



Mayoral Governance Structure

How should Monrovia select our Mayor?

PUBLIC OUTREACH MEETING



What do you mean by “Mayoral Governance Structure?”

- When we reference the Mayoral Governance Structure, we are referring to the process used in selecting the Mayor
- In general, a city has two options for selecting the Mayor
 1. Directly Elected
 2. Rotated Between All Elected City Council Members
- It is important to note – the City cannot unilaterally decide the type of mayoral governance structure that it will employ
 - The voters have to decide if we will have a directly elected Mayor or if the position of Mayor will be rotated between all members of the elected City Council

Why are we discussing this matter at this point in time?

- The issue of our Mayoral governance structure is being raised now because all five members of the City Council – including the current directly elected Mayor – believe that it would be in Monrovia's best interest to consider transitioning to a rotational system where the Mayor is selected annually from amongst all of the elected City Council members

How does Monrovia currently select its Mayor?

- Here in Monrovia, we currently elect the Mayor directly once every two years in every odd-numbered year
- In addition, it is important to note that we have not always selected the Mayor by direct election
 - Until 1976, we employed a rotational system where every member of the City Council was eligible to serve as the Mayor on an annual basis

Why did Monrovia change our process of selecting the Mayor?

- Historically, Monrovia had employed a rotational system where the Mayor was selected amongst all members of the elected City Council
- However, in the 1960's – 70's, Monrovia was struggling as a community and City leaders thought that having a directly elected Mayor might enhance our image when seeking Federal and State economic development grants
 - Given that thought, the City asked the voters in 1976 to transition to a system of governance where the Mayor would be elected directly once every two years

Did the transition to a directly elected Mayor help with obtaining grants?

- Unfortunately, after transitioning to a directly elected Mayor system of governance, the City did not gain any advantage in obtaining Federal and State economic development grants
 - Other governmental institutions and development interests were focused on financial commitments, and that the governance structure for the City had no bearing on decisions that were made
- It should also be noted that according to many elected and appointed officials connected with the City, the experiment of utilizing a directly elected Mayor has yielded little beneficial results
 - Those observers have reported that the change did not impact the authority of the Mayor, as all five members of the elected City Council have equal authorities in Monrovia
 - To that end, given that the Mayor directly elected, many feel that the individual serving as Mayor speaks and acts for everyone on the City Council, when in fact there is no difference in practical authority between the Mayor and individual City Council members

Wait... the Mayor doesn't have any additional authority / power?

- Correct!
- In terms of actual authority / power, the directly elected Mayor has no additional legal authority other than that which is granted to the other members of the City Council

Then why do we have a directly elected Mayor?

- Those that advocate for a directly elected Mayor form of governance have articulated the advantages of such a system to include the following items:
 - A directly elected Mayor could provide more responsiveness to the community because the individual serving in that role can better exert leadership / influence over the rest of the City Council, which could result in better representation of the will of the majority of the community
 - In metropolitan cities, such as Los Angeles and San Francisco, the presence of a directly elected Mayor has been shown to work
 - In those larger city settings, the directly elected Mayor serves as the chief executive officer of those communities and is responsible for the actual operations of the organization, including the hiring / firing of department managers
 - In larger cities where City Council members are elected by district – such as Pasadena – a directly elected Mayor who is selected from across all of the districts can better bring all of the individual City Council members together to unify the City

What are the advantages of having a rotating Mayor system of governance?

- As we have analyzed this issue with the Directly Elected Mayor Advisory Committee, some of the advantages of having a rotating Mayor system of governance include the following:
 - Given our current form of government in Monrovia (Council-Manager), where the City Council appoints a city manager to serve as the chief executive officer of the City, the public is best served when the authorities and power of the elected body are shared equally between all five members of the City Council
 - Given that the Mayor does not have executive authority, it is vitally important for the City Council to be able to work well together, as it takes a majority of the City Council in order to implement any policy direction

Other advantages of the rotating Mayoral governance system include...

- Some additional advantages of having a rotating Mayor system of governance have been identified as follows:
 - By selecting the Mayor through a rotating system, the importance of every City Council position is emphasized, as any of the elected representatives could be selected to serve as Mayor
 - This creates a situation where the public is better represented by their City Council
 - In addition, by rotating the position of Mayor, each member of the City Council is in effect “rehearsing” to serve as the Mayor, which can create a greater sense of mutual respect between members of the elected body
 - Having a directly elected Mayor where only a single candidate can win means that those running for office to serve Monrovia have to choose between running for Mayor or running for City Council
 - It also means in a closely contested Mayoral election, 2 popular candidates can nearly evenly split the vote, but only one winner is seated
 - If instead the position of Mayor were to be rotated, an additional City Council position would be up for vote and Monrovia voters would have their top vote receiving candidates elected to the City Council

How do other cities select their Mayor?

- Monrovia's way of directly electing the Mayor is an anomaly in the San Gabriel Valley
- A survey of every city in the San Gabriel Valley resulted in the following findings:
 - For those cities with a population of under 100,000 people, 78% of those communities (21 out of 27 cities) utilize a rotational system for selecting the Mayor
 - This means that there are only 6 cities (including Monrovia) that do not utilize the rotational system of governance for identifying the Mayor
- This is likely due to the fact that in smaller communities, where local issues are of paramount importance, it has been found that sharing the position of Mayor is conducive to developing a more cohesive City Council, which leads to better policy decisions being made

What is the City doing about the issue regarding our Mayoral system of governance?

- Given the current City Council's direction to assess the feasibility of transitioning our system of governance to have a rotational Mayor, the City created a Directly Elected Mayor Advisory Review Committee, which is made up of the following individuals:
 - Steve Baker, current Elected City Treasurer & City Historian
 - Don Hopper, former City Manager
 - Karen MacNair, current Arcadia Chamber Executive Director
 - Joanne Montgomery, current Elected Citrus College Board of Trustee Member
 - Brian Ulm, current City Community Services Commission Member

What is the Committee's role in the review process?

- Given the background of the Committee members, the group has been meeting to review the two options available to the City regarding our process of selecting the Mayor
- As part of the review process, the Committee members will be soliciting community feedback regarding the proposal to transition to a rotational system for selecting the Mayor
- Community feedback is being requested through a few different mechanisms, including:
 - Outreach meetings (June 14, 2016 @ 8 a.m. – Chamber // June 22, 2016 @ 7 p.m. – 123 W. Pomona Ave.)
 - Online information (www.cityofmonrovia.org)
 - Online survey (www.cityofmonrovia.org)
- The Committee will be presenting all of the findings collected during the outreach process to the full City Council in late July 2016

What are the next steps in the overall review process

- After the Committee presents their findings, the City Council will have to make the decision as to whether or not the item should be placed on the ballot for the community's consideration
 - **It is important to note that only the voters of Monrovia can decide if we should have a directly elected Mayor or utilize a system where the position of Mayor is rotated amongst all of the elected members of the City Council**
 - If the City Council does decide to proceed with the overall process, the issue will likely be placed on the April 2017 ballot for community to consider
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Questions?
