

Council Vice President Fielkow to Bring Open Meetings Law Legislation To February 5th Council Meeting

Attorney General Issues Second Opinion

Affirming Council's Right to Enforce Greater Government Transparency

News Release

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New Orleans
City Council

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New Orleans, LA - January 15, 2009 - Today, New Orleans City Council Vice President Arnie Fielkow announced his intent to move forward on legislation further opening up the City of New Orleans professional service contracting process to the public. Council Vice President Fielkow plans to bring the legislation to the Council Meeting on February 5, 2009.

"I am very heartened by the opinion issued by Attorney General Buddy Caldwell which, for the second time, affirms the Council's rights to legislate in this area and further supports the intent of the legislation to make the City's professional service contracting process subject to the Louisiana Open Meetings Law. This legislation, if approved by Council, will go a long way in ensuring the openness and transparency of how we do business for the benefit of our citizens," said Fielkow.

The legislation filed by Vice President Fielkow involves both an Ordinance directed towards the Executive Branch of city government and a Motion directed towards the Legislative Branch of city government. Both pieces of legislation aim to increase transparency in city contracting processes.

The Ordinance Cal. 27,069 reinforces that every professional service contract procurement process done by the City is subject to the state's Open Meetings Law.

(Click [here](#) to read the Ordinance)

The Motion further refines the City Council's professional service contracting process by ensuring its compliance with the state's Open Meetings Law. (Click [here](#) to view the Motion)

the Motion)

The legislation, originally introduced in August, has been held up pending review by the state Attorney General's office. The Attorney General recently issued an affirmation of his original October 15, 2008 opinion on the matter, which maintains the City Council's right to pass Vice President Fielkow's legislation.

To view the Attorney General's October 15, 2008 letter of opinion, click [here](#).

To view the Attorney General's January 9, 2009 letter of opinion, click [here](#).

New Orleans City Council

The New Orleans City Council is the legislative branch of New Orleans city government. The Council considers and enacts all local laws that govern the City of New Orleans. The Council also approves the operating and capital budgets for the City, as recommended by the mayor, and continually monitors revenues and expenditures for local government operations. The City Council is also the regulatory body for public utilities. It also reviews and has final say on many land use and zoning matters, as well as considers major economic development projects for the City. As a Board of Review for Orleans Parish, the Council examines appeals of property tax assessments for real estate taxes, and certifies tax rolls to the Louisiana Tax Commission. Other responsibilities of the Council include overseeing the operation of the public access television in Orleans Parish.

The City Council is comprised of five districts and two councilmembers-at-large. Council President and Councilmember-at-Large Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson; Council Vice-President and Councilmember-at-Large Arnie Fielkow; District "A" Councilmember Shelley Midura; District "B" Councilmember Stacy S. Head; District "C" Councilmember James Carter; District "D" Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell; and District "E" Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis.