

MINUTES OF THE AD HOC REVIEW COMMITTEE
ON AN APPOINTMENT TO THE INTERIM TASK FORCE ON
METROPOLITAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

December 29, 1987

Committee Members Present: Councilors David Knowles (Chair),
Larry Cooper, Tom DeJardin, Corky
Kirkpatrick and Mike Ragsdale

Others Present: Executive Officer Rena Cusma, Don
Rocks, Don Carlson, Senator Glenn
Otto, John Houser and Ed Whelan

Chairman Knowles called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m. and reviewed the events leading up to the appointment of the ad hoc review committee. On December 22, 1987, the Council failed to adopt a motion to confirm the appointment of Ed Whelan to the Task Force on Metropolitan Regional Government. After the vote, Councilor Ragsdale, with permission from the Presiding Officer, changed his vote in order to serve notice that he might have the matter reconsidered at the January 14 Council meeting. The Council then adopted another motion to have the Presiding and Deputy Presiding Officers appoint a five-member committee to review the appointment of Ed Whelan and to make a commendation to the Council on January 14. Subsequently, the Presiding Officer appointed Councilors Knowles (Chair), Cooper, DeJardin, Kirkpatrick and Ragsdale to the Committee. Chairman Knowles concluded that the purpose of this meeting was to inquire into Mr. Whelan's background and to make a recommendation to the Council on January 14 regarding whether he should be confirmed to the Task Force on Metropolitan Regional Government.

Executive Officer Cusma said Mr. Whelan was an excellent candidate, was experienced in regional government matters, was a man of integrity and possessed an open mind. It would be difficult to find another candidate as qualified as Mr. Whelan.

Senator Glenn Otto, Chair of the Task Force on Metropolitan Regional Government, discussed the history of Metro's appointment to the Task Force. At Metro's request, the proposed City of Portland appointment has been deleted so that Metro could appoint a member. Two previous names had been rejected by the Council and the Task Force was well into its work. He acknowledged that the Council had objected to the Executive Officer's appointment process but warned that infighting between the Executive and the Council regarding the appointment and other matters would damage Metro's image with the public. Senator Otto noted that as a legislator, he wanted Metro to assume more areas of responsibility. It would be difficult for the Legislature to assign additional responsibilities if Metro could not get its own house in order, he said.

Although Councilor Kirkpatrick thought Mr. Whelan's credentials were excellent, she questioned his ability to objectively represent both the Council and the Executive Officer. She recalled he had taken a

strong position in favor of the Executive's transition policies and asked Mr. Whelan how he would represent the Council if appointed to the Task Force.

Mr. Whelan responded he would keep the Council well informed of the Task Force's activities via regular reports and other forms of communication as established by the Executive and Council. In response to the Councilor's concerns about his service on the Executive's transition team, Mr. Whelan explained he had taken a firm position regarding the Executive's proposed changes to Metro's Personnel Rules. He suggested the Rules could be an area the Task Force could review.

Councilor Ragsdale asked Mr. Whelan to expand on his views regarding the future of Metro. Mr. Whelan thought the Council was too large and therefore not workable. He also suggested the Chair of the Council serve as both the Presiding and Executive Officers and be elected by all Metro voters. Another option would be for the Executive to be appointed at the pleasure of the Council. He emphasized the roles of the Council and Executive needed to be clearly defined in order for Metro to successfully do its work. He thought Metro was the logical government to assume responsibility for highway administration and water and sewage disposal systems, noting that county boundaries in the Metro area were now meaningless. He also thought Metro needed a tax base and its own charter. He pointed out the Task Force would be exploring the above ideas.

Councilor DeJardin noted the Council's role had changed to a more vocal and active group and he advocated the Council appointing the Executive Officer. That would be in keeping with the trend toward good municipal managers, he explained. He thought it important the Task Force appointment be a mutual process. Mr. Whelan agreed.

In response to Chairman Knowles' question, Mr. Whelan said if he were asked to represent to the Task Force opposing views of the Council and Executive, he would report both positions depending on the specific issue.

Councilor Knowles asked Mr. Whelan to comment on whether he could serve both the Council and Executive given that some Councilors perceived him an advocate of the Executive's position regarding transition issues. Mr. Whelan responded he had only objected to the Council's position regarding Metro's Personnel Rules. He explained he had not participated in those transition discussions but had served the Executive as a note taker in case litigation subsequently occurred.

Councilor Cooper said he thought the Committee's purpose was to work out a process for mutual Council/Executive appointments to commit-

tees and commissions. He urged that issue be resolved in order for Metro to avoid further public embarrassment.

Chairman Knowles said he had narrowly interpreted the Committee's charge to address only Mr. Whelan's suitability to serve on the Task Force. The new Presiding Officer would work with the Presiding Officer on the appointment process. He noted the Task Force appointment was different from other commission appointments in that it was intended to be a mutual appointment.

At Councilor Ragsdale's request, Executive Officer Cusma reviewed the process leading up to Mr. Whelan's name being recommended. Presiding Officer Waker had rejected the Executive Officer being appointed to the Task Force. Another candidate was rejected because he was not a resident of Washington County although such residence had not be formally indicated as a criteria for appointment. Mr. Whelan's name had then been recommended. The Executive said she had called Presiding Officer Waker and asked if he wanted to meet to review the appointment. The Presiding Officer had declined to meet, explaining the Council would make the decision on December 22.

A discussion followed regarding the Committee's process and schedule. Chairman Knowles said no action would be taken on the appointment until the Council met on January 14.

Senator Otto urged the Executive and Council to settle their differences on this issue internally. He said if Metro could not agree on their appointment on January 14, they should forget about appointing a member to the Task Force. He noted the group was now operating shorthanded and was well into its work.

Councilor Knowles again acknowledged the Council would resolve the issue by January 14. He also explained that because Metro had no charter and had to come to the Legislature to settle issues, their internal discussions were termed as "squabbling." He thought, however, such debates were constructive because they served to formulate the new government. Councilor DeJardin agreed, noting that apathy should be feared more than "squabbling."

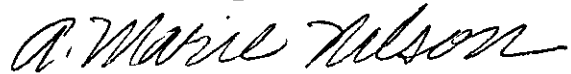
Senator Otto discussed the fact that the Council was a political body and that Councilors should act accordingly. Councilor Kirkpatrick acknowledged that many past Councilors lacked political experience but she thought the current Council was very astute regarding its proper role.

Chairman Knowles announced the Committee would meet on Thursday, January 7, 1988, at the Metro Center for the purpose of drafting a report for Council consideration on January 14 and to perhaps review the appointment process. Councilor Ragsdale wanted the Committee's report to reflect mutual consent, noting the issues of Mr. Whelan's ability and a cooperative process were separate.

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Chairman Knowles the meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "A. Marie Nelson".

A. Marie Nelson
Clerk of the Council

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