



Staff Report

File #: 20-274
Version: 1

Date: 7/13/2020
Item #: 3.3c.

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Legislative Committee

SUBJECT:

Policy statements for the interim and 2021 Oregon Legislative Session.

Ward(s): All Wards

Councilor(s): All Councilors

Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

ISSUE:

Shall the City Council approve the attached legislative policy statements as policy direction for the interim and 2021 Oregon Legislative Session?

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the attached legislative policy statements as policy direction for the interim and 2021 Oregon Legislative Session

SUMMARY:

The Oregon State Legislature convenes in February 2021 for its regular session. Adoption of the attached policy statements provides the overarching framework for City officials and contracted lobbyists to officially represent the City on bills during the 2021 session in the absence of specific recommendations on bills.

On July 2, 2020, the City Council Legislative Committee met to consider Legislative priorities to guide interim and 2021 legislative activities (Attachment 1). The Legislative Committee is comprised of Mayor Bennett and Councilors Andersen, Hoy, and Nanke, with Councilor Kaser serving as alternate.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

For the 2021 Session, the Legislative Committee approved specific policy priorities:

- Funding capital projects to protect Salem’s drinking water
- Funding for local government to reduce hardships that lead to homelessness and chronic homelessness such as support for:
 - A navigation center, and
 - Additional funding support for mental health.
- COVID-19 Recovery Resources:
 - Support the equitable distribution of recovery resources to ensure recovery of our community, its residents, and its businesses.
 - Oppose re-allocation of State funding, including state-shared revenues, that may further jeopardize existing municipal programs and services, hindering our recovery.

In addition to the specific 2021 policy priorities, the City’s legislative policy statements address broad topics of economic development, financing and revenue, human resources, telecommunications, public safety and land use (Attachment 1). In preparation for this session, positions have been added to the policy statements to support infrastructure investment, COVID-19 recovery, and local planning priorities.

Staff will bring updates to the Council throughout the 2021 Legislative Session and provide a summary report at the Session's end. As positions are developed for individual bills, staff will use a system of prioritization to identify the City’s opposition (“O”) or support (“S”) for a bill. For a high priority bill with a fiscal or policy impact, classifying the bill with a “1” will allow for the Mayor, councilors, and staff to work to support or oppose the bill. For medium priorities, a “2”, staff will watch for changes and may become involved if time and resources permit. For a bill of little to no priority to Salem, a “3” will not warrant staff effort. Given limited resources, these bills will be set aside and not referred to the Committee or Council unless amendments change their anticipated impact.

To make the best use of Council and staff resources and allow the City to respond more expeditiously to moving legislation, the Council approves policy statements which are intended to guide public officials and the City's contracted lobbyist in responding to and formulating positions on issues expected to come before the Oregon Legislature.

To continue a coordinated and unified response during the upcoming session, the Mayor and Councilor are asked to share legislative contacts with staff via an email to the Courtney Knox Busch (cbusch@cityofsalem.net <mailto:cbusch@cityofsalem.net>). The email should identify the date of the legislative contact, the delegate(s) with whom contact was made, bill(s) discussed, and a summary of the position(s) and comments shared. Staff will forward the communication to the City’s contracted legislative consultant, the Legislative Committee, and City Council as appropriate.

Courtney Knox Busch
Strategic Initiatives Manager

Attachments:

1. 2021 Legislative Policy Statements