

Minutes

Monday, August 13, 2007



Public Service Committee

3:00 p.m. – 3:55 p.m.
at Carnegie Town Hall
235 West Tenth Street

Members Present: Kermit Stagers, De Knudson, and Bob Jamison

Staff Present: City Clerk, Debra A. Owen and Assistant City Clerk, Tamara M. Jorgensen

1. Call To Order

- Committee Chair Stagers called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

2. Review and approval of Minutes dated 07/02/07 and 07/09/07.

- Motion made by Knudson and seconded by Stagers to approve the 07/02/07 Minutes.
- Motion made by Knudson and seconded by Stagers to approve the 07/09/07 Minutes.

3. Introduction and transfer of Committee Leadership

- This action will take place at a future Public Services Committee.

4. Discussion on PACs

- PAC discussions at previous Public Service Committee meetings explored the possibility of eliminating all PAC contributions. Since that time, legal research has shown this would abridge the First Amendment rights of PAC's. However, it is legal to restrict the dollar amount that a PAC can contribute.
 - Discussion was held regarding limiting the monetary contribution to the same amount from PACs, individuals, relatives, etc. The intent is that this would create a more level 'playing field' for all candidates seeking the position. However, Supreme Court rulings have indicated that you cannot limit the amount of money that a candidate contributes to his/her own campaign which also includes the level contributed from up to the 3rd degree of kinship.
 - Discussion was held regarding utilizing the newly formed Charter Revision Commission for any proposed changes in the election laws. One negative aspect of doing this is that future changes or updates could not be processed as quickly or as easily as the current ordinance process. Owen reviewed recent changes to state law regarding election changes in reference to municipalities.
 - As the campaign deadlines have been discussed and agreed to at previous meetings, Owen asked if the deadline ordinances could be severed from other changes and sent to the Council for action because 2008 campaigns generally start raising money in the fall. The committee agreed that this could occur.
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- Campaign finance information was discussed and a review was given of the recent state law changes regarding the amount of money that can be contributed. The committee will be asking for input and suggestions from the City Council regarding the following points:
 - a. Contributions: No individual contribution limits vs. limit PAC contributions by setting a limit of \$1,000 per PAC to each candidate (no limit on ballot question committees)
 - b. Late Filing of Finance Reports: Social stigma enough (no financial penalty) vs. monetary fine for late filers (\$50.00 or \$100.00 per day).
- Owen affirmed the intent to revise the election books and explore the possibility of a program that will allow easier and faster submission of election reports and financial information.

5. Open discussion

- Discussion was held regarding drafting an ordinance to allow an elected official to gather signatures on petitions. A provision to amend the code of conduct could be made allowing this to occur.

6. Next meeting is scheduled for: Monday, August 20, 2007, at 3:00 p.m.

7. Adjournment at 3:55 p.m.

Tamara M. Jorgensen
Assistant City Clerk