



AGENDA SUMMARY CITY COUNCIL

TITLE: Bill No. 1055 Administrative Hearing Procedures

DEPARTMENT: City Attorney

PREPARED BY: Robert N. Black, City Attorney

PRESENTED FOR

Action Information only Discussion

RECOMMENDATION

Introduce an Ordinance amending Title I, Chapter 10 of the Eureka Municipal Code, adding Sections 10.110 through 10.118 to establish uniform administrative hearing procedures, and set the Ordinance for adoption at the next regular City Council meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT

No Fiscal Impact Included in Budget Additional Appropriation

COUNCIL GOALS/STRATEGIC VISION

Improve participation and efficiency of our public meeting processes by increasing outreach to the community and defining the roles and responsibilities of elected officials, appointed board/commission/committee members, and staff.

DISCUSSION

Currently, administrative hearing procedures are dispersed throughout the Municipal Code and vary by program area, resulting in inconsistency and uncertainty for City staff, hearing officers, and members of the public. Research shows at least 32 instances of administrative hearing procedures identified in the Municipal Code, each slightly different.

The proposed Ordinance establishes uniform administrative hearing procedures applicable across selected City departments by adding new Sections 10.110 through 10.118 to Title I, Chapter 10 of the Municipal Code. The hearing procedures will be transitioned on a case-by-case basis through individual amendments to the Municipal Code.

This Ordinance creates a standardized procedural framework designed to ensure due process, transparency, and legally sufficient decision-making, while expressly preserving specialized hearing procedures set forth in specific chapters of the Municipal Code; for example, dangerous and potentially dangerous dog hearings under Title IX, Chapter 91.

The Ordinance authorizes the City Attorney to appoint impartial Hearing Officers, establishes minimum notice requirements, defines the conduct of administrative hearings, defines the standard of evidence applied, requires written decisions supported by findings, and clarifies the finality of decisions and exhaustion of administrative remedies. Adoption of the Ordinance will improve consistency in administrative proceedings, reduce procedural uncertainty, and strengthen the City's overall administrative enforcement framework.