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CITY COUNCIL PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

August 19, 2025
11:30 am

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

In attendance: Committee Members Carrico (CP), Howland (CVP) and Johnson

Also: Mary Staffopoulos, Office of General Counsel; Jason Teal, Council Secretary/Director; Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

Meeting Convened: 11:31 am

Council President Carrico convened the meeting and called for introductions. He reviewed the purpose of the meeting and welcomed the group to the new council year.

Presentation by Jason Teal regarding Council Staff Employee Satisfaction Survey

Jason Teal, Council Secretary/Director, discussed the council staff survey conducted by vendor Beyond Feedback earlier this year. The survey was slated to be repeated after 6 months to assess improvements, if any. Council Member Johnson, who worked with the vendor on the survey design, said the service contract was for a one-year period with a follow-up survey included in the initial agreement. Mary Staffopoulos, OGC, indicated she would confirm the dates and timeline in the service contract.

Motion/2nd move to proceed with implementing the 6-month follow-up staff survey with Beyond Feedback. **Approved unanimously.**

Public participation: John Nooney spoke in support of the survey.

CP Carrico regarding engagement of Legislative Counsel

Council President Carrico talked about the need for legislative counsel for council, as authorized through the Charter and Chapter 14, *Ordinance Code*. He indicated that there was a need due to the strained relationship between the General Counsel and some council members. The committee spoke about funding for such counsel, \$100,000 previously appropriated through 2024-160-E with the intent to be used for services provided by GrayRobinson, and some of which was then used for legal services from Ballard Spahr, specific to the Laura Street Trio project. Those funds will lapse September 30, 2025, and will require legislation to be carried over to the new fiscal year.

Council President Carrico proposed engaging with Jason Teal as legislative counsel, and additionally with Jason Gabriel of Burr Forman if needed. There was discussion about Mr. Teal holding dual roles, as Council Secretary/Director and legislative counsel. It was said that the opinions issued by General Counsel would still be binding, even if council is advised by someone else. Mr. Teal indicated that there is no preclusion to the dual roles, per Code or Charter nor by state statute. In the role of legislative counsel, Mr. Teal would provide legal advice only on council-related items. Council Member Howland asked about the potential engagement of outside counsel as well, if needed, which would be at the discretion of the council president.

Motion/2nd move to engage Jason Teal as legislative counsel, and with Jason Gabriel, Burr Forman if necessary. **Approved 2-1** (Johnson in opposition)

Comments/Questions from Committee Members

Council Member Johnson questioned the speed of this decision and action. He expressed concern about the Charter, the role of the General Counsel, and the selection of Burr Forman as opposed to considering other outside firms.

Ms. Staffopoulos spoke about the broad exception in Article 7, *Charter* that established the Office of General Counsel with the responsibility for furnishing legal services to the city and its independent agencies, except that the council may create an office of legislative counsel within the legislative branch whose purpose shall be to advise and assist the council and its committees and members in the achievement of a clear, faithful and coherent expression of legislative policies and to perform such other related duties for the council as the council may by ordinance direct.

Mr. Teal said that he has the capacity to fulfill both roles, and that the dual function is permitted legally. There was some discussion as to the compensation arrangement.

Motion/2nd move to authorize the council president to negotiate the terms of engagement. **Approved 2-1** (Johnson in opposition)

Public participation: Mr. Nooney spoke in support of Mr. Teal.

With no further business, CP Carrico adjourned the meeting.

Meeting adjourned: 12:16 pm