



City of Olympia

City Hall
601 4th Avenue E
Olympia, WA 98501

Information: 360-753-8447

Meeting Minutes City Council

Tuesday, November 20, 2012

5:30 PM

Room 207

Special Meeting to Hold a Study Session

1. ROLL CALL

Mayor Buxbaum called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Present: 6 - Mayor Stephen H. Buxbaum, Mayor Pro Tem Nathaniel Jones, Councilmember Jim Cooper, Councilmember Julie Hankins, Councilmember Steve Langer and Councilmember Jeannine Roe

Absent: 1 - Councilmember Karen Rogers

2. BUSINESS OF THE EVENING

2.A [12-0707](#) Approval of 2012 Amendments to City Council Guidebook

Mayor Buxbaum started the meeting by thanking the General Government Committee for their work and Chair Roe for arranging this meeting to discuss Council Guidelines. He turned the meeting over to Councilmember Roe to facilitate the discussion on Council Guidelines.

Councilmember Roe stated that the proposed changes to the Council Guidelines represent a significant amount of work by the committee. The current guidelines were adopted in 2007 with minor modifications over the years. The General Government Committee reviews the guidelines every two years. They are a guide for how Council operates, not a set of rules.

Councilmember Roe stated that in terms of the order of the agenda Council would begin with discussions on the City Manager's performance review then discuss shared leadership and responsibility, and conclude with a discussion on some proposed routine changes to the guideline language.

1. City Manager Performance Review

Councilmember Roe asked Cathie Butler to review the performance evaluation process for the City Manager. Ms. Butler referred Councilmembers to the handouts she provided which detailed the performance review process proposed.

City Manager Steve Hall discussed the format further and how his performance review had evolved over time. The process changed from formal to informal and he stated his preference for a more formal process.

Mayor Buxbaum said he liked the format and categories but did not prefer the numeric scoring. He also expressed an interest in seeing prior year reviews at the time he is assessing the City Manager's performance.

Council agreed to the new format and that they would use it as it best fit their needs in terms of scoring versus narrative. Councilmember Jones requested an "Other" category be added to capture any other comments, which Council concurred with.

2. Discussion about Shared Leadership and Responsibility

Councilmember Roe shared that the General Government Committee had a lengthy discussion on shared leadership and responsibility and asked Councilmembers to share their perspectives on the issue.

Councilmember Cooper stated he would like to see all of the Councilmembers get opportunities to learn and grow and he would like to find a way to equalize leadership amongst the Council.

Councilmember Langer agreed that shared leadership is important, and noted that each Councilmember brings a unique perspective and skill set. Shared leadership should be an aspirational goal and we should always look to make assignments in terms of what is best for the City.

Councilmember Hankins stated that everyone on the Council should continue to have an equal voice and vote, and that the Council should match needs with each member's strengths. She expressed concern about committee coverage if both the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem were not allowed to chair committees. She would like to utilize all seven members to fill committee positions.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones shared that he is supportive of the sentiment and proposals by the General Government Committee around shared leadership, but shares Councilmember Langer's concerns that the Council should maintain flexibility in terms of assignments and place members in positions that they can best serve the City.

Mayor Buxbaum expressed appreciation for the work and proposals shared by the General Government Committee. He stated the purpose of the guidelines is to help us stay on track and he feels the need to keep them flexible and adaptive in terms of language.

Councilmember Roe also mentioned the code states that the General Government Committee picks the Interjurisdictional assignments and does so based on committee assignments. She expressed using caution so as not to overload a particular member with too much work or centralizing power amongst a few members.

Councilmember Langer said we need to trust Councilmembers in terms of what their workload limits are as everyone is different.

Mayor Buxbaum expressed a desire to keep the pathways flexible and not rigid and focus on the principles.

Councilmember Roe indicated she was not hearing any consensus to change the guidelines.

3. Council Guidelines - Routine Language Changes

The Council discussed suggested routine changes to the guidelines, including the setting of committee meeting dates, special recognition, scheduling of meetings during primary and general elections, agendas for special meetings, preferred time for executive sessions, removing language around the Committee of the Chairs, and televising of special meetings.

For the scheduling of committee meeting dates, the proposed language states that would occur at its first meeting of the year. Mayor Buxbaum requested to add language at the end clarifying "following confirmation of committee appointments for the year". Council concurred with this change. Councilmember Langer suggested that additional language might be needed to clarify that meeting times and dates might change with committee concurrence and adequate notification.

Council agreed with removal of Committee of the Chairs language.

Council agreed to include language in the guidelines that the Council's annual retreat will be held as early in January as possible given Councilmember schedules, facility and facilitator availability, and that the mid-year retreat will be held during the month of June.

Council expressed concurrence with other proposed routine language changes. Ms. Butler stated that all of the changes would be forwarded to Council for approval on the Consent Calendar in the near future.

The discussion was completed.

3. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.