

Dear Council Colleagues,

Since I first was elected to Town Council in 2015, I have been advocating for increased transparency and principles of good governance, as relates to meeting minutes and broadcasting our work sessions and Council Economic Sustainability Committee meetings.

Meeting minutes, ideally, would be used to remind ourselves of what was discussed in relation to a given topic, so we are able to all be informed and on the same page as we revisit the topic or as it moves along through our process. Currently, minutes can take months or even over a year to be certified and shared back with Council for final approval, making them more of a historical artifact than useful information that helps us consider and debate important local policy issues.

On a similar note, many important conversations take place in not only our work sessions, but also in our Council Economic Sustainability Committee meetings. No votes are taken, but crucial background information and Council interests are shared, making these meetings critical to understanding the trajectory of many of our decisions. If members of the public or even Council members are unable to attend any of these meetings, they miss critical conversations and pieces of information, rendering them at a disadvantage in following or advocating on a given issue.

Therefore, I petition the Town Manager to work with staff over the summer to come up with recommendations as to how we can accomplish the following:

1. Turn around meeting minutes so they can be included in meeting materials for the next time a given issue will be discussed or voted upon. This may mean that minutes that are currently in the queue will have to follow the old schedule, but all new minutes will be turned around in an expeditious manner that allows elected officials, staff and members of the public alike to read meeting minutes in advance of the next meeting or time an issue will be revisited.
2. Broadcast and archive video of work sessions and Council Economic Sustainability Committee meetings so that anyone not able to be in attendance can view from home or after the meeting has taken place.
3. Ensure that all upcoming boards and commissions calendar events include the agenda on the calendar page, so residents can easily determine the content of the meeting.
4. Ensure that summaries/action minutes are provided for all boards and commissions so that Council members, staff and the public can keep track of what is happening across the organization.

Thank you in advance for your time and attention to these important and fundamental issues of good governance and transparency.

Jessica Anderson, Mayor Pro Tempore