

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the National Civic League, formerly the National Municipal League, developed a “Model City Charter” that, beginning in 1915, called for the Council-Manager form of government; and

WHEREAS, the voters of Austin narrowly adopted a Council-Manager form of government in 1924 through a charter amendment vote and that is the general form of government that remains today; and

WHEREAS, many other cities have adopted the Council-Manager form of government and evolved how the Council functions and meetings are managed as they grow in size or as changes in technology permit; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin has seven subcommittees of Council, but city operations are not uniformly covered by council committees; and

WHEREAS, Austin Energy constitutes 36% of the City’s budget but did not have a dedicated council committee until 2013, public safety represents 70% of the General fund budget and has no dedicated council committee, and other City departments such as Austin Water Utility, Parks and Recreation, and the Library, do not have dedicated council committees; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the 2012 Charter amendment election, a new 11-member Council is to be elected in November general elections starting in 2014; and

WHEREAS, a new Council with additional members would benefit from knowing how the city councils in Austin’s peer cities operate effectively using a committee structure; and considering other potential changes to meeting management to work effectively with an 11-member body; and

WHEREAS, national best practices may also suggest small changes to current committees such as including a citizen auditor or accountant on the Audit & Finance Committee; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Auditor is directed to study how Austin's peer cities with Council-Manager governments structure their council committees, including how those committees provide council oversight for city departments, and to study practices in Council meeting management, and to provide a report for public consideration by December 05, 2014, and to work with the City Manager to post a public hearing for December 11, 2014 to hear from both the public and current City Council members on those results. The December 11 posting should not be for council action.

ADOPTED: _____

ATTEST: _____

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk