



Memorandum

DATE: May 29, 2015

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Judi Baumann, City Attorney (Ext. 8779)
Nikki Ripley, Communication and Media Relations (Ext. 8846)

SUBJECT: Follow-up on City Council retreat discussion on community outreach events and video opportunities

Staff from the City Attorney's Office, City Clerk's Office and City Manager's Office followed up on the Mayor and City Council's March retreat discussion about planning for Council-hosted community outreach events and for videos featuring Councilmembers.

Councilmember Kuby asked for a discussion on these topics during the June 4 Work Study Session.

RESTRICTED PERIODS FOR INCUMBENTS RUNNING FOR RE-ELECTION:

State law prohibits the use of city resources to influence the outcome of an election. Staff worked to define a time period during which the City should not provide direct organizational or promotional support for outreach events or for taping and promotion of videos featuring Councilmembers.

The 2016 candidate elections, for the Mayor and three Council seats, will be held March 8 (Primary Election) and May 17 (General Election). Candidate paperwork can be filed between Nov. 9 and Dec. 9, and the City Clerk's Office typically certifies candidates for the ballot within a couple of business days of paperwork submittal.

Staff advises that the City not do any direct organizational or promotional work for videos/outreach events involving Councilmembers pursuing re-election between the date when a candidate is certified for the ballot and the date when the Councilmember's participation in the elections is concluded by re-election, loss or withdrawal. During this 'restricted' period, an incumbent Councilmember running for re-election could organize and promote his/her outreach event(s) without the assistance of City resources.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE FOR COUNCIL COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENTS:

Currently, Vice Mayor Woods and Councilmembers Navarro and Granville host discussion events aimed at engaging community members. They happen at occasional intervals and they have been scheduled at various locations. Council aides handle logistics for the events while the communication team handles promotions via various means. Vice Mayor Woods held his first "All Ears" on Feb. 7; Councilmember Granville held his most recent "Community Conversation" series on April 11, 13 and 25; and Councilmember Navarro held his most recent "Java with Joel" on March 28.

On June 9, Mayor Mitchell is hosting the first in an occasional series of outreach events historically used by Tempe mayors to inform the community on topics of interest. Until 2010, the City hosted a monthly event called the Early Riser Forum/Let's Talk Tempe. Mayor Mitchell's show is now called "City Talk," and it will be taped to air on Tempe 11. Community members are invited. Tempe Fire Medical Rescue Chief Greg Ruiz is the first guest. Aside from June, staff had contemplated holding another City Talk in September.

At the retreat, staff requested that the Council discuss establishing an annual schedule of outreach events. Knowing in advance when these will happen makes it easier for staff to coordinate logistics and promotions.

Given that other Councilmembers may have a desire in the future to host staff-supported outreach events, below is a proposed schedule that could be adopted. Councilmembers are obviously not obligated to host any events – this is simply a proposed schedule in case each person wanted to do so. This schedule takes into consideration the restricted periods for incumbents outlined above:

June 2015 – Mayor Mitchell

July – Councilmember Granville

August – Councilmember Navarro

September – Mayor Mitchell

October – Vice Mayor Woods

November – Open to Councilmembers Arredondo-Savage, Schapira OR Kuby

December – Open to Councilmembers Arredondo-Savage, Schapira OR Kuby

January 2016 – Open to Councilmembers Arredondo-Savage, Schapira OR Kuby

February – Open to Councilmembers Arredondo-Savage, Schapira OR Kuby

March – Open to Councilmembers Arredondo-Savage, Schapira OR Kuby

April – Open to Councilmembers Arredondo-Savage, Schapira OR Kuby

May – Open to Councilmembers Arredondo-Savage, Schapira OR Kuby

June – TBD

July – TBD

Staff needs Council's input in order to finalize a schedule. Even when finalized, staff will remain flexible in adjusting dates, etc.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE FOR BRIEF COUNCIL VIDEOS:

Prior to the retreat, some Councilmembers had expressed a desire to take part in Tempe 11 video productions.

Currently, Councilmembers are featured in Tempe 11 videos as it makes sense based on a particular Councilmember's area of focus. For example, if we produce a future video package on efforts to improve arterial walls, we would likely interview Councilmember Navarro, since that has long been his area of interest and work. Those types of Council interviews within video packages will continue, provided they serve the topics.

Beyond those videos, the communication division proposed featuring Councilmembers in short, highly visual segments on a variety of topics. These would not be 'shows.' They would be designed to be informative, fast-moving and entertaining vehicles to expose residents to the City Councilmembers who serve them. Examples would be: touring a City facility the public never sees; previewing an event; explaining a complex topic; meeting an interesting person; highlighting a positive neighborhood project, etc.

These short videos would be distributed via social media. They would also air on the Cox and Century Link channels. The exception to these promotions and airings would be during the 'restricted' period outlined above.

Below is a proposed filming schedule that could be adopted. Councilmembers are obviously not obligated to appear in any videos – this is simply a proposed schedule in case each person wanted to do so. This schedule takes into consideration the restricted periods for incumbents outlined above:

June 2015 – Councilmember Navarro (tour of Sun Devil Stadium construction)

July – Councilmember Granville

August – Mayor Mitchell

September – Vice Mayor Woods

October – Open to Councilmembers Arredondo-Savage, Schapira OR Kuby

November – Open to Councilmembers Arredondo-Savage, Schapira OR Kuby

December – Open to Councilmembers Arredondo-Savage, Schapira OR Kuby

January 2016 – Open to Councilmembers Arredondo-Savage, Schapira OR Kuby

February – Open to Councilmembers Arredondo-Savage, Schapira OR Kuby

March – Open to Councilmembers Arredondo-Savage, Schapira OR Kuby

April – Open to Councilmembers Arredondo-Savage, Schapira OR Kuby

May – Open to Councilmembers Arredondo-Savage, Schapira OR Kuby

June – TBD

July – TBD

Staff needs Council's input in order to finalize a schedule. Even when finalized, staff will remain flexible in adjusting dates, etc. Three of the months between November and May would not be occupied by any Councilmember.

It should be noted that Tempe 11 will continue to provide services to voters during election season by televising "Open Mic" opportunities before Council meetings and public candidate forums held in the City Council Chambers. Tempe 11's guidelines would continue to apply here unless modified.

CITY COUNCIL COMMUNITY NEWSLETTERS:

City Council newsletters – electronic or otherwise – that may be produced, disseminated and promoted with staff assistance also would be put on hold for incumbent Councilmembers running for re-election, during the 'restricted' period described above.