

City Council Begins Posting Emails on Council Website

News Release

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New Orleans, LA - May 22, 2009 - The New Orleans City Council has begun the process to make available to the public its emails produced over the last three years, in response to recent Public Records Requests made to the Council.

Over the next several weeks, the City Council, its staff and a staff assembled by the Council's Special Counsel will continue the task of reviewing more than two-million pages that total over 400,000 emails.

According to Special Counsel Steve Lane, over this holiday weekend a team of lawyers, paralegals, technology and communications professionals, Councilmembers and staff will work hundreds of hours reviewing the emails to ensure that postings are made as quickly as possible.

Lane said, "It is an overwhelming task that is costing thousands of dollars. Nonetheless, the Council is making its best effort to comply with Public Records Requests to produce over 400,000 emails. Besides the costs to taxpayers, the process is labor intensive and is directly impacting the Council's and its staff's ability to perform day-to-day duties attending to the needs of the City."

Lane also went on to say, "The page-by-page review is necessary to ensure that private information of constituents and privileged information under the Public Records Act is protected. The review process also guarantees that communications that citizens have the right to view are appropriately made accessible. It has become apparent that the vast majority of documents reviewed up until now are communications from constituents and emails reflecting day-to-day business performed by the Council on behalf of the citizens of New Orleans."

All Councilmember emails are currently in the review process. Email postings will be made on a rolling basis and will be updated periodically on the City Council's website www.neworleanscitycouncil.com.

To instantly view available Council email postings, please click [here](#).

Media calls are being referred to Steven J. Lane, Attorney and Managing Partner, Herman, Herman, Katz & Cotlar, (504) 680-0527, slane@hhkc.com.

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.