



City Council

Discussion of Operating Agreements and Council Support

Agenda Date: 9/21/2021
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Title

Discussion of Operating Agreements and Council Support

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee.

City Manager Recommendation:

Participate in a facilitated discussion to review and refine Operating Agreements and discuss Council support needs.

Report

Issue:

Whether to participate in a facilitated discussion regarding Operating Agreements and Council support.

Staff Contact:

Jay Burney, City Manager, 360.753.8740

Presenter(s):

Kerensa Mabwa, Facilitator, Athena Group

Background and Analysis:

In June 2020, the City Council met for their mid-year retreat. At that retreat discussion began regarding the City Council Referral Process; Meeting Types; Advisory Committee Liaison Roles; Operating Agreements and Norms. On August 17 the Council met in a work session to further work on their operating agreements in a facilitated discussion. At this work session the Council will review and refine the draft agreements for consensus.

In this work session Council will also discuss their desired needs for support.

In cities in Western Washington with a Council/City Manager form of Government, the support to the City Councils is provided by the Executive Assistant that reports to a City Manager.

In a casual survey of City HR Directors in Washington seven supplied position descriptions of support staff that provide support directly to Councilmembers. In every case the cities with such positions have Mayor/Council forms of Government and the Assistant reports to the mayor. In some cases, the Assistant is a direct contracted employee with the mayor and/or Council, similar to how the Olympia City Council employs it's City Manager. For example, the Edmonds City Council has a position that was established with a contract so the oversight of the position can be ceded from the Mayor to the Council.

While the City of Tacoma does have an Executive Assistant for the City Manager that provides administrative support to Council, they also employ what they call "Management Fellows" that serve for two years and while they provide some policy support to the City Manager, their primary function is to manage constituent relations, policy analysis, research and support for their Council. One of the qualifications of that position is a Masters in Public Policy or Masters in Public Administration.

It will be helpful at the Work Session discussion to get a fuller understanding of the specific type of support the Council would like.

Attachments:

August 17, 2021 Work Session Notes