

From: Marlin, Diane  
Sent: Saturday, September 12, 2020 11:15 AM  
To: !City Council  
Cc: Simon, James; Borman Curt; !Department Heads  
Subject: Follow up to council questions

PLEASE DO NOT REPLY ALL

1) In response to the request for list of people invited to attend the Hillard Heintze stakeholder sessions, it is attached. The names were gathered from a number of sources, including Council member suggestions. We weren't able to include everyone suggested but tried to get a cross section of community members who were directly related to either the Aleyah Lewis advocacy efforts, involved in community social and racial justice efforts, or some neighborhood organizations, new and older. Once we supplied the names and contact info to Hillard Heintze, we were not involved. We also were not given a list of who actually attended the sessions, per the agreement to maintain anonymity for the participants. The themes that were discussed were based on comments that council members provided, as well as the recurring themes that emerged from weeks of public input.

2) Below are Jim's comments on the proposed language in the SRO resolution. As he notes, as written, the resolution still specifies when the city deems the agreement to end. This has serious financial and legal implications and can very much restrict our flexibility in negotiating a satisfactory exit strategy. I urge you to come up with alternative language that takes into account the legal and financial aspects that have to be considered, while expressing your position.

Diane – "Subparagraph (b) states that the School District and the City will work to develop a "financial exit strategy." (and specifies the end of the then current quarter. DWM) What happens if the School Board votes to terminate the IGA on September 29 and the calendar quarter ends on September 30? The 30th could pass without even so much as time for communications between the City and School Board to arrive at such a strategy. The IGA would end and nothing would require the School District to work on a financial strategy.

The better, albeit not the best, approach would be to have Section 1 read as follows: "In the event that the School Board votes to terminate the School Resource Program Intergovernmental Agreement ("IGA"), the IGA shall terminate effective on the ninety-first (91st) following that vote. During the ninety (90) days immediately following the School Board's vote to terminate the IGA, the City and the School District shall undertake good faith negotiations in order to arrive at a mutually acceptable financial exist strategy that recognizes the City's upfront and continuing costs in equipment, supplies, and staffing to undertake its obligations under the IGA." This paragraph would replace subsections (a) and (b).

Of course, what I recommend does not resolve the issue of the parties' failure to reach a mutually agreeable financial exist strategy during the 90-day period".

3) Staff is still reviewing proposed changes to city code re: council rules. I'll send it around as soon as the draft is done.

4) On Monday, we have a Town Board meeting at 6:30 , followed by the City Council meeting. There are 8 resolutions related to accepting funds from various grant sources. Check your email for an explanation from Sheila Dodd.

5) RE: public input. The personal attacks, profanity, political threats against elected officials, board and commission members, and city staff are not acceptable. They have created a hostile environment in our Zoom meetings and have discouraged other members of the public from participating. The attacks have made it almost impossible to recruit people to serve on certain boards and commissions. This is exactly the opposite of what our meetings should be. We have the legal right to set time, place, and manner restrictions on public input as long as the restrictions are content neutral. And, consistent with First Amendment, we have the legal authority to bar from public comment and input abusive, threatening, or defamatory language.

I'll be proposing revisions to city code asap but for Monday's meeting, I intend to ask for public input specific to action items on the agenda (ie, items you will be voting on) in the usual place, at 3 minutes per speaker. Anyone with general comments will be able to provide input after council business is completed, at end of the meeting. All comments must be addressed to the council as a whole and not to individuals. If speakers engage in personal attacks or target individuals, they will be admonished to stop. If they don't, they will be muted and I'll move on to the next speaker. If we believe in the Ten Shared Principles, then we believe in mutual respect and we must practice it.

Our top priority is to conduct the business of the city at our meetings. We have no other opportunity to take the actions required to keep our city functioning other than in an open meeting. We also have much work to do in addressing public safety, policing, and racial equity. It would be a tremendous challenge in "normal" times but I can't stress enough how much HARDER it is for staff to work in this pandemic. EVERYTHING we do takes longer and requires more effort due to the extra demands of the pandemic response, the changing guidelines, and concern for health and safety of our employees. The bureaucratic hoops that we have to jump through just to distribute CDBG assistance are mind-boggling. Some staff are working extra hard to compensate for the fact positions are being held vacant. The increasingly hostile commentary at our meetings is profoundly damaging and unwarranted and it piles another layer of undeserved anxiety onto the people who are working hard to move this city forward during COVID-19. And that includes each of you. I appreciate all that you are doing in service to our community and your thoughtful, thorough consideration of the issues.

I would appreciate your support for this public input approach for Monday and for helping us to move efficiently through the agenda. Feel free to call if you want to discuss it this weekend. 217-607-9720. Thank you.

Diane Wolfe Marlin  
Mayor

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