

**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

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**CITY COUNCIL LUNCH AND LEARN MEETING MINUTES - AMENDED**

 **August 22, 2016**

**12:00 p.m.**

**Location:** Lynwood Roberts Room, 1st floor, City Hall – St. James Building; 117 West Duval Street,

**In attendance:** Council Members Lori Boyer (President), John Crescimbeni, Danny Becton, Garrett Dennis, Al Ferraro, Reginald Gaffney, Bill Gulliford, Tommy Hazouri, Jim Love, Sam Newby, Scott Wilson

**Also**: Peggy Sidman – Office of General Counsel; Carol Owens– Legislative Services Division; Louie Marino – Council Staff Services; Jeff Clements – Council Research Division; Cheryl Brown – Council Director/Secretary

See attached attendance sheet for additional attendees

**Meeting Convened**: 12:22 p.m.

Council President Boyer convened the meeting and stated the day’s topic – Bill Review Tips – was a general discussion to share best practices in reviewing legislative bills. In her presentation, Council President Boyer pointed out that in searching a bill, the term “Current Text” includes all the language from the amendments and/or substitutions. In order to access links and exhibits attached to the bill, you must click on “Original Text”. It was suggested to pay close attention to exhibits and documents listed as “on File” to determine the substance of the bill. The exhibits/documents, on file, are located in Legislative Services. Council President Boyer explained that the “whereas” clauses were used to provide historical information and intent language. The term “finding” depicts the action necessary for the adoption of the bill. Additionally, it was encouraged for Council members to notice whether or not legislation was prepared by the Office of General Counsel or a lawyer from an outside entity.

Council President Boyer shared that the Legislative Fact Sheet has been revised to be more content specific, and expand the checklist of actions items with explanations. Moving forward, the listed contact person will be those individuals that are most knowledgeable about the legislation. All departments will begin to utilize the new form for the upcoming cycle. In the case where Council members are drafting legislation, the Office of General Counsel and Council Research will assist in completing the fact sheet.

Peggy Sidman suggested Council members send ~~her office~~ an email to City Council Legislative Services when requesting to be added as a co-sponsor. She stated that receiving the list of MBRC agenda items before the meeting would assist in preparing them for discussion. Additionally, she encouraged members to read the Council agenda to determine where funds are coming from, for a specific bill, to understand if additional fund may be available for other purposes.

Jeff Clements provided a historical perspective on bill summaries. The goal of the Council Research Division is to have the summaries published on the Thursday after Council meeting. The background section provides historical context and summary of the bill. The fiscal impact is difficult to ascertain, with the exception of appropriations, without direct input from the specific department.

Council Vice President John Crescimbeni commented that he viewed the “whereas” clauses as an opportunity to provide detail information to deter oppositions. Additionally, he strongly suggested that all attachments to bills be reviewed because reading all the information increases one’s institutional knowledge. It is important to understand that lobbyist have a special interests.

In response to a question from Council Member Tommy Hazouri whether a citizen can introduce a bill, Council President Boyer responded that only Council members and the Council President on behalf of, can introduce a bill according to the City’s Charter.

Council Member Gulliford encouraged members to support a District Council person that strongly supports a bill within his/her district. He suggested that members utilize notice meetings more to discuss concerns and other issues. It should be noted that, often times, there are unfunded State mandates that interfere with the City taking action on a particular subject. Additionally, Council Member Gulliford advised members to never stop trying regardless of challenges because a good debate is sometimes a necessary result.

Council Member Love encouraged the utilization of notice meetings, and suggested that members help ensure that legislation has been assigned to the appropriate committees.

Bills are assigned by Legislative Services Division. Currently, Carol Owens sends the list to Council President, and she affirms the assignments based on the charges of each committee.

Council President Boyer thanked attendees and suggested they email her if there were any further procedural questions.

**Meeting adjourned:** 1:08 p.m.

Minutes: Jeff Clements, Council Research

8.23.16 Posted 2:30 p.m.

Tapes: Council Lunch and Learn meeting – LSD

 8.22.16

Materials: Legislative bill review tips handouts - LSD

 8.22.16