

Minutes

Monday, September 8, 2008



Public Service Committee

4:28 p.m.
at the Carnegie Town Hall
235 West Tenth Street

Members Present: Vernon Brown, Kermit Staggers, De Knudson, and Kenny Anderson Jr.
Members Absent: None
Staff Present: City Clerk, Debra A. Owen and Assistant City Clerk, Tamara M. Jorgensen
Guests: None

1. Call To Order

- Committee Chair Anderson Jr. called the meeting to order at 4:55 p.m.

2. Review and approval of Minutes dated 08/11/08

- A motion was made by Brown and seconded by Staggers to approve said minutes. Anderson Jr. called for a voice vote on the motion. Council Member Knudson excused herself from the vote as she was absent from the last meeting. All remaining members voted yes. **Motion Passed.**

Item 6 was discussed at this time. See item for action taken.

3. Recycling and Paper Reduction by Committee Member Knudson

- Knudson gave the committee a brief update on the 'Green Committee' which is an internal committee started with the purpose of finding ways to recycle and 'make the City greener'. The committee has met twice now with future schedules yet to be determined. To start the process moving, members have selected the following 2 areas to begin the recycling process: 1) Increasing recycling at the City Level and 2) paper reduction.
 - Knudson stated that she has inquired with the administration regarding when we will go towards single stream recycling with City trash. This process may occur in the future but is not there now.
 - Knudson asked for suggestions regarding paper reduction and encouraged staff to cut back whenever possible on duplication. The following suggestions were made:
 - ⇒ Have a 'master copy' of certain documents that can be read in the Council office and then filed – this can pertain to documentation concerning money transfers, executive orders, large government/training books, etc.;
 - ⇒ Implement a 'check out' system for larger binders. Instead of having one large binder for each member, maintain one or two in the City Clerk's Office for review;
 - ⇒ Using two sided copies whenever possible. Brown made the recommendation that the Informational Agenda have the Committee Agenda on the opposite side. Council Members and members of the audience would know the subject items for the committee right away.
 - Knudson encouraged Council Members and staff to attend the 'Going Green' meetings whenever possible and to think about new ideas for recycling paper, etc.
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4. Proposed City Events/Block Party Ordinance

- As stated at last month's meeting, Anderson Jr. would like to propose a new ordinance regarding City Events/Block Parties. He has researched other similar cities to see if they have such an ordinance. Anderson Jr. and Owen have attended a recent Downtown Events Committee meeting and have communicated the following recommendations for improvements:
 - ⇒ As most of these events occur on city property (and are becoming larger and more frequent), liability coverage needs to be re-examined and updated where needed;
 - ⇒ Meeting Agendas need to be publicized on a larger level so additional people can attend if they want to. Minutes should be taken at every meeting. These items are not being done now.
 - ⇒ An appeal process should be implemented that will allow people who have been turned down for an event an additional chance to have their event scheduled/reviewed.
 - ⇒ A process for reviewing and approving events should be uniform for all items submitted.
 - ⇒ Once approved, all events need to be reviewed to ensure that they are in compliance with city ordinances. Special mention was given to events that may hinder citizen safety, or may promote alcohol consumption, etc.
 - ⇒ A 'one stop shop' process could be set up by having all of the information, rules and regulations, contact personnel, forms, etc. in one envelope for distribution to event organizers. All of the same information would be distributed to anyone requesting event information. Perhaps the same information could be made available on the City's website. Information should be included regarding ADA Requirements, Health Department needs, Fire Department requirements, Police Department, etc. as well as any other pertinent departmental needs. One uniform process for any of these types of events on city property.
- Anderson Jr. stated that he would like to see a member of the City Council's staff attend future committee meetings.
- Knudson stated that making these suggestions are more of an 'administrative' area not so much a City Council area. Discussion was held regarding how the Council sets policy and that approving ordinances is part of the process.
- Anderson Jr. would like to review other city ordinances and 'fine tune' the process. There is not intent to change the existing committees or micro manage, just a need to making the process more uniform in nature and therefore, further enhance the events in the future. Anderson Jr. had discussed the proposed suggestions with this committee and they were very receptive to the suggestions.
- Anderson Jr. has researched similar cities that operate through the 'home rule charter' and they do have very successful appeal processes. Additional research will be done in this area.

5. Open Discussion

- There was none.

6. Item Added after Agenda Deadline – Election Ordinance Review

- Owen discussed the number of reporting periods in the previous election and showed the following reporting period for the upcoming election(s): December 31, 2009, February and April of 2009, December of 2010 for the candidates that are elected.
- To end the duplication of reports for Political Action Committees, the City Clerk's Office proposed to have all PAC's register with the secretary of states office when contributing to local election. Over 99% of PAC's which contribute to local elections are currently registered with the secretary of state. In 2008, the clerk's office retrieved the PAC's Statement of Organization information from the State's website and posted it on the City Election webpage.

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- Owen also proposed that PAC's file only one Financial Disclosure statement with the City on the Monday one week prior to the election. The year end Financial Disclosure Statement and post election statement can be retrieved from the Secretary of State's website and posted to the City's website.
- Owen also proposed that the January and March financial disclosure report dates be deleted. The end of the month March report is only one week apart from the April report, which will still be required. Owen stated that the reporting periods are still Dec 31 of the year prior to an election, and February, and April for pre-election Financial Disclosure Reports. (She indicated that the 60 day post-election report is still required).
- Discussion continued regarding the December 31st deadline. Owen clarified that the verbiage in the ordinance states that the paperwork would be due 3 business days after the deadline, making this report due January 7th, 2009.
- The logic behind the reporting by PACs stems from a potential loophole if the requirements do not exist. In 2002, if a PAC reported to the Secretary of State after a certain report date time; next report could not be due until May, therefore they would not have to report during a local election. Stipulations in the ordinance could mandate that all PACs need to be registered with the State in order to contribute to local elections.
- The logic behind the reporting by PACs stems from a potential loophole if the requirements do not exist. In 2002, if a PAC reported to the Secretary of State after a certain report date time; next report could not be due until May, therefore they would not have to report during a local election. Stipulations in the ordinance could mandate that all PACs need to be registered with the State in order to contribute to local elections. Secretary of State Chris Nelson is comfortable with this proposal as it would mainly impact PACs that have not already formed as is the case in Mayoral Elections.
- The City Clerk's Office will send form letters to the existing PAC's that have contributed to City Elections. Candidate financial information will be reviewed to ensure that the PAC is listed with the Secretary of States office.
- Brown asked Knudson what the status was of the current penalty fees. Knudson stated that she had a conversation with City Attorney Amundson who recommended that the ordinance changes become effective as soon as possible. Knudson would like to have 'total forgiveness' for the penalty fees and Amundson is suggesting a \$100 fine for the infractions. Owen reminded the group that, per the city ordinance (which mirrors state law); candidates have to return any money that is from a group/person that does not comply with the campaign finance ordinance. Discussion was held regarding candidates who were fined (and paid) for late reports. Opinions differed as to whether or not all fines should be forgiven or only those imposed on PACs.
- Comparisons were discussed regarding the enforcement of ordinances in 2002, 2004, 2006 and 2008; the monthly reporting processes from previous years; and the City Council's recent advancements in election financial reporting that have been positive improvements for the candidates, the PACs and the office personnel.

7. Adjournment

- A motion was made by Knudson and seconded by Brown to adjourn the meeting at 5:32 p.m. Anderson Jr. called for a voice vote on the motion and all members voted yes. **Motion Passed.**

Tamara M. Jorgensen
Assistant City Clerk