



CITY COUNCIL

Open Government, Rules & Intergovernmental Relations Committee

**Monday, April 1, 2013
Meeting Report**

Attendance: S. Marmarou, D. Reed, D. Sterner Chair

Others Attending: S. Katzenmoyer, C. Snyder, C. Younger

The meeting was called to order at 5:03 pm by Mr. Sterner.

I. Update Welcome to Reading Guidebook

Ms. Snyder stated that a glossy cover will be used as it is sturdier and will last longer. She stated that this increases the price slightly. She stated that letters for advertising were sent to the City's basic partners. She stated that there is a two week deadline and additional letters will be sent to the next tier of partners depending on the response to the initial letters. She stated that advertisements will be limited to 26 pages and the Guidebook will be 100 pages.

Mr. Marmarou questioned the cost. Ms. Snyder stated that the cost is \$6,612 for 10,000 copies. She stated that the Career and Technology Center is printing the books. She stated that she supports the work of the School District.

Mr. Marmarou questioned the amount of revenue for this project. Ms. Snyder stated that depending on the level of ads, the most would be \$7,800.

Mr. Marmarou questioned what the excess revenue would be used for. Ms. Snyder stated that this has not been discussed.

Mr. Lloyd arrived at this time.

Mr. Sterner stated that Council heard that the Guidebook is not a priority for the Administration. Mr. Lloyd noted the need for the Administration to prioritize projects. He stated that there are different levels of priority but that all projects will get done.

Mr. Sterner and Ms. Reed stated that this project is almost complete.

II. Citizens Advisory Board

Ms. Snyder stated that she has met with Ms. Katzenmoyer to move this issue forward. She reviewed the proposed changes. She stated that the changes will make the Board less formal. She stated that she is comfortable with this amendment.

Mr. Lloyd stated that the Mayor's office is also comfortable with the amendment.

Ms. Snyder suggested that this draft be circulated to the current membership of the Board. She also suggested that the draft move off of this agenda and into the Council agenda for introduction on April 8.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if the current members of the Board would carry forward. Ms. Snyder stated that they will and that their terms will be addressed as they expire.

Ms. Reed agreed with this approach and stated that those who are interested in remaining maintain their membership. She suggested that all principal partners attend the first meeting to keep the focus of the Board moving in the right direction.

Mr. Marmarou noted the need for committed members. He noted the importance of the three meeting removal clause. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that in the past she has sent a memo to all BAC liaisons reminding them of this clause. She stated that she will send the memo again in the near future.

Mr. Sterner questioned if minutes of these meetings were received in the past. Ms. Reed stated that Council should get minutes of all BAC meetings. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that these minutes were inconsistent.

Ms. Snyder stated that the Board should appoint a secretary. She questioned if there is no quorum if updates can be given and discussions held. Ms. Reed expressed the belief that after the Board is reconfigured, the meetings will be well attended.

Mr. Sterner stated that the Board may be more informal but a quorum is needed. Mr. Younger stated that meetings can be held without a quorum but that official actions cannot take place.

Ms. Reed stated that this Board is a conduit for communication.

Ms. Snyder stated that the amendment sets monthly meetings but stated that this may change depending on the issues at hand. She explained that meetings may not need to be monthly if there is no business but may need to be more often if there are many topics for discussion.

Ms. Reed expressed her thanks to Ms. Snyder for moving this forward. Ms. Snyder stated that Ms. Katzenmoyer should get the thanks as she moved the amendment forward.

Mr. Sterner recommended that the amendment be placed on Council's April 8 agenda for introduction and Ms. Snyder work to schedule their first meeting.

Ms. Snyder stated that after the amendment passes Council she will continue to work with Ms. Katzenmoyer on membership and term expirations.

III. Consolidation of City Policies

Ms. Snyder stated that policy is being set by the Mayor's office.

Mr. Lloyd stated that there is no report at this time. He explained that the Mayor's office is reviewing all City policies and is working to consolidate them. He stated that they are working with the sister cities to determine best practices.

Mr. Sterner expressed concern for the heavy-handed tone of past policies. Mr. Lloyd stated that there are disciplinary issues in each policy but that they are very inconsistent. He stated that after the policies are reviewed, a handbook will be created.

Mr. Sterner questioned the Council communication policy and media communication policy. Mr. Lloyd stated that there are many policies and that they will all be addressed.

Mr. Sterner questioned when the next discussion should occur. Mr. Lloyd stated that the review has begun with Human Resources. He stated that the review of Human Resources policies is almost complete and will serve as the foundation for the others. He suggested that the next discussion occur in June. He stated that he will have a much better sense of the project at that time as there is currently much confusion.

Mr. Marmarou expressed the belief that elected officials should be able to speak with the press. He stated that in the past he was told not to do this.

Ms. Reed stated that freedom of the press would prevail in this situation. She expressed the belief that elected officials have the right to speak to the press.

Mr. Lloyd questioned who told Mr. Marmarou not to speak to the press. Mr. Marmarou stated that it was the past Administration and was related to the issues at the 9th & Marion fire station.

Mr. Lloyd stated that speaking with the press is not the same as speaking with City staff. He stated that there should be boundaries with staff.

Mr. Marmarou questioned Council speaking with employees. Mr. Lloyd stated that casual conversation is okay but that directives are problematic. Ms. Snyder stated that employees are here to do a job. She stated that it becomes problematic when too much of their time is used by

these directives. She stated that this will be discussed at the Committee of the Whole meeting tomorrow.

Mr. Sterner described a constituent codes issue that he related directly to Mr. Natale when he ran into him in City Hall. He stated that he followed up with Mr. Natale to ensure that this was okay. He stated that Mr. Natale suggested that in the future an email be sent and that Ms. Snyder be copied. He noted his understanding of the need for this policy.

Ms. Snyder stated that Council is also encouraged to make complaints directly to the Citizen Service Center (CSC). She stated that any citizen can use the CSC and that access is not restricted.

Mr. Marmarou stated that he was hesitant to use the CSC. He stated that he has heard reports that citizens call the CSC and no action is seen. He stated that he informs all to be sure to get the Service Request number for follow up at a later date. He stated that he has excellent responses from CSC staff.

IV. Amendment to the Code of Ethics

Ms. Katzenmoyer explained that she has added a history page at the end of the document. She stated that the amendment has been reviewed by Mr. Younger.

Mr. Younger stated that his only concerns were the financial figures as they were not familiar to him. He stated that the Ethics Board solicitor has confirmed the rationale for the figures.

Ms. Snyder questioned if these items needed to be added to the Code if they can be addressed by the State. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that if they are addressed by the State, complaints must be submitted to the State. If they are added to the Code, they can be addressed locally.

Ms. Snyder questioned adopting the State legislation rather than adding this to the City Code. Ms. Reed agreed.

Mr. Sterner questioned if other cities have Ethics Codes. Mr. Younger stated that the City Charter creates the Ethics Board and mandates an Ethics Code.

Ms. Reed stated that the Board has been served by good people.

Ms. Snyder questioned if the amendment was reviewed with the Mayor. Mr. Lloyd stated that he received a briefing but that a thorough review was not done.

Ms. Snyder suggested that requiring all the information for no bid contracts would create additional work for the Board of Ethics and increase legal fees. She questioned if the cost outweighs the benefits.

Mr. Marmarou stated that all campaign contributions are available for review at the County.

Ms. Snyder stated that this seems extensive. She stated that the City must provide this information to the Board. She questioned the practicality of using this method and noted the need for further review.

Mr. Younger stated that this is based on State Statute and that it is not an easy read. He explained that no bid contract information must be submitted only for those listed in the amendment – City employee, City official, immediate family of the employee or official or a for-profit business entity which the employee or official has a material interest. He stated that this does not apply to all no-bid contracts. Ms. Snyder thanked Mr. Younger for the explanation. She stated that this makes the provision much less onerous.

Mr. Sterner questioned who sets the limit at \$500 for no-bid contracts. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that this is taken directly from State Election Code.

Ms. Snyder questioned why campaign contributions were limited and why this amount was chosen. Ms. Katzenmoyer explained that the amounts are based on those used by the City of Philadelphia and that there are two different limitations. She stated that during an election cycle, individuals are limited to \$2,600 to a specific candidate and organizations are limited to \$10,000 to a specific candidate. She stated that a limitation of \$10,000 is set for candidates to contribute to Political Committees. There is no limit on the amount that can be raised during an election year. She explained that during non-election years, candidates for Mayor may raise up to \$250,000 per year and Council members may raise up to \$100,000 per year.

Ms. Reed suggested that a member of Senator Schwank's staff be present at the next meeting for further discussion.

Mr. Sterner noted the need for further review of the amendment. Ms. Katzenmoyer was instructed to contact Senator Schwank's office.

Mr. Younger reminded all that former Councilor Fuhs initiated this issue during his tenure. Ms. Katzenmoyer explained that the provisions were added to a section of the Administrative Code that is difficult to enforce. She stated that adding them to the Code would make it easier to enforce.

Mr. Sterner stated that this topic will be discussed at the next meeting. He expressed the belief that the amendment is close to completion.

V. Other Matters

Mr. Sterner questioned if there was other business for the Committee.

Mr. Lloyd stated that he is excited to begin City Stat. He stated that the use of this program will keep all better informed. He stated that it will also allow the City to address specific challenges or properties. He stated that this information can also help drive agenda topics.

There was discussion to have a presentation at the work session.

Mr. Lloyd stated that he is working with Ms. Kelleher on bringing standing reports to all Committees to keep Council better informed.

Mr. Sterner suggested that Mr. Lloyd work with Ms. Kelleher on the placement of the City Stat presentation. He stated that if the presentation is made only to this Committee that it be preliminary information and a full presentation be made to the full body.

The meeting adjourned at 5:59 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,
Shelly Katzenmoyer,
Deputy City Clerk