



MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor & Council
From: K. Aaron Shirley, City Recorder & Finance Director
Date: April 6, 2021
Subject: Changes to City Code in Regards to Public Notices

Mayor & Council,

Background

On March 3rd, 2021 the most recent state legislature session ended and among all of the bills passed was Senate Bill 201 which removes the requirement for the use of newspapers in the public noticing process. In place of the use of newspapers is a requirement for the use of the Utah Public Notice Website. This change will be effective May 4th, 2021.

Research & Findings

As the readership of print newspapers and publication of daily newspapers has declined, the requirement of public noticing 'once a week for x number of weeks', found in numerous spots throughout state public noticing requirements, no longer works in promoting transparency. As newspapers and their readership move increasingly online, it makes sense from a transparency perspective to use the Utah Public Notice Website, Santaquin City website, and social media pages for public noticing. Additionally, from a financial perspective, these resources are free for both city and citizen use instead of paying newspaper publication fees which has been about \$3,000 year to date with the city only roughly 75% through the fiscal year. With all of the city growth, this number of newspaper publication fees has only been trending upwards.

To make Santaquin City code match this update to State Code, the following sections of code require a revision as they specifically require the use of a newspaper in the public noticing process:

- 1.20.050 (D) Notice of Ordinances to be considered by City Council
- 1.40.030 (B) Bids (Notification of Intent to Purchase in an amount over \$15,000)
- 2.04.040(B) Notice of Vacancy in Planning Commission
- 5.08.120(B) Notice of Sale of Stray Animals by Animal Control Officer
- 10.16.030(C) Notice of Public Hearing for Land Use Ordinance
- 10.68.110(E)(8)(b) Notice of Public Hearing for Land Use Applications

Recommendation

I recommend that the City amend the listed portions of city code to match state code to repeal all requirements for the use of a newspaper for public noticing and to refer to state code for public noticing requirements on the Utah Public Notice Website as well as both the city website and social media sites if desired. If the Council agrees with this recommendation, then these changes would be reflected in a proposed Ordinance at an upcoming City Council Meeting.