

MEETING REPORT

DATE OF MEETING: July 17, 1979

GROUP/SUBJECT: WAYS and MEANS COMMITTEE

PERSONS ATTENDING: Councilors: Jack Deines, Donna Stuhr,
Gene Peterson, Caroline Miller,
Mike Burton, Corky Kirkpatrick

Staff: Denton Kent, John Gregory,
Andrew Jordan, Charlie Shell,
Jill Hinckley, Bob McAbee

MEDIA: None

SUMMARY:

Vice Chairman Deines called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m. Since Coun. Kirkpatrick, Chairman of the committee, was not expected to arrive until 6:00 p.m., Coun. Deines suggested delaying consideration of the Personnel Rules. Coun. Burton, unable to remain at the meeting until that time, expressed his support of the memorandum to be presented by Coun. Peterson. A memorandum from Coun. Banzer was also distributed to be considered for discussion.

Coun. Peterson presented his memorandum which supported Council confirmation of all positions involved with policy formulation, having contact with the public and local government officials and those having responsibilities to serve the public. These positions were the Chief Administrative Officer, Legal Counsel, Legislative Liaison, Council Secretary, Information Officer, Local Government Relations Officer and all Department Heads.

Coun. Peterson proposed that as many positions as possible be maintained on a merit basis. All supervisory tasks, efficiency ratings, disciplinary action or dismissals would be the sole responsibility of the Executive Officer, with the exception of Council staff.

Coun. Burton stated that he wanted to avoid any problems over the authority to be exercised by the Executive officer and the Council by establishing clear-cut guidelines.

In response to a question by Coun. Stuhr, Coun. Peterson explained that he was not concerned over the technical qualifications of a prospective employee. He was concerned over any possible conflicts with Council policy, any conflict of interest, ability to work effectively with the Council and public, and with local officials. Coun. Peterson envisioned that the Executive Officer would present a resume to the Council for consideration after a selection had been made. If the Executive Officer chose, the Council could meet with the candidate.

Coun. Stuhr questioned how the Council would determine if there were a conflict. After a discussion of that point, Coun. Peterson concluded that the process would largely be a preventive measure since the Executive Officer would not likely present any one who would be in potential conflict with Council positions.

The Personnel Rules were tabled temporarily and Coun. Deines moved to a report on the status of Data Processing Systems. The report was presented by Mr. Charlie Shell.

Mr. Shell reviewed the background on the purchase of the computer explaining that the initial decision was based on the objective of consolidating computer usage which was disbursed among several pieces of equipment. At the time of this decision, the staff worked on the assumption that existing staff would convert existing programs to run on the new computer. While the transportation and solid waste programs are ready to be converted, changes have occurred since the initial decisions were made which have created problems with the financial systems.

These changes have involved staff turnover which left the organization without the skills needed to convert the existing financial programs. It was also discovered that because of the inadequacy of the documentation of the existing program and serious design flaws, the financial program was not worth converting.

Mr. Shell explained that a recommendation on how to proceed with the acquisition of a financial systems program was based on the constraints of lack of data processing staff which could be used for financial systems and program maintenance, the inadequacy of the existing programs and the prior decision to consolidate computer usage on one piece of equipment. Mr. Shell stated that the staff was prepared to recommend that MSD acquire a financial reporting system from a company which provides performance guarantees and has local maintenance services available.

Mr. Shell discussed how the staff arrived at this recommendation and how existing constraints limited the options of improving the existing system or of acquiring other systems. Mr. Shell listed the alternatives considered, such as a cooperative project with Tri-Met, the purchase of an interim system to meet our requirements until a project with Tri-Met could be completed or time-sharing on another system.

Mr. Shell concluded that the staff would continue to evaluate alternative systems which could be installed on the new computer and would be making a report back as soon as a firm recommendation was prepared.

A draft report on long-term financing for MSD and organizational issues prepared by Rick Gustafson, Executive Officer, was presented by Denton Kent. The memo focused on two issues; long-term financing and alternative organizational structure and future responsibilities. The memorandum suggested three organizational structures to provide citizen input on these issues.

These were: 1) reconstitute the Tri-County Local Government Commission, 2) establish a citizen committee for finance or, 3) formulate an executive committee to direct long-term issues for the Tri-County Local Government Commission.

The Committee asked questions about the formation of the Tri-County Commission, the original authority and the process of reconstituting the Commission. Coun. Kirkpatrick explained that the 60 member Commission was originally established by the Boundary Commission, which had received a grant to finance a study of Metropolitan Government. Members of the Commission and a representative of the Chamber of Commerce selected the members which were divided between elected officials, business, labor and the academic community.

Coun. Miller expressed concern over how the Council would maintain contact with the Commission. Coun. Miller stated that the Executive Officer should not have sole access to the Commission.

Coun. Kirkpatrick acknowledged that the members of the Commission would be appointed by the Council.

On the arrival of Coun. Kirkpatrick, the discussion of long-term financing was tabled and the Personnel Rules were discussed. Coun. Deines reviewed the memoranda from Coun. Peterson, Coun. Banzer and the Employees Association. The committee reviewed changes made by staff after the Ways and Means Committee meeting on July 12. The committee first reviewed the various changes on which there had been major discussion at the previous meeting and noted additional changes.

The committee then discussed the issues which had not been previously resolved. Three main issues were discussed: Council confirmation, review of the Executive Officer's action discharging an employee by a three member panel, and the positions to be included in exempt status.

The Committee deleted reference to Council confirmation from the Rules with the intent of resolving the issue at the Council meeting on July 26.

The Committee confirmed its support of the "Troika" review of a grievance involving a discharge.

The Committee also opposed including the Council Secretary in an exempt status. Coun. Miller explained that the secretary should have the same protection as any other employee. Exempting the secretary would place that person in the position of working for 12 people.

The Committee noted two additional issues for further study. The Committee requested staff to recommend a way to establish an incentive for employees to reduce the use of sick leave. Second, the staff was asked to prepare a recommendation on how cost of benefits will be paid for part-time and regular employees and job

sharing positions.

The Committee unanimously approved the Personnel Rules for recommendation to the Council along with Appendix "A" concerning policy on Temporary Employees.

The Committee resumed discussion of the long-term financing and organizational issues. The committee decided to invite Rick Gustafson and Coun. Banzer to the next committee meeting on July 31 to discuss the issues further.

The Committee then discussed the arrangements and schedule for the Council retreat. They also reviewed a report from Martin-Simonds on the proposed topics to be discussed at the retreat, along with additional topics for further consideration.

The Committee approved a contract with the Data Processing Authority for computer support for the transportation program.

The Committee then received a status report from Denton Kent on labor negotiations.

REPORT WRITTEN BY: Charlie Shell

COPIES TO: Committee
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Denton Kent

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