

**PROPOSED  
CHANGES TO  
CITY COUNCIL  
MEETINGS**

# PROPOSED CHANGES

Two primary changes to the meeting schedule and location have been proposed to increase community engagement and access to council meetings:

1. Change City Council meeting times from 1:30 p.m. to 5 p.m.
2. Move the location of City Council meetings from Council Chambers at City Hall to other City of Beaumont properties.



**IMPACT OF LATER  
COUNCIL  
MEETINGS ON CITY  
STAFF**

# LOSS OF PRODUCTIVITY

- The schedule changes necessary to accommodate after-hours City Council Meetings would leave departments short-handed during normal business hours.
  - Those staff members that do not prepare for Council Meetings would be expected to cover the normal responsibilities of those that do prepare for Council Meetings, as well as their own normal responsibilities.
- In already short-handed departments, quality of service would fall as fewer staff members would be available to perform City of Beaumont operations and address the needs of the Citizens.

# MEETING LENGTH

- The length of City Council Meetings are unpredictable.
- In 2023, the average meeting length has been 2.5 hours, with the longest being 4.5 hours long.

# SECURITY

- Currently, daytime meetings allow for passive monitoring of all areas of City Hall, as staff is on-sight while citizens are attending the meeting. Moving meetings to after business hours would result in far fewer staff members in the building while requiring that some doors remain open for meeting attendance, which could lead to people entering City Hall unseen and gaining access to sensitive areas or materials.
  - After hour meeting would increase foot and vehicle traffic in and around City Hall.
  - Additional security is recommended for after-hour meetings.

# SCHEDULE CHANGES

- Schedule changes would have these various impacts on the different categories of City staff:
  - Dais Staff Members – Would be able to adjust their schedule at their discretion
  - Department Directors – Would be able to adjust their schedule at their discretion but would need to accommodate for their duty to either be in chambers or watching the meeting online should they be needed.
  - Salary Staff – Schedules may need to be adjusted to accommodate for the extended hours.
    - Increase in comp time.
  - Hourly Staff – Schedules may need to be adjusted to accommodate for extended hours.
    - Increase in overtime pay.
  - Hourly Part-Time Staff – Schedules would need to be adjusted to accommodate for extended hours. Given the limited number of hours these staff members work in a week, as well as their inability to receive overtime, the City would likely need to hire additional staff at this level to avoid manpower shortfalls as their weekly hours are reached earlier in the week as a result of the extra hours spent accommodating the later meetings.

# A/V SUPPORT

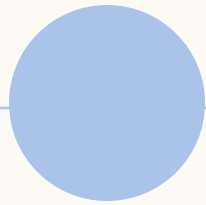
- Currently, the City of Beaumont has contracted with Lamar University for the provision of A/V support during Council meetings.
- Lamar University has made it known that they would adjust the schedules to satisfy the contract, but following the end of the contract
  - Possible increase in the contract price





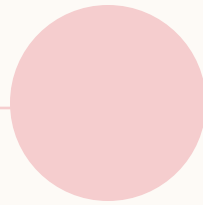
**PREDICTED  
IMPACTS ON CITY  
DEPARTMENTS**

# DEPARTMENT IMPACTS



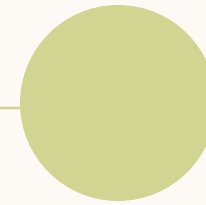
## CITY CLERK

- Two of the Three staff members in the City Clerk's office would need to be available for every meeting.
- The later meeting would also impact the timing of some necessary post-meeting functions.



## COMMUNICATIONS

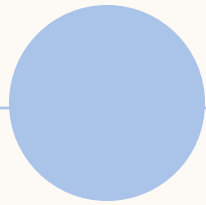
- Two staff members need to be available at every meeting, with a third also needed if Lamar is unavailable for recording.
- Due to short staffing the increased hours would have to be compensated with comp time.



## EXECUTIVE OFFICE

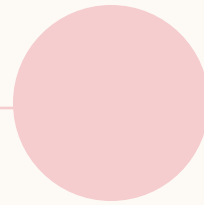
- Executive Office staff would need to stay at least through the start of the meeting to accommodate Council or Manager needs.
- All staff are salary and would require schedule changes or the accrual of comp time.

# DEPARTMENT IMPACTS CONTINUED



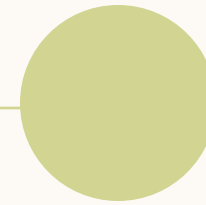
## LEGAL

- Two to Four staff members would be impacted by later meetings. Later meetings would also result in delays should any agenda times be changed affecting when the Mayor can sign items and when items go to the Clerk's office for filing.



## POLICE

- Three officers would be impacted. One officer would be needed for security and would be expected to guard a less secure building than currently.
- Two PCR officers are required at every meeting, and the new time may conflict with other engagements.



## EVENT FACILITIES

- Three staff members impacted, as they cannot begin cleaning until after the meeting is adjourned.
- These staff members are hourly part-time, and therefore are limited on weekly hours and prohibited from earning over time.

# IMPACTED DEPARTMENTS

## Information Technology:

- Six to seven staff members would be impacted in this department
  - four technology services
  - two to three telecommunications staff
- Currently, all four Technology services staff can monitor Council while performing their daily tasks.
  - Schedule changes would not be feasible with new start times due to understaffing.
  - If assigned as part of on-call duties, would necessitate additional on-call pay.
- Help Desk is currently 6 months behind on work orders and 9 months behind on computer installations
  - After-hours installations would be impacted by later meeting times as these employees would now have to be available to meetings as well.
- Two telecommunications staff required in control room for every meeting.
  - Both staff members are hourly employees and are the only staff trained to use the equipment. Later meeting times would result in increased overtime pay.



# **DRAWBACKS OF COUNCIL MEETINGS IN THE WARDS**

# EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

- Currently, Council Chambers is the only City facility fully outfitted with the necessary A/V capabilities to record and livestream meetings.
- While all Community Centers have internet, the increased load on the connections may cause connectivity issues.
  - Increasing internet in these locations would be difficult as they are in residential areas and must use the internet offerings currently available for those neighborhoods.
  - Some community centers do not have WiFi capability.
- Streaming to YouTube would be possible at all locations depending on the above issues with bandwidth.
  - Streaming to Swagit, which is the service used on the City of Beaumont website and considered the primary streaming source, would not be possible without expenditures for new equipment.
- Video from these locations would be of lower quality, and there would be no capabilities for multiple camera angles or real time effects packages
  - Like digital name tags for City officials.
- All audio equipment would need to be rented from an external company
  - Estimated cost of \$1,600 per meeting.

# STAFF AND FACILITIES

- Setup and break down of meeting facilities would be the responsibility of Part-Time Parks and Recreation Department Staff. As setup and breakdown would take 2-4 people an 8-hour day each, hourly part-time staff would need multiple days to do each.
  - This would prevent the rental of the hosting Community Center's facilities while setup and breakdown occurred.
- Community Centers have not been designed for recording audio or video
  - Streams and recordings would be of much lower quality.



# **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**



# BENEFITS OF TOWN HALL MEETINGS

- Flexibility
  - Lesser need for technology services would greatly increase the number of acceptable locations for these meetings.
  - More times and days would be available, including weekends, maximizing the number of citizens that can attend.
- Citizen Focus
  - An opportunity to hear and discuss issues specific to that ward
  - Potential for greater community involvement
- Less Resources
  - Reduced impact on staff and equipment

# PROPOSED CHANGES TO COUNCIL MEETING FORMAT

- Removing The Excesses
  - Proclamations and recognitions prior to the meeting
  - Work sessions and work shops held in a separate meeting
- The Great Comprise
  - Starting the meeting at 3p
- Speaker Registration
  - More time for advanced registration
  - No impact to individuals who register on the day of the meeting