

## Summary of Commissioners Meeting with City Manager

**Meeting Date:** March 22, 2023

**Purpose:** As financial health of the City is a priority of the City Council and the public, the purpose of the meeting was to begin a dialogue with Finance Commissioners on opportunities for the commission and City Team to advance this important priority.

### Attendees:

- Finance Commissioners
  - Vice Chair Hamilton
  - Commissioner Cicerone
  - *Note: Unfortunately, the meeting was scheduled for a time Chair Grasso was unable to attend.*
- Sunny Han, Acting CFO
- Travis Hopkins, Assistant City Manager
- Al Zelinka, City Manager

### Thought Questions

1. How to most effectively keep finance commission informed about all aspects of city finances?
2. How to most effectively provide information requested by the finance commission?
3. How to most effectively and efficiently respond to the inquiries of the finance the commission?
4. How to most effectively use limited staff resources to advance the finance commission's responsibilities in the municipal code?
5. How to most effectively respect volunteer time of finance commissioners?
6. How can city staff most effectively build trust with the finance commission?
7. How can city staff and finance commission together build public trust in local government?

### Summary of Meeting

- A. In addition to those already occurring (e.g. budget, annual audit, financial health indicators, etc.), all present agreed that the Commission would appreciate from regularly scheduled presentations on important financial matters relevant to the City (e.g. CalPERS, HdL Tax Advisors, etc.).
- B. All present agreed the public would benefit from continuous improvement of the City's financial health indicators (i.e. metrics) by reviewing current methodology in light of the "Wang, Dennis, and Tu Solvency Test" and "Brown's 10-Point Test."
- C. All present agreed the public would benefit from identifying performance measures for communicating the efficiency and effectiveness of the services provided by the City of Huntington Beach. Through the City Council Strategic Planning process that will evolve over the next several months, performance measures will be included for this purpose and will look to recommendations provided by Commissioner Cicerone, among other resources for guidance and insights. On a related note, all agreed that an ultimate goal is to have dashboards will up to date data for understanding status of City operations and for decision making pertinent to the City.

- D. All present agreed that the City would benefit from more succinctly and clearly communicating the essence of otherwise complex financial information pertaining to the City. Further, all present discussed using charts, ratios, tables on comparable cities, etc., to develop over time at-a-glance and easily understandable information.
- E. All present discussed the importance of more effectively communicating to the public “wins” of the City, including financial related successes, to allow the HB community more insights into the progress of the City.
- F. All present discussed three topics of interest to some commissioners:
  - a. Previous contracts for City Managers and Police Chief entailing housing-related assistance. All present understood there is no adopted policy related to this contract provision and the past instances of this was limited in number (3 or 4 contracts have included housing related assistance) and no current City Executive has such contractual provisions.
  - b. Concerns related to “Middle income housing” programs such as Elan and Breakwater.
  - c. Concerns related to homelessness programs – in terms of costs and efficacy.
- G. All present agreed that future conversations between members of the City Team and Finance Commissioners would be beneficial. Staff will organize meetings with other commissioners following budget adoption.