



NEWS RELEASE

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CITY OF RANCHO CUCAMONGA TO EVALUATE LEGAL OPTIONS FOR ELECTORAL DISTRICTS AFTER THREAT OF LITIGATION

Rancho Cucamonga, CA - Officials announced following Closed Session at the City Council meeting this evening the receipt of a letter on December 23, 2015, from the law offices of Shenkman and Hughes. The letter cites the authors belief that the city is in violation of the California Voter Rights Act (CVRA), urging the City to voluntarily change its at-large system of electing council members or the firm will “be forced to seek judicial relief.” The law firm’s assertion is that the city’s existing election process dilutes the voting power of Latino residents.

The Malibu based law firm has sent similar demand letters to cities and governing boards across the state over the last several years, and has taken several agencies to court regarding this claim. To date, no city in California has prevailed in a CVRA lawsuit, despite millions of dollars in legal fees paid by these cities.

Upon receipt of the letter, the City of Rancho Cucamonga took this item under advisement with legal counsel. At the February 17th meeting, City Attorney James Markman provided an overview of the potential litigation and reported that the City Council directed staff to move forward with putting the matter in front of the public for discussion. It is anticipated that this item will be placed on the March 16, 2016 City Council meeting for further review and discussion.

The City has always elected City Council Members at large, rather than using a system where Councilmembers are elected to represent geographic districts.

Information, including a copy of the Letter received, will be provided on the City’s website at www.CityofRC.us. Questions regarding this subject should be referred to James Markman, City Attorney at CouncilDistrictsInfo@CityofRC.us.

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