine their position relative to one another in the rotational sequence.
  - F. If a Council Member is appointed to fill a mid-term vacancy, that Council Member will go to the bottom of the rotational list.
  - G. Incumbent Council Members, when re-elected, do not begin anew at the bottom of the list, but rather retain their placement in the rotation.



- H. If for any reason (death, resignation, recall, not seeking re-election, etc.) a Council Member is removed from the rotation, the remaining Council Members move forward in the sequence.
  - I. A Council Member may decline to serve as Mayor or Deputy Mayor. In this case, the office would pass to the next Council Member on the list. The Council Member who declined may drop back one position in the rotation.
- 4. When the Council reorganizes, the outgoing Mayor will nominate the Deputy Mayor to succeed him/her. The newly appointed Mayor will then nominate the next Council Member in the rotational sequence to serve as Deputy Mayor for the coming year.
  - 5. The process described above shall guide the council's selection of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor; however, a majority of the City Council retains the authority to disregard the process and select any member of the City Council for these positions.
  - 6. The City Clerk shall keep a list outlining the suggested rotational sequence and update it annually.