

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL BUDGET COMMITTEE  
OF THE METROPOLITAN SERVICE DISTRICT

April 21, 1988

Committee Members Present: Tanya Collier (Chair),\* George Van Bergen (V. Chair),\* Tom Balmer, Gretchen Buehner, Gary Hansen,\* Steven Harloff, Ron Hohnstein, Jim Gardner,\* David Knowles,\* Phillip Korten and Dapo Sobomehin

Committee Members Absent: None

\* Metro Councilors

Chair Collier called the meeting to order at 5:55 p.m. and explained the Committee would receive presentations concerning General Fund department budgets.

1. GENERAL FUND OVERVIEW

Ray Phelps, Finance & Administration Director, reviewed highlights of a printed overview of the General Fund.

2. COUNCIL DEPARTMENT

Donald Carlson, Council Administrator, reviewed the Department's proposed budget.

- \* Ms. Buehner thought the proposed salary for the new Analyst position was too low to attract quality candidates.
- \* Councilor Hansen thought the 33 percent increase proposed for Councilor Per Diem was too and did not reflect the actual number of additional meetings under the new committee system.
- \* Councilor Hansen proposed the "Professional Services" line item be increased by \$15,000 to \$20,000 to provide for contracting professional services if necessary.

3. EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

After an overview of the Department's budget by Dick Engstrom, Deputy Executive Officer, the committee discussed proposed staff levels.

- \* Councilor Knowles requested a copy of the job description for Don Rocks' position. He questioned whether Mr. Rocks was performing work at the classification and salary level proposed in the new budget. Chair Collier advised Mr. Engstrom to be prepared to answer specific questions about Mr. Rocks' position at the April 25 meeting.

4. OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL

Dan Cooper, General Counsel, reviewed the proposed budget and the tasks that would be assigned to new and existing positions.

- \* Chair Collier asked Mr. Cooper to review the entire FY 1988-89 budget to determine how much the agency was actually saving in contracted legal services over the amount budgeted for FY 1987-88.
- \* Councilor Van Bergen was concerned that many of the tasks proposed for new and existing positions were administrative or policy making activities. He felt strongly the Office of General Counsel should restrict its activities to providing legal opinions.
- \* Regarding the proposed salary levels for two additional Legal Counsel positions, Ms. Buehner requested Mr. Cooper return with a recommendation for hiring a first candidate at a higher salary level, followed by hiring a second candidate at a lower salary level.

5. FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

Personnel Division. Mr. Phelps and Randy Boose, Personnel Officer, reviewed the Department's proposed budget programs.

- \* Many Committee members expressed concern about the need for the proposed employee assistance personnel program. Chair Collier suggested placing funds for the program in the Contingency Fund for future Council consideration.
- \* Mr. Sobomehin requested Mr. Boose provide him with a copy of the District's Affirmative Action Program.
- \* Mr. Balmer suggested the Personnel Office initiate a dependent aid program. Chair Collier asked Mr. Balmer to share information about the program with Mr. Boose.

Construction Management Division. Neil Saling, Construction Manager, presented an overview of the Construction Management Division. He also explained how he would oversee the newly reorganized Convention Center Project Office.

- \* Councilor Knowles was concerned staff had entered into an exclusive contract with The American Contractor to publish monthly information about Metro's purchasing and contracting opportunities. He thought it inadvisable to spend those

advertising resources on a single publication. Mr. Saling explained the contract had been awarded as a result of a competitive request for proposals process.

- \* Councilor Knowles was very concerned the Convention Center Project reorganization plan was different from the plan proposed by the Executive Officer one week earlier. He thought the plan was top heavy with management personnel.
- \* Councilor Van Bergen noted the new reorganization plan had not been reviewed by the Council Convention Center Committee. Chair Collier said that Committee would meet at 4:00 p.m., April 25, to review the plan.

Chair Collier called a recess at 8:10 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 8:25 p.m.

#### Financial Services Division.

Don Dox, Accounting Manager, and Mr. Phelps discussed the Accounting budget with the Committee.

- \* Councilor Hansen asked that staff make sure funds budgeted in Accounting for on-site audits of non-Metro disposal facilities were not also budgeted in the Solid Waste Department.

LeRoy Nollette, Data Processint Manager, presented the Data Processing budget program. Councilor Van Bergen reported he had served on a Council sub-committee to review the Data Processing Plan and proposed computer purchases. He had determined the proposed purchases were appropriate and the equipment would have the capacity of handle MERC needs.

Judy Munro, Management Services Supervisor, discussed the Management Services budgeted programs.

- \* Councilor Hansen thought staff should investigate alternative methods of distributing district-wide mailings such as including them in tabloid newspapers and garbage bills.

#### 6. BUILDING MANAGEMENT FUND

- \* Councilor Van Bergen suggested Ms. Munro re-read building lease agreements every three months to ensure compliance with those agreements. He also suggested she review real property taxes paid to the County and appeal them if necessary.

7. COST ALLOCATION PLAN/GENERAL FUND REVENUE

Chair Collier deferred discussion until the April 25 meeting.

PREPARATION FOR APRIL 25 WORK SESSION

Chair Collier announced that Committee members should forward specific recommendations on the budget to Don Carlson. Mr. Carlson would develop a list of proposed Budget Committee recommendations by fund.

Councilor Hansen reported the Solid Waste Committee met April 20 and recommended a Solid Waste Department budget of \$17.1 million including a Contingency Fund and program priorities. Those recommendations would be forwarded to Mr. Carlson.

Councilor Hansen said it was perceived by some that an aura of "staff bashing" surrounded the Budget Committee. The Committee had a responsibility to maintain a professional decorum which he thought had been lacking.

Councilor Knowles responded that staff had not respected the Committee's role as policy makers and had not provided adequate information in order for the Committee to make decisions.

Mr. Sobomehin agreed with Councilor Hansen's assessment. He referred the Committee to a letter from himself to the Committee on subject. He acknowledged what Councilor Knowles had said was true but still thought the Committee needed to be mindful of decorum.

Chair Collier said the Committee had not treated staff unfairly. The information given to the Committee by staff had not always been adequate to make good decisions. Therefore, the Committee had to make those decisions. She explained it was not her intent to "bash" staff but to make sure they responded to the Committee's requests. She noted staff had to be held accountable for the \$30 million agency budget.

There was no other business and the meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A. Marie Nelson  
Clerk of the Council

amn  
9448C/313-2  
04/27/88