

MINUTES OF THE METRO WORK SESSION

Thursday, November 2, 1995

Council Chamber Annex

Councilors Present: Ruth McFarland (Presiding Officer), Rod Monroe (Deputy Presiding Officer), Jon Kvistad, Patricia McCaig, Susan McLain, Don Morissette, Ed Washington

Councilors Absent: None

Presiding Officer McFarland called the meeting to order at 1:35 PM.

1. DISCUSSION OF COUNCIL STAFFING NEEDS

Presiding Officer McFarland initiated a discussion about staffing in the Council office. She said certain Metro staff members were in attendance to provide information if requested. She distributed a copy of Ordinance No. 95-616 pertaining to the staff reorganization.

According to Presiding Officer McFarland, Council decided not to act upon the ordinance at its second reading. She said she consulted with Daniel Cooper, General Counsel, and it is his belief that when Council moved the ordinance for a month, it meant that Council moved for a time certain. Councilor Washington said it had been brought to his attention that when he moved to delay action on the ordinance, he moved for a delay of a minimum of 30 days, when he meant a maximum of 30 days. Presiding Officer McFarland asked Councilor Washington if it was his intention that if the Council reached a conclusion in today's work session, that the Council could move forward with a vote on the ordinance at the Council regular session immediately following the work session. Councilor Washington agreed that this was his intent.

Presiding Officer McFarland said that after consulting with Mr. Cooper, it was determined that the proposal that will be made by Councilor McCaig at today's meeting will constitute an amendment of Ordinance No. 95-616. She pointed out that the ordinance simply amends the budget to accommodate re-staffing. She said if the ordinance is not voted on at today's Council meeting, it can be dealt with at the November 9 Council meeting.

Councilor McCaig advised the Council that she did not have an ordinance, rather she said she would be presenting a draft concept for the Council to consider and possibly draft into an ordinance. Presiding Officer McFarland responded that this being the case, any decision regarding staffing would be put off until the next Council meeting. Councilor McCaig pointed out that she was not advocating one way or the other with regard to when the Council acts upon staffing proposals.

Presiding Officer McFarland asked Councilor McCaig to present her modifications to the staff reorganization plan. Councilor McCaig began by establishing that she had

MINUTES OF THE METRO COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Thursday, November 2, 1995

page 2

not spoken to Council members about her proposal in advance of today's meeting. She stated that her proposal was a draft concept that reflected her view of what the Council organizational structure should look like.

Councilor McCaig stated that in developing her proposal, money was no object. She emphasized that her goal was to put together the best staff and the best organizational structure that would help Council achieve its goals. She distributed a copy of the Metro Council Mission Statement; saying she used the mission statement to refresh her memory about the goals and objectives the Council had agreed upon in earlier work sessions.

Councilor McCaig said she then attempted to determine the work flow of essential services in the Council office. Based on her determination of the work flow, she established a proposal that she proceeded to present in chart format to the Council. The charts, which have been reproduced below are available in Councilor McCaig's office for review.

WEEKS	MEETINGS/COMMITTEES						
	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven
1	2		2		2		3
2		2		2		2	3
3	2		2		2		3
4		2		2		2	3
Meeting Hours	4	4	4	4	4	4	12
x3 for transcription	12	12	12	12	12	12	36
TOTAL HOURS	16	16	16	16	16	16	48

WEEKS	COUNCILORS						
	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven
1	12	12	12	12	12	12	20
2	12	12	12	12	12	12	20
3	12	12	12	12	12	12	20
4	12	12	12	12	12	12	20
TOTAL HOURS	48	48	48	48	48	48	80

HOURS/MONTH/STAFF							
Meetings	16	16	16	16	16	16	48
Councilors	48	48	48	48	48	48	80
TOTAL HRS/WK	64	64	64	64	64	64	128
TOTAL HRS/ASST	128		128		128		

	ASSISTANTS		
	One	Two	Three
Total Hrs./Month	174	174	174
Committee/Councilor	128	128	128
Total Hrs. Available	46	46	46

MINUTES OF THE METRO COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Thursday, November 2, 1995

page 3

According to Councilor McCaig the first chart represents the staffing requirements for each of six committees and the Council. (She identified the seventh column as Council.) For purposes of uniformity, she based her presentation on a four week month, with each committee meeting twice a month. She said the meeting time allotted per committee was two hours per meeting, for a total of four hours per month per committee. She allotted three hours per Council meeting for a total of twelve hours per month. Councilor McCaig allowed that the meeting times were estimates. She informed the committee of a rule of thumb which states that for every minute spent in a meeting, three are spent transcribing and getting ready for the meeting. Councilor Monroe asked where Councilor McCaig had found this formula. Councilor McCaig remembered that she had received the information from the PSU Business School. She clarified that PSU had actually found that two minutes production time is required for every minute spent in a meeting; however, she felt the Council Office up-front time requirements are considerably higher than other organizational structures. Adding the four hours meeting time and 12 hours related production time, a total of 16 hours per month per committee is required. For the Council, a total of 48 hours per month is required. According to Councilor McCaig this is the amount of time it takes staff to set up for the meeting, take the minutes, and transcribe the minutes.

Councilor McCaig referred to her second chart, which shows a proposed increase in the amount of councilor support from 10 hours per week to 12 hours per week, for a total of 48 hours per month. She referred councilors to a two-week desk audit of Council staff. Councilor McFarland said the desk audits had not yet been distributed to councilors. According to Councilor McCaig, only one councilor had used their staff person for more than ten hours per week. Under Councilor McCaig's proposal, the assistant to the presiding officer would dedicate 20 hours per week in assistance to the presiding officer for a total of 80 hours per month. Councilor McLain advised the committee that due to staffing constraints she has put off three or four requests, therefore, she felt the last two weeks were not indicative of the need for councilor support. Councilor McCaig responded that she had not used the last two weeks when she developed her proposal.

Councilor McCaig then referred to her third chart, and reported that under her proposal, each committee/councilor (not considering the presiding officer and Council meetings) would receive would receive a total of 64 hours council staff per month. She stated that under the current scenario, three persons provide staffing for six councilors and committee meetings. Therefore, Councilor McCaig doubled the 64-hour figure to come up with the number of hours each assistant provides per month for the two work assignments under consideration, giving a total of 128 hours per assistant.

Councilor McCaig referred to her fourth chart, which shows that each assistant works 174 hours per month. The chart subtracts the 128 hours as outlined in the previous paragraph, which results in a surplus of 46 hours per month not dedicated to councilors or committees. Councilors discussed the difference between the 160 hours in the four week scenario, and the actual 174 hours in an average month.

MINUTES OF THE METRO COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Thursday, November 2, 1995

page 4

Councilor McCaig clarified that each month has a differing number of work days, and that in the case of an "extra" week, additional meetings are not scheduled. She pointed out that there is some flex time under her proposal, to conduct other duties that are important to the Council. She said that among the options for utilizing the surplus hours, more staff could be assigned to councilors.

According to the mission statement, Councilor McCaig defined the Council's role as that of policy development and analysis, to provide an objective analysis of the executive officer's work, and to develop policy ideas. She stressed her desire that the Council function as a policy-setting board. She said the Council fundamentally cannot do that with one policy analyst. Therefore, she stated her proposal to increase the number of policy analysts to two. She proposed to continue with three assistants to the Council, who would do committee meetings, and councilor support. One assistant would have minute taking responsibilities for every Council meeting, for a total of 48 hours per month. She stated the importance of consistency in the minutes as a reason to assign just one assistant to this duty. According to Councilor McCaig, a second assistant would be assigned the responsibility for public relations. She said whether it was 20 or 40 hours out of the 46 was not important. She said she thinks there are the skills on existing staff to provide for public outreach. She said the third assistant would be assigned to support the MCCI.

Councilor McCaig said she would significantly change the position of the assistant to the presiding officer. She said the position should be a permanent hire. She said there is a reason to have a permanent position that would have an ongoing responsibility to do three things: 25 % office administration; 25% pre/post legislation, which is working with the presiding officer to set the agenda, to notify the committees of the legislation as it is filed in the office, and to work with the presiding officer to process legislation after it has gone to committee/Council. She would eliminate the need for the assistant to the presiding officer to sit through a council meeting. According to Councilor McCaig the only reason the assistant currently sits through the Council meeting is to determine Council votes on legislation, and determine the path for legislation. She would assign the responsibility for tracking legislation in a meeting to the Council analyst, reducing the number of staff members who attend a meeting from three to two. Councilor McCaig proposed to assign 50% of the assistant to the presiding officer's time to provide direct assistance to the presiding officer. Councilor McCaig said the receptionist would be a "real voice" and a "real person" at the front desk who would do agenda and notice mailings. Councilor Monroe asked for clarification that the assistant to the presiding officer would not be hired by the presiding officer, and that the incoming presiding officers would work with the existing individual hired in that position. Councilor McCaig responded that this is the situation under which the rest of the Council currently operates. She stated the consistency is good for the collective, and further stated that her proposed process of having a group of three councilors sit in on the hiring process would be better than having the responsibility for hiring that position rest solely with one person. *(tape inaudible)* Councilor McFarland pointed out that Council staff is at will, and if at any time Council has an

MINUTES OF THE METRO COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Thursday, November 2, 1995

page 5

employee that is not appropriate for their position, Council can make a change in that position. Finally, Councilor McCaig suggested budgeting for temporary help under materials and services for up to 60 days with the presiding officer's authorization to meet extraordinary staffing requirements, and a district-wide councilor newsletter at a cost of \$61,000. *(tape inaudible)* She pointed out that the question of staffing MCCI meetings at a .45 FTE (78 hours) should be reviewed, because that is more than is currently assigned to staffing of regular Council standing committees.

(tape recorder malfunctioned)

Councilor Morissette asked who would manage staff under Councilor McCaig's scenario. Councilor McCaig responded this would be the assistant to the presiding officer, stating this was one reason to make the position a permanent hire. Councilor McCaig said an analyst would coordinate the committee work of the Council.

Individual mailings versus one district-wide mailing were discussed. It was determined either option could be utilized.

It was determined that by moving money into the temporary help line item, there would be no net budget increase, and in fact the change could result in savings.

Councilor Kvistad said he would not be in favor of having an assistant to the presiding officer that was not selected by the presiding officer, because the presiding officer could find him- or herself burdened with a staff member that was not responsive to his or her needs. He referred to a situation in recent history, where a Council staff person was not found to be responsive to Council needs. Councilor McFarland clarified that if the person in the assistant to the presiding officer was found to be totally incompatible, a change in staff could be made, and that this could be made a condition of employment. Councilor Kvistad maintained that he wants the position to be an at will appointee of the presiding officer, rather than a recruited and selected individual of a Council committee. He said that if the presiding officer wants to continue with the existing assistant to the presiding officer, that would always be an option.

Councilor Washington said he felt strongly about the need for permanence of the assistant to the presiding officer position.

(new tape recorder installed)

Councilor McLain responded to Councilor McCaig's proposal, by comparing the "status quo" presentation made by Councilor McCaig and the ordinance under consideration. She highlighted two areas of agreement: 1) both proposals indicate Council is top-heavy in the area of Council analysts, and 2) the MCCI cannot be appropriately stably served under the current configuration. She distributed a copy of testimony prepared by MCCI Chair Ric Buhler. She said the MCCI has requested

MINUTES OF THE METRO COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Thursday, November 2, 1995

page 6

a formalized system of stable support. She stated that the MCCI has never received 78 hours staff time.

She charged that there were contradictions made by Councilor McCaig in her proposal. One was in response to questions Councilor Morissette, who asked 1) what Council would do when a committee had more work than is normal and needed a temporary service, and 2) what level of support would be needed besides analysts from the executive side. According to Councilor McLain in one frame of reference, Councilor McCaig stated that she did not believe you needed a high level of support with an issue such as 2040 because you should be getting that from the executive side. On the other hand, Councilor McCaig indicated there was a need for two analysts because there is a lot of work that should be produced that is independent of the executive officer's staff. Councilor McLain said these were contradictory statements.

Councilor McLain said one of the reasons she could not vote for Councilor McCaig's proposal was that the temporary help line item is not sufficient. She said she has dealt with temporary help at least four times in the last five years, and it has not been satisfactory. She continued that the status quo presentation does not give her the kind of assistance she needs. She said she needs more hands, not more heads. She said she agrees with Councilor McCaig that she was hired to do the policy analysis. She claimed that 12 or 24 hours is not sufficient to handle all of the constituent work surrounding 2040 and the Burlington Northern issues that arise.

Councilor McLain pointed out that Council has been understaffed for about two months by at least three positions. She said that this lead to one positive, that the Council was saving money. She said the enormous difficulty was to get the work done. She said her goal today is to support whatever the rest of the Council wants to do to ensure that the Council is staffed to the full level of the current fiscal year budget, and to make sure that the quality of work of which staff is capable is attained. She said this will be the last energy she will put into the staffing issue. She has many other projects which have more relevance to the success of the agency. She says she has lived the proposal presented by Councilor McCaig for five years with very few modifications. She says her proposal does not have an office manager, Council needs it. She said there needs to be staff to deal with public outreach. As much as she agrees that newsletters are needed and appropriate, that is not the only way nor the best way to achieve public outreach. She stressed that she wants to be cooperative and a team player. She said Council needs to move ahead to get the work done. She said the work that has been done at this point has been minimal because staff, doing their very best, have not had time to sufficiently serve all the needs of the body. She said Council has done some good work in the review of the last two months, and every councilor has had the opportunity to present their ideas and proposals, and now it is time to vote.

Councilor McFarland pointed out that in this year's budget there is funding for three analyst positions. She agrees with Councilor McCaig that two analysts can do the job. She suggested the third analyst position could be changed to an office

MINUTES OF THE METRO COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Thursday, November 2, 1995

page 7

manager/public relations person, giving it the desired permanence. In addition, she would recommend authorizing an assistant to the presiding officer/clerk of the council position.

Councilor McCaig summarized the three options: Councilor McLain's, Councilor McCaig's, and Councilor McFarland's suggestion to replace the newsletter, and to have the existing third analyst position to do office management and other duties.

Councilor Monroe attempted to point out areas of agreement, stating that every one agrees about the need for a full-time receptionist. He continued that everyone agrees that there is a clerk of council function, that is probably not full time. He maintained that the presiding officer is a full time position and needs a full time or half time assistant. He said an office manager at less than full time was needed; public relations help, committee and council assistants, either 3 or 6 are needed; as well as one or two analysts. He said it is extremely helpful if the presiding officer can choose an assistant. He suggested that the clerk of the council duties could be added to the assistant to the presiding officer. He said the office manager position should be permanent, subject to the will of the Council. Since the office manager position would not be full time, he suggested that public relations be added.

Councilor McLain said the office manager could serve as a back-up analyst. She said that some committee assistants use up to 50% of their time on minutes, and that councilor assistance would suffer with three assistants. She did not agree that the presiding officer needed more assistance than any of the other councilors, because their district functions are the same. She said four would be better than three. She said the job descriptions are pretty decent.

(laptop to malfunctions)

Councilor Washington briefly recapped Councilor McCaig's proposal. Councilor McCaig said her proposal would reduce staffing for the MCCI from .45 FTE to .15 FTE; 25 hours rather than 78 hours. Councilor Washington then recapped Councilor McLain's and Councilor McFarland's proposal. Therefore, he pointed out that the three proposals on the table called for 7, 10, and 8 staff members respectively.

Councilor Morissette asked Councilor Kvistad about his proposal, which he outlined as being two analysts, three council assistants, a receptionist, an MCCI analyst, an office manager/fourth "extra hand", and one presiding officer assistant, for a total of 9 FTE. Councilor McFarland said that the MCCI analyst position is paid for out of a separate budget, so it should not be considered in the current discussion. Councilor Kvistad then modified his position to be 8 FTE, however, he felt it was important to have the extra .5 FTE for overflow work.

Councilor Morissette suggested an office manager/analyst. He maintained that an office manager needs to be able to help manage the process. He said that for seven people, the office manager wouldn't require a lot of time -- no more than one hour per day. Councilor Monroe said that an office manager/analyst would be assigned

MINUTES OF THE METRO COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Thursday, November 2, 1995

page 8

to the area of budget and finance. He would hire the second analyst as an office manager. He said this would most closely match with Councilor McCaig's proposal.

Councilor McCaig said that with seven positions, she could concede to Councilor Kvistad's point that the presiding officer's assistant, which would do 1/4 time office administration, 1/4 pre/post legislation, and 1/2 assistant to the presiding officer, could function at the discretion of the presiding officer.

Councilor McLain said under the current configuration of eight staff members, there were three clerks who couldn't serve the MCCI because they did not have the time to do so, and now the Council is considering seven people. She said that the Council is not doing enough outreach, and yet staff is being subtracted.

Councilor McFarland polled the Council to determine how many staff members councilors would choose to have. Councilor McCaig, Councilor Washington, and Councilor Morissette chose seven. Councilor Kvistad and Councilor McFarland chose eight. Councilor McLain and Councilor Monroe chose 10.

Councilor McCaig said that five individuals supported a 7 or 8 member staff, and only two supported a 10 member staff. Therefore, she suggested the proposal for a 10 member staff be dropped. Councilor McLain pointed out that the swing vote could go in either direction.

Councilor Kvistad said two analysts, three assistants, one presiding officer assistant, one receptionist, and one office manager/floating staff person (not analyst) would be his minimum requirement.

Councilor McCaig volunteered to bring her proposal and negotiate with Councilor Kvistad on the one area of office manager to come up with a compromise proposal. Councilor Kvistad said he is not comfortable with negotiating Councilor McLain's and Councilor Monroe's position. He agreed to work with Councilor McCaig.

Councilor McFarland said that Councilor McCaig and Councilor Kvistad will submit a compromise proposal as an amendment to the ordinance that is on the table. Councilor McCaig reiterated her position that her proposal is for two analysts, three assistants, an assistant to the presiding officer, a receptionist; and the area for compromise would be that instead of temporary help and newsletter, Council would convert the third analyst to an office manager.

Councilor Kvistad expressed his desire that a compromise be reached, rather than having an up or down vote be taken in the Council meeting.

Presiding Officer McFarland stated that she would schedule the issue on the next agenda that comes in a timely manner. She said anyone who wishes to present amendments to the ordinance, can do so. She said she was convinced it needed to be voted up or down, so the Council can get on with its work.

MINUTES OF THE METRO COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Thursday, November 2, 1995

page 9

There being no further business before the Council, Presiding Officer McFarland adjourned the meeting at 2:00 PM.

Prepared by,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lindsey Ray", with a large loop at the end.

Lindsey Ray
Council Assistant

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