Late Backup

Overview of Municipal Practices

Tuesday, March 22, 2011

City Council Work Session

<u>Training</u>
Peer Cities

- Given to newly elected officials

- Advises of the need to watch the AG video

- Is not generally required for staff

  - One city provides training for staff or members on request.

  - One city provides quarterly training at which any city employee may attend.

- There is not a consistent policy among cities for training appointed board members, although at least one advises members of non-advisory boards to take the AG training.

<u>Records Retention</u>
Peer Cities

- Individuals contacted had less awareness of records retention policies than of other issues such as open meetings, open records, etc.

- Among the persons we spoke with, it appeared that Houston had the most developed records retention policies.

  - It has a Records Management Division that is responsible for providing training and advice on records management to Council offices.

  - The City Council Administrative Division acts as records liaison between the Council offices and the Records Management Office.

  - Houston and at least one other city are working on a system to automatically retain and archive emails, but implementation has been delayed due to budgetary issues.

  - Policies do not expressly address text messages and instant messages.

Meetings Between Manager and Council members
Peer Cities

- The manager and other city staff typically meets with individual Council members.

- Council members' staff meet with other Council members' staff.

- While respondents indicate that they were aware of the walking quorum issue and advise their clients to avoid problems, there did not appear to be formal procedures to address the issue.

Potential Practices to Consider

- Consider regularly scheduled open government training for council members and staff.
  - Personally presented
  - Updates
  - Refreshers
  - Can be AG-approved
- Include records retention in training.
- Include open government and records retention training in new employee orientation as appropriate.
- Consider automatic retention of emails.
- Continue public work sessions.