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CITY COUNCIL PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

**November 13, 2024
11:30 am**

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

In attendance: Committee Members Randy White (CP), Kevin Carrico (CVP), Ron Salem (Finance Chair), Nick Howland (Rules Chair), and Rahman Johnson; Council Member Peluso

Also: Mary Staffopoulos, Office of General Counsel; Peggy Sidman, Council Secretary/Director; Leah Hayes, Acting Director Employee Services; Todd Norman, Chief of Employee and Labor Relations and Debbie Wilkes, Labor Relations Officer; Kim Taylor and Phillip Peterson, Council Auditor's Office; Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

Meeting Convened: 11:31 am

Council President White convened the meeting and called for introductions. Mary Staffopoulos, OGC, provided an overview of the previous Personnel Committee meeting. Ms. Staffopoulos said that in the last meeting, the committee decided to engage with the Ballard Spahr firm regarding the Laura Street Trio, and to request a staff survey vendor recommendation from Employee Services within 30 days. Council Member Howland asked about Ballard Spahr's progress thus far. Council Vice President Carrico said that one invoice for services, primarily document review, has been received. Ms. Staffopoulos said a progress update can be requested from Ballard Spahr. Council Member Johnson asked about the Administration's negotiations with the developer, which reportedly recently terminated.

Discussion on Council Staff Survey

Todd Norman and Debbie Wilkes, Employee Services, presented their review of staff survey vendors. Mr. Norman said they assessed 96 providers, selected the top 3, and from those had one highlighted vendor recommendation, "Beyond Feedback". The vendor license lasts for one year and may be renewed. Ms. Wilkes described the format and function of the survey. She said the surveys are sent through an email link, and the responses are anonymous. Ms. Wilkes said the questions include open ended and those with Likert scale response options, the results can be benchmarked to compare with peer organizations and to provide an action plan for improvement. Ms. Wilkes said the cost is \$9,000, to survey a staff of up to 80

employees. Beyond Feedback offers a list of 300 pre-constructed questions with the option to customize if desired. Ms. Wilkes said there will be an administrative user who will receive 2 hours of training. The survey will take 4-6 weeks to prepare and will be open for use for 2 weeks. The results will be sorted to display participation, a results summary, and frequently used words.

Council Member Howland asked about the price differences among the 3 top vendors. Mr. Norman said that although Beyond Feedback is not the least expensive, it has the best final product, and a rate with no added costs for services post survey. Council Member Salem said that the division chiefs should be evaluated through the survey as well, and he asked who develops the questions. Ms. Wilkes said that Employee Services will select the questions. Council Member Johnson asked to be included in the question review and selection. Post survey, a report of the results will be shared with the Personnel Committee.

Motion/2nd CMs Salem/Johnson: Proceed with selecting “Beyond Feedback” as the vendor for the staff survey.

Approved unanimously (5-0) by voice vote.

Council Member Johnson asked if funds need to be appropriated for the survey. Ms. Sidman said that there are funds remaining from the appropriation for Michael Huyghue’s consulting fees, as related to the stadium negotiations, that could be utilized to pay for the survey. Council Member Salem directed Ms. Sidman to find the funds for the survey within the council budget, not from another source or the remaining funds from Mr. Huyghue’s consulting fees.

Eligible Retirements in 2025

Ms. Sidman spoke about amending Chapter 11, *Ordinance Code* to specify that Council Division Chief positions and the Council Secretary/Director position require a bachelor’s degree. She mentioned that such a Code requirement exists for other departments directors and chiefs within the City. She stated that the topic arose in previous Personnel Committee meetings.

Council Member Johnson noted the separation of powers and said that council does not have to follow the practice of the Executive Branch. He said that some past Council Secretaries were exemplary without having a college degree. He talked about grandfathering current staff and waivers. Ms. Staffopoulos said, if agreed upon by the committee, it would be a prospective requirement.

Council Member Howland questioned the need to restrict future council staffing decisions. CVP Carrico said he doesn’t see the need for a change, noting that experience is gained in ways other than college (military or on-the-job experience). Council Member Salem said he thinks the degree is important for the director and chief positions, especially the director.

Council Member Johnson said that the Employee Services job descriptions could include language about a preferred degree. Ms. Hayes said it can be added. CP White said he won’t agree to require a degree since he doesn’t have one, and it is not the sole determinant of success. He emphasized that staff applicants should be assessed on an individual basis.

Council Member Johnson asked who is expected to retire next year. Ms. Sidman said she is only aware of Jeff Clements, Chief of Research, who was supposed to retire this year but postponed it until 2025.

Public Comment: none

With no further business, Council President White adjourned the meeting.

Meeting adjourned: 12:06 p.m.

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

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11.14.24 Posted 5:00 p.m.