

**JACKSONVILLE CITY COUNCIL**

**RESEARCH DIVISION**

117 WEST DUVAL STREET, SUITE 425

4TH FLOOR, CITY HALL

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA 32202

904-630-1377

City Council Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes

August 27, 2019

**Topic:** Chief of Legislative Services position, Council budget and Council print and postage allocation

**Location:** City Council Conference Room A, Suite 425, City Hall – St. James Building, 117 West Duval Street

**In attendance:** Council President Scott Wilson; Council Vice President Hazouri; Council Members Bowman, Newby, Cumber, Morgan, Salem, Freeman, DeFoor and Pittman

**Also**: Director/Council Secretary Cheryl Brown; Kyle Billy, Kim Taylor and Brian Parks – Council Auditor’s Office; Peggy Sidman and Paige Johnston – Office of General Counsel; Colleen Hampsey and Richard Distel– Council Research Division; Carol Owens – Chief of Legislative Services; Diane Moser – Chief of Employee Services; Kristi Sikes – Chief of Administrative Services; Laura Dyer – Council Executive Administrator

See attached sign-in sheet for additional attendees.

**Meeting Convened**: 1:01 p.m.

Council President Wilson called the meeting to order and the attendees introduced themselves for the record. The first topic of discussion was the Chief of Legislative Services position, which will be open upon the retirement of the current chief Carol Owens. Ms. Owens and Cheryl Brown, Council Secretary, both recommended Jessica Matthews for the position. Ms. Matthews is a Legislative Assistant II and has been in training for the Chief role since 2016 as a part of a council staff succession plan. CP Wilson asked about protocol for council staff openings, and whether the positions must be posted. Ms. Moser explained that for chief positions, the Council Secretary makes a recommendation, which is either supported or opposed by the Personnel Committee and then is presented to the Rules Committee and then the full City Council for approval. External postings for chief positions are not required.

CM Morgan spoke about the importance of staff institutional knowledge and stability, making internal promotions the best way to go for staff leadership. CM Bowman expressed his support for Ms. Matthews, for her positive interface with the public, good staff management, and her dedication to the division and for attaining her graduate degree at night while also working full time. CVP Hazouri, CM Newby and CM Pittman spoke about Ms. Matthews’s vast knowledge and willingness to help council members and the public. CM Freeman relayed his positive experiences working with Ms. Matthews over the years when he worked for the JAX Chamber, as a council executive assistant and now as a current council member. CP Wilson also spoke in support of Ms. Matthews and reminded the group that there should be succession planning for all of the chief positions. Ms. Matthews thanked the group for their words of support and for the opportunity.

**Motion** (Bowman): recommend Jessica Matthews as the new Chief of Legislative Services. Ms. Sidman will draft the resolution to be presented to the Rules Committee as a one cycle emergency item to coincide with Ms. Owens retirement on September 27th – **approved unanimously**.

The second topic was the council budget, specifically $15,600 which was to be used for part time staff hours but was pulled from the budget draft, instead of shifted from VAB to council staff services. These funds would have been used to cover security staff costs, front desk staffing and additional staff to assist with technological transitioning and training. CP Wilson will speak with Joey Greive, Director of Finance and Administration, about what happened to the $15,600. CM Cumber asked for a detailed part-time hour breakdown, which will be provided by Ms. Dyer. CM Pittman asked if there are staff needs this year which differ from past years. Ms. Dyer explained that there is new software and a database for VAB which requires a transitioning process and two departing IT employees which will require the training of two new hires. Ms. Brown mentioned additional staff demands due to tasks related to ADA compliance public documents.

CP Wilson also said that over the next few months the Personnel Committee will meet again to discuss each council staff division and what the employee roles are in each. CM Morgan asked about other departing staff members. Ms. Dyer said that Ms. Owens and Louie Marino, Information Systems Administrator, will be both retiring as of September 27, 2019. Ms. Dyer and Cheryl Brown will be eligible for retirement in 2020, but neither of them has formally announced retirement dates. CM Bowman asked if there is an option or ability to conduct desk audits for council staff to assess workflow duties, levels of responsibility, and skills and knowledge required for each position. Ms. Moser said that a salary analysis was conducted in 2017 by outside consultants (which indicated that two council staff members were underpaid in relation to their responsibilities and the comparable job market) and that the analysis will be repeated in 2021. CM Bowman asked for a copy of the 2017 report.

The third topic on the agenda was the Council print and postage allocation, which provides a limited amount per council district each year. At-large council members are not included in the allocation. The consensus was that the amount is not sufficient for mailers sent to constituents, which leads some council members to find alternate methods to communicate or use their own monies to pay for printing/postage. It was suggested that legislation be drafted to allow the unused funds to carry over from year to year and that council members who spend their allocation, but still need postage/printing funds, request those funds from the Council President. This issue was not resolved but will be discussed in a future meeting.

With no further business, CP Wilson adjourned the meeting.

**Meeting Adjourned**: 1:49 p.m.

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

8.27.19 Posted 5:00 p.m.

Tapes: City Council Personnel Committee meeting– LSD

8.27.19