

**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**RESEARCH DIVISION**

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**CITY COUNCIL PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

**Meeting Minutes**

**February 17, 2022**

**3:00 p.m.**

**Location:** Lynwood Roberts Room, 1st floor, City Hall

**In attendance:** Council Members Sam Newby (Chair), Terrance Freeman, Brenda Priestly Jackson, Ron Salem, Aaron Bowman

**Also**: Paige Johnston – Office of General Counsel; Diane Moser and Leah Hayes – Employee Services Department; Jeff Clements – Council Research Division; Jessica Matthews, Maritza Sanchez and Melodi Murray – Legislative Services Division; Yvonne Mitchell – Administrative Services Division; Eric Grantham – Information Support Services; Kim Taylor – Council Auditor’s Office

**Meeting Convened**: 3:01 p.m.

Chairman Newby convened the meeting and the attendees introduced themselves for the record.

Review of Council Secretary/Director Expectations

CM Bowman said he had worked with Diane Moser, Director of Employee Services, on a list of things the Council Secretary/Director should be expected to do which resulted in the development of a Letter of Expectations, which was distributed during the meeting, to be provided to the selected candidate. CM Salem asked why this list of expectations wouldn’t be incorporated into the job description. Ms. Moser said some of the items are more general expectations than specific duties. Mr. Bowman said that the annual turnover of the Council President position makes it desirable for the Secretary/Director to undertake some of the functions that the President performs that are more administrative in nature and where prior experience would be helpful.

CM Salem said he would like to see the addition of an expectation item that the Council Secretary would review the Council’s organizational structure and evaluate the number and arrangement of employees on an annual basis prior to the beginning of the budget process. There was consensus agreement to add this item. In response to a question from CM Brenda Priestly Jackson about whether the expectations document would be part of the annual performance review process, Ms. Moser said that it could be.

**Motion** (Freeman): Adopt the Council Secretary/Director Expectations document as distributed with the addition of the language regarding annual review of the council staff and organizational structure prior to the start of the budget process

Public Comment

None

**The motion was** **approved 5-0.**

Review of Eligible Candidates

Ms. Moser told the committee that any notes made by council members in their notebooks constitute a public record, so should be restricted to factual notations only. She reviewed the contents of the notebooks which include 2 matrices outlining the candidates’ qualifications and experience.

Ms. Moser said that 35 applications were received, of which 17 were at least minimally qualified. The applications were sorted into classes: “well qualified” - 6; “qualified” - 5; “minimally qualified” – 6. None of the applicants were veterans, so no veteran’s preference was applied. When the committee determines how many and which candidates to interview, Employee Services will arrange the interview times. She said the committee members may select candidates other than those ranked as “well qualified” to interview. Ms. Moser said that Employee Services had done a social media check on the 6 “well-qualified” applicants and the only thing that caught their attention was one candidate who posted about entering into a 3-year contract with their current employer in 2021, which may or may not be a consideration in their availability to take the job immediately.

The committee was in recess while the members individually reviewed the candidate matrices from 3:20 to 3:35 p.m.

Upon resumption of the meeting, Ms. Moser recommended that all interviews be completed in one day to protect the integrity of the process. President Newby asked how to make the interview process fair if the proceedings are live streamed and the subsequent candidates could learn the committee’s questions from watching the first interview of the day. In response to a question, Ms. Moser suggested that the release of the meeting’s video stream could be delayed until after the interviews are completed.

The committee decided initially to choose 5 candidates for interviews, consistent with its discussion at the January 7th meeting. Ms. Moser suggested starting with consideration of the “well qualified” candidates first. She explained that some of the wording in the Notes column of the matrices are quotes pulled directly from the candidates’ applications or cover letters, and do not represent Employee Services’ evaluation of the candidate. In response to a question from CM Salem, Ms. Moser said that the committee is free to give preference to local area residents over out-of-town candidates. She also added that they were not limited 5 interviews but could select more candidates if the committee agreed.

The committee did not choose any of the “minimally qualified” candidates for the interview process. From the “qualified” candidates list, CM Bowman recommended interviewing Kimberly Hicks. CM Salem recommended Christy Linster for an interview because of her previous experience as a council secretary; CM Freeman also advocated for interviewing Ms. Linster.

Among the “well-qualified” candidates, CM Salem said he was concerned about the 3-year contract of Christine Landes mentioned earlier, who is also a bit of a concern because she lives in Maine. Several council members expressed concern about her potential lack of budgeting experience. CM Bowman felt that Ruth Kedzior might not be sufficiently qualified and she was excluded along with Ms. Landes. The committee chose to invite the other 4 “well qualified” candidates – Kathleen Collins, Jessica Matthews, Chiquita Moore and Margaret Sidman – along with Kimberly Hicks and Christy Lindster from the “qualified” list for interviews.

The committee asked about the mechanics of the timing of the interviews. In response to a question from CM Salem, Ms. Moser described how she develops the question list for the interviews, which she shares privately with the committee members in advance of the interview day. Additional ad hoc questions could be added at the end of the interview after the standard questions are covered. Mr. Salem said that he would be inclined to ask different questions of the candidates depending on their particular backgrounds and experience.

Public comment

None

**Motion** (Freeman): the Personnel Committee will request interviews with 6 candidates: Kathleen Collins, Jessica Matthews, Chiquita Moore, Margaret Sidman, Kimberly Hicks and Christy Linster – **approved 5-0.**

In response to a question from CM Priestly Jackson, Ms. Moser said she had no issue or concern with all six of the selected candidates being female.

**Meeting adjourned:** 11:28 a.m.

Minutes: Jeff Clements, Council Research Division

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