

East County Democratic Club

Established in 1965 representing the larger East County Area

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October 20, 2006

Kathie Rutledge, City Clerk
Kathi Henry, City Manager
Mayor Mark Lewis, City Council.
200 E. Main Street
El Cajon, CA 92020

Dear City Representatives:

On Oct. 18th, 2006, I submitted a letter to the City Clerks office requesting an agenda item be placed on the agenda. The request was submitted prior to the 3pm deadline, which I was told would allow the item to be placed on the formal agenda. Previously, I had asked the City Clerk to explain the process and she stated that at the Oct. 10th meeting, I could make a comment during the "Public Comment" period, which I did, and then if I submitted my request prior to this deadline, it would be included as a formal agenda item.

I complied with that procedure but was informed that the item was dropped to Public Comment at this meeting and would not appear on the agenda.

--> I object to this action and request that the item be returned to the formal agenda.

According to City Council Policy A-2,

Agenda Items. A number of petitions, remonstrances and other communications are received for inclusion on the Council agenda which need staff evaluation, comment or preparation of background information. In order to expedite the City Council's response, the following procedure shall be observed.

The Mayor will meet with the City Clerk on Thursday morning to go over communications received for the agenda. The Mayor shall determine which items shall be withheld from the agenda and referred to the Staff before being placed on the agenda.

Items which are referred to the Staff shall be listed on the agenda under "General Information - Referred to Staff for Preparation". Such items shall be placed back on the agenda in at least three (3) weeks. If an item is not ready within that time, the item is to be placed on the agenda under "Consent Items" requesting an extension of time to receive a report from Staff.

Those items that the Staff is able to resolve without City Council action shall appear on a future agenda under General Information with a notation of the disposition of the item.

Any controversial items or items requiring Council discussion and action shall go on the regular agenda.

The City Clerk shall send a letter notifying correspondents that their letter has been received and referred to the Staff for study or a report and will appear on the agenda of a certain date (if known). If the agenda date is not initially known, a second letter shall be sent advising when the item will appear on the agenda.

The City Clerk shall maintain a file of the items referred to Staff, placing such items on the agenda as indicated by this policy.

As you can see, there is no option listed for ignoring a properly submitted agenda item request and dealing with it under public comment. The Mayor has the option of placing it on the agenda or submitting it for a Staff report.

I am particularly dismayed by the comments you made to me on the phone, Ms. Henry. Apparently, it is standard procedure to disregard many elements of City Council Policy when it serves the purposes of the City Manager or the Mayor. Since you are in charge of the operation of the City, it is mind boggling for you to say that you no longer comply with many parts of this policy, and since it was approved in 1975, it many parts are out of date.

My mouth is still hanging open from these comments. The public relies on you to comply with City Policy, not approximately, but to the letter. Not sometimes, but always. And, if the policy is not meeting your needs, what is standing in the way of changing it? I doubt there is a citizen in the East County area that will state that the City of El Cajon should disregard some portions of the Policy and follow only the parts that suit your current political situation.

This agenda item is particularly important to occur at this meeting because this is the last meeting before the election. Therefore, time is of the essence, and again, I urge you to return this to the agenda.

Warm personal regards,

Raymond Lutz
President, East County Democratic Club
and Property owner in El Cajon.

cc: Liz Neely, Union Tribune