



City of La Quinta

CITY / SA/ HA/ FA MEETING DATE: December 16, 2014
ITEM TITLE: CONSIDERATION OF CLOSING CITY HALL
ON DECEMBER 26, 2014 AND JANUARY 2, 2015

AGENDA CATEGORY:

BUSINESS SESSION: 2

CONSENT CALENDAR:

STUDY SESSION:

PUBLIC HEARING:

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Direct the City Manager to close City Hall on December 26, 2014 and January 2, 2015.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- This year, Christmas and New Year's fall on a Thursday. Per the City's Personnel Policy, employees have the Wednesday before both holidays off, returning to work on Friday.
- Customer service demand during the holiday season and, in particular, years wherein Christmas/New Year's fall on Thursday, has historically been negligible.
- As Fridays are typically half-staffed due to the 9/80 Alternate Work Week Schedule, and many employees have requested a vacation day for these two days, there would be minimal service and minimal financial impact if City Hall closed on December 26, 2014 and January 2, 2015.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Closing City Hall these two days would not result in the City incurring additional costs as the costs are already included in the Fiscal Year 2014/15 Operating Budget. Although difficult to quantify, there is the non-financial cost in terms of lost productivity. However, based on already planning for a skeleton crew on those Fridays, this cost would be minor. There would be some, but minimal, utility and internet/telecommunications cost savings.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

Christmas and New Year's fall on Thursdays this year. Per City policies, employees have holiday leave on Christmas/New Year's Eve (Wednesday) and Christmas/New Year's Day (Thursday). As is standard practice, essential maintenance and management staffs are "on-call" to respond to emergency events on these holidays.

The Executive Team has evaluated customer traffic at City Hall during the holiday season as well as when Christmas/New Year's fell on Thursday. This review indicated that there were minimal customer visits to City Hall. Based on this evaluation, vacation requests for the two Fridays were granted, which leaves a minimal crew for December 26, 2014 and January 2, 2015.

Given this data, the City Manager questioned the effectiveness of opening City Hall on those two Fridays. While having a skeleton crew maintain operations these days would result in work being completed, productivity may not be at its highest level. Further, when calculating the cost impact, staff finds that there would be no direct costs as employee direct and indirect costs are already accounted for in the City Operating Budget. There would be minimal cost savings resulting from reduced electric, gas and telecommunications use.

Review of City Hall holiday hours for Coachella Valley cities indicates that the Cities of Rancho Mirage and Indio will be open on December 26; all other Valley cities will be closed. On January 2, 2015, the Cities of Indio, Indian Wells Palm Desert and Rancho Mirage will be open, and all other cities will be closed.

These holidays will not fall on Thursday again for another seven years. Given this unique circumstance, it is not recommended that this be a reoccurring practice.

ALTERNATIVES:

City Hall could be open on both December 26, 2014 and January 2, 2015, or open only one of these two days.

Report prepared by: Frank J. Spevacek, City Manager

Report approved for submission by: Frank J. Spevacek, City Manager