

BUDGET, FINANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

July 13, 2010

3:20 P.M.

Councilwoman Berz, Chairwoman, called the meeting of the Budget, Finance and Personnel Committee to order again, with Councilmen Rico, Scott, Gilbert, Benson, Ladd, Murphy, Robinson and McGary present. City Attorney Michael McMahan and Shirley Crownover, Assistant Clerk to the Council, were also present.

Others present included Larry Zehnder, Vickie Haley, Dan Johnson, Daisy Madison, Randy Ray, Fredia Kitchen, Simone White, and Chief Parker.

REPORT: AUDIT COMMITTEE

Chairwoman Berz stated that this was a follow-up to a previous approval; that the Audit Committee had been working long and hard on this and were to be commended. She turned the meeting over to Mr. Millsaps of the Audit Committee.

Mr. Millsaps stated that an Ordinance had passed in April; that the proposed Resolution would outline how employees are protected and what the Audit Committee does; that we do have a Hotline.

Councilman McGary asked about a web-based reporting method? Mr. Millsaps stated that a person could go into this and file an incident; that they would fill it out and submit it; that there would be no ID and e-mail address; that if a person wanted to remain anonymous, they would give them an ID number; that 16% would probably be reported on the web but most would be telephone calls and a person could remain anonymous.

Councilwoman Ladd wanted to know if we had been tracking calls and getting some frivolous calls? Mr. Millsaps responded that no one had called because the number has not been activated; that the calls would go to Stan Sewell.

Councilman Rico contended that someone would know who called; that someone could be doing this for meanness, and they would need to tell who they are; that we need to know if the calls are legitimate. Mr. Millsaps responded that our investigation will determine this—that the person would remain anonymous.

Councilman Benson stated that in 2001 we had a lady call who told us something was going on, and it was true, and the fellow was fired; then the lady went out of town and is back but can't get a favorable interview—that this is the human nature of a situation; that this person “blew a whistle” on their boss and now no one wants to hire her. He asked how this could be averted? Mr. Millsaps agreed that it could not be averted, but under these guidelines, employees here will be covered.

Councilman Rico stated that when we appointed a Police Chief, the Council got anonymous letters; that they don't say who they are.

Mr. Millsaps stated that complaints would come to Stan Sewell, and he and the Audit Committee would determine the ones that are frivolous.

Councilman Rico asked if you don't know who it is, how can they be disciplined?

Chairwoman Berz stated that it was wiser to go this route for total anonymity; that we may not know directly but some of our cohorts will.

Councilman Gilbert noted that some of the reports will be the same.

Mr. Millsaps stated that we would use the Internal Audit Staff like we do now.

Chairwoman Berz asked if it were okay to go forward with this and approve the Resolution.

Councilwoman Ladd asked how it would be communicated to employees? Mr. Millsaps stated that they would get a handout, and it would be on the website.

Councilman Gilbert asked if it could be put on bulletin board, and the answer was yes.

Mr. Millsaps stated that we could give this a year and then re-evaluate and see if there are problems.

Chairwoman Berz confirmed that it was okay to move on with this.

The meeting adjourned 3:30 p.m.