

**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

117 WEST DUVAL STREET, SUITE 425

4TH FLOOR, CITY HALL

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA 32202

904-630-1377

**City Council Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes - amended**

**June 10, 2016**

**11:45 a.m.**

**Topic:** Legislative Services Division staffing; FY16/17 City Council budget

**Location:** Conference Room A, City Hall – St. James Building; 117 West Duval Street,

Suite 425

**In attendance:** Council Members Greg Anderson (Chair), Bill Gulliford, Lori Boyer, Matt Schellenberg

**Excused:** Council Member Reggie Brown

Also: Council Member Anna Lopez Brosche; Cheryl L. Brown – Director/Council Secretary; Kirk Sherman, Kyle Billy and Kim Taylor – Council Auditor’s Office; Peggy Sidman and Paige Johnston – Office of General Counsel; Jeff Clements – Council Research Division; Carol Owens and Philip Zamarron – Legislative Services Division; Angela Moyer – Budget Office; Kristi Sikes, Laura Dyer and Rachel Merritt – Council Administration Division

**Meeting Convened**: 11:50 a.m.

Chairman Anderson called the meeting to order and the attendees introduced themselves for the record. Due to the excused absence of Council Member Reggie Brown, Council President Anderson appointed Council Member Lopez Brosche as a member of the Personnel Committee for today’s meeting.

Council Director/Secretary Cheryl Brown announced that Dana Farris, Chief of the Legislative Services Division, would be retiring as of June 20th and recommended that Assistant Chief Carol Owens be appointed as her permanent replacement. In response to a suggestion by Chairman Anderson that an interim appointment should be made while a search for a full-time replacement is conducted, Ms. Brown said that the qualifications and experience requirements of the Chief of Legislative Services position are such that it is likely that only an internal candidate would be qualified to perform the job without extensive training, and that the current Assistant Chief is the logical candidate for the permanent job. Committee members debated the merits of an interim appointment and full-blown search versus an immediate appointment of an internal candidate from within the office. Ms. Brown noted that the budget proposal to be discussed later in the meeting includes reclassifying the Assistant Chief of Legislative Services position to a Legislative Supervisor position. Laura Dyer stated the Assistant Chief position should not be de-authorized and converted before the hiring of the new permanent Chief in the event that Ms. Owens should not be selected as the replacement chief; she would need to be able to revert to the Assistant Chief position.

**Motion** (Boyer): the Personnel Committee appoints Carol Owns as Interim Chief of Legislative Services for a period not to exceed 120 days and authorizes advertisement of the position, with Director Cheryl Brown to review the resulting applications and provide them and her recommended finalists to the Personnel Committee for selection of a permanent replacement – **approved 5-0**.

Ms. Brown also announced that Carmen Poindexter, an Administrative Assistant I in the Administration Division, has submitted her resignation earlier in the morning. That position will be advertised both internally and externally.

Council President-Elect Boyer discussed several of her initiatives for the upcoming Council year. She wants annual performance reviews performed for all Council staff by August 15th in prior to the start of the budget hearing process. She also wants to have more in-depth policy research performed on legislation and on non-legislative policy issues, which may justify the hiring of a third Research Assistant in the Research Division, and/or creation of another type of research/support position that would provide higher-level staff assistance to the standing committees and to initiatives like the Lunch and Learn series that she plans to institute. She noted that the Personnel Committee can recommend, but does not have the power to compel, council members to perform performance evaluations on their Executive Council Assistants.

FY16-17 budget

Ms. Brown reported that the Mayor’s Budget Review Committee had scheduled but then deferred discussion of the City Council budget because the Council Auditor’s portion of the budget is not complete, pending today’s review by the Personnel Committee. She said that the proposed conversion of the Assistant Chief of Legislative Services position to a Legislative Assistant II would have no budgetary impact. Ms. Boyer said that the Council budget for printing and postage had been increased over the current year in order to provide $2,500 per district council member and $1,500 per at-large council member for printing and mailing town hall meeting notices and other citizen information pieces. One of the Legislative Assistant positions in Legislative Services could be converted to a Research Assistant position if the Personnel Committee makes that determination.

Council Auditor Kirk Sherman reported that his office’s budget is increasing slightly, primarily due to salary and benefit increases related to increased pension costs and promotion and merit increases for some employees. In response to a question he stated that the maximum merit increases proposed were 7% for three employees. Ms. Boyer expressed some concern over the cumulative effect of salary increases for some employees (up to 20% over the course of the last several years), which Mr. Sherman attributed in most cases to promotions, increased job responsibilities and increases for earning CPA certifications. Market forces are also making it imperative to raise salaries to keep good, experience personnel.

**Motion** (Schellenberg): the Personnel Committee approves the Auditor’s Office budget as presented – **approved 5-0**.

Other

Council President-Elect Boyer discussed several other initiatives that she intends to undertake during her presidency. 1) She anticipates splitting the RCDPHS Committee back into two committees (for a total of six), and will poll the council members about whether they would prefer the sixth committee meeting to be on Monday evening or on Wednesday morning. 2) She will recommend that all special, select and ad hoc committee meetings be held on Wednesday, leaving staff (Legislative Services, General Counsel, Research, Council Auditor) to work uninterrupted on Thursdays and Fridays in preparation for the next week’s meetings. 3) She will recommend that the council and committees be future-oriented rather than focusing on the week to week flow of legislation to the exclusion of all else. She wants the committees to research and develop action agendas for community improvement ideas separate from the flow of day-to-day legislative actions. 4) She intends to reduce the number of special committees and to have the regular standing committees take on issues in their regular meetings, with the assistance of increased research, policy papers, expert presentations, etc. 5) She intends to develop a series of occasional Lunch and Learn presentations led by staff, council members and outside experts to inform the council members and staff about important issues and developments and provide opportunities for in-depth discussion and question and answer sessions on topics of general interest.

**Meeting Adjourned**: 12:50 p.m.

Minutes: Jeff Clements, Council Research

6.15.16 Posted 4:00 p.m.

Tapes: Personnel Committee meeting– LSD

6.10.16

Materials: Auditor’s Office proposed budget; City Council proposed organizational chart

6.10.16