

# REQUEST FOR CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION ACTION

MEETING DATE(S): 09/01/2009

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**SUBMITTED TO:** HB Charter Review Commission

**SUBMITTED BY:** Mark D. Bixby, Charter Review Commissioner *MDB*

**SUBJECT:** Amend charter section 303 (Meetings and Locations) or add new section to address Internet publishing of meeting minutes.

**Statement of Issue:** Improve transparency by publishing all meeting minutes on the Internet.

**Recommended Action: Motion to:**

Amend Huntington Beach charter section 303 (Meetings and Locations) or add new section as follows:

Minutes shall be taken for all non-closed session meetings subject to the Ralph M. Brown act and shall be published via the City's official Internet presence.

**Analysis:**

Current city Internet publication of minutes is fairly good. This amendment aims to ensure that the practice continues. Note that this amendment applies to all legislative bodies subject to the Brown Act, not just the city council.

This amendment is part of a group of amendments that require Internet publication of any content that requires public or news media notification. I wish it were otherwise, but print newspapers are dying, and radio and TV news media rarely cover Huntington Beach city hall news. Thus the broader goal here is to get the city started down the road of using the Internet as a primary means of public notification so the city will be ready when print newspapers finally die.

I prefer the phrase "City's official Internet presence" instead of "City's official Internet web site" for the following reasons:

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- “Web site” is specific Internet nomenclature and communications protocols which may or may not exist in the future. It’s much more flexible to say “Internet presence” instead which allows for future use of Internet functionality that hasn’t even been dreamed up yet and does not restrict publishing to a single technology (web sites).
- “Official Internet presence” also allows for distributed, outsourced publication that the city might wish to contract for (i.e. NetFile, Granicus, numerous code publication companies, etc) whereas “official Internet web site” could be interpreted to just mean content directly hosted by the web server [www.surfcity-hb.org](http://www.surfcity-hb.org). Even though NetFile, Granicus, and the like are not the official city web site, they are however an extension of the city’s official Internet presence.