

MOTION

In the past decade the use of electronic communications via email and social media have become more common as a means to invite the public to events and to inform them of current issues before the City Council. State law does not include these electronic communications, newsletters, or mass emails in “blackout period” restrictions.

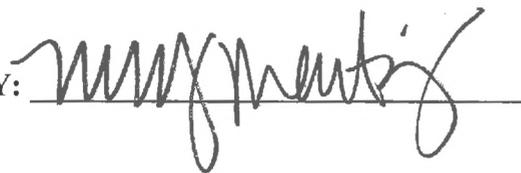
The ability to communicate with the public and provide information about city services and city sponsored events is a paramount value in the day to day work of elected officials. The responsibility and duty to inform the public does not stop during an election cycle.

Current law prohibits the expense of public funds for mass mailing during an election period. This “blackout period” is intended to prevent the use of public funds for materials that could be construed as part of a campaign or supporting the re-election of an incumbent, and is reflected in both state and city law. It is necessary to clarify the current city law in order to allow for the public to be informed in a timely manner in regard to city events, public safety emergencies, and other related duties and responsibilities.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Council REQUEST the City Attorney’s office to draft an ordinance to clarify city rules to align with state law on electronic communications and interpret this section of the code accordingly, such as:

LAMC 49.61. Definition. For the purpose of this Article 11 the term "newsletter or mass mailing" shall mean more than 200 substantially similar tangible items but does not include a form letter or other mail which is sent in response to a letter or inquiry or an official mailing required by law.

PRESENTED BY: 
 HERB J. WESSON, JR.
 Councilmember, 10th District

SECONDED BY: 


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