

# Irvine debates rules on lobbying and ethics

### What the ordinance does

One provision of a proposed ordinance could be trouble for Councilwoman Christina Shea, who is a lobbyist.

BY SONYA SMITH AND JEFF ROWE  
THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

- Bars City Council members from engaging in compensated lobbying.
- Prohibits city officials from monetary interest in city contracts.
- Allows city manager to initiate audits of city contracts.
- Bars the city attorney and the county district attorney from prosecuting any violations.

**IRVINE** • The City Council late Tuesday was debating an ethics ordinance for council members that prescribes guidelines on auditing of city contracts, regulates false statements and bars lobbyists from serving on the council.

A decision hadn't been made as of 10 p.m.

In contrast to the previous raucous debate on the "Rules for Ethical and Open Governance," this one was calm and deliberate.

"I hope that tonight we can

redirect ourselves to the merits of this proposed ordinance," Mayor Beth Krom said.

That took some time. The council began discussing the ordinance at 7 p.m. and proceeded almost line by line through the document. By 9:30 p.m., the council had reviewed most of the provisions but was debating the most

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**MORE ONLINE**  
To learn what the Irvine City Council decided, go to [www.ocregister.com](http://www.ocregister.com).

### RIVALS AGRAN AND SHEA



"Let's be clear about the overall intention of the ordinance."

LARRY AGRAN  
IRVINE COUNCILMAN



"I have the right to make statements at this dais without being controlled by two people who mischaracterized what I'm saying."

CHRISTINA SHEA  
IRVINE COUNCILWOMAN

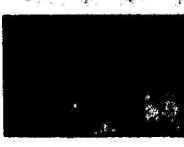
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# ETHICS: Revisions made to ordinance

Councilman Steven Choi has shared many of Shea's concerns over the ordinance and said he, too, believes it was targeted against her. Mayor Pro Tem Sukhee Kang stayed out of most of the arguing but said that he agrees with the ordinance and with the point that council members should not work or act as lobbyists. In December, Kang said he supported the ordinance but wanted implementation and enforcement of the lobbying section delayed until Jan. 1, 2007 - after the next council election.

That change was one of the few revisions made to the ordinance. Several wording changes were made after the council received a letter from James Grossberg, a lawyer representing The Orange County Register and the Irvine World News, which is a part of Freedom Orange County Information. The Register had argued that certain passages, as originally written, interfered with constitutional free speech protections.

Also, lobbying was defined more clearly to limit it to coming before a local agency or involving a client, though she doesn't expect that to happen because she has avoided working for clients wanting to do business with the city. Still, she said, the ordinance would tarnish her unfairly in the upcoming election.

Shea says she will refuse herself from any council vote involving a client, though she doesn't expect that to happen because she has avoided working for clients wanting to do business with the city. Still, she said, the ordinance would tarnish her unfairly in the upcoming election.

To Shea, the ordinance is little more than a vehicle to run her out of office; for Agron, it is protection against what he says have been unsubstantiated charges against him over the years of cronysism, back-room maneuvering and advancing his own interests.

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