



To: Members of the Board of Representatives
From: Mayor David Martin *DM*
Date: May 1, 2018
Re: Budget Recommendations of the Fiscal Committee

I am concerned that several of the reductions suggested by the Fiscal Committee to the full Board of Representatives will be counterproductive or will have a serious impact on the City's future plans and success.

Citizen Service

I strongly urge you to include the position of Citizen's Services Manager in this year's operating budget.

A common misperception is that Citizen Service is only a "call taking" function, or that new software will fix any issues we have. This is a very narrow definition of what Citizen Service should be doing.

After discovering numerous problems in tracking citizen complaints through to final resolution, we have talked with more than two dozen cities, as well as professional consulting firms, in search of "best practices." While I believe we need to improve how we take complaints and communicate back to citizens, the most important takeaway from this work is that best cities have a manager in charge of the entire citizen service process including the tracking and management of the follow-up process.

A case in point is the Board of Representative's concern regarding the City's responsiveness to zoning complaints, blight, and other housing concerns. These are multi-faceted issues. So, as you know, we are pursuing a number of tactics to improve zoning enforcement including the citation ordinance the Board of Reps recently approved, and the addition of enforcement resources included in this year's budget. But we have also discovered that we clearly need to significantly improve the follow-up management to citizen complaints. Without a citizen service manager, we cannot honestly guarantee that we will make significant improvement on zoning violations, blight enforcement, and housing complaints.

But tracking zoning complaints is but a small part of the many different departments that handle the follow-up to thousands of citizen complaints. We think many departments are doing reasonably well, but we don't have solid objective evidence – perhaps they should be doing better.

It seems easy to say that each department "needs to be accountable." But how do you know if a department is doing well or not?

The need for a centralized manager is particularly true when multiple departments are involved – there must be someone to manage and coordinate the collective effort. It is extremely time consuming, and

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sometimes nearly impossible, to resolve complaints from multiple neighbors that involve multiple issues across multiple departments without a central person in charge. And many of our department heads' responsibilities require them to be in the field performing or supervising work. Having a centralized service manager will, in fact, enable us to get more work done.

I have been urged by some members of the Board of Reps to make certain that this is a pay-plan, rather than a traditional MAA position. I agree. Accordingly, the previous job description will be revised because it does not encompass the upgraded responsibilities of this position. I strongly suspect that the full amount in the budget will not be necessary when the Personnel Commission determines the salary range, but please recognize that this is much more than a supervisory position.

There has also been some discussion that we need new software before we get a manager. We already have citizen service software (GovQA), but it was not implemented well – we are correcting that now, but still will need a manager. In the future we may want to change that software, or augment it with a work order system. Regardless, it would be supremely foolish to acquire software without first putting a manager in charge.

Police

There are increased requests for police presence throughout the city, including requests from members of the Board of Reps. A \$250,000 cut for police will obviously decrease police resources. New recruits, which need to be hired this coming year in anticipation of retirements in the 2019-20 fiscal year, are unavailable for regular duty as they are in training for 6 months and then require another nearly 6 months of direct supervision before they work as independent police officers. This requires an increased in total hourly requirements for the police force.

Pay-Plan Salaries

I recommend against the Board trying to amend the approved Pay-Plan system by making budget adjustments to salaries.

A recommendation has been made to reduce the salaries for the Town Clerk, the Mayor, and five members of the Cabinet. None of these positions receive a defined benefit pension. None of these individuals are in the top 100 salary earners of the City, and only the Mayor is in the top 150. These salaries are set by the Personnel Commission and based upon the Pay-Plan that was approved by the Board of Representatives. These salaries are not under the direct control of the Board, or the Mayor. None of these positions receive OT, and I can assure you that all the members of the Mayor's cabinet work well beyond 40 hours per week.

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While cutting non-union salaries may have populist appeal, several members of your Board have even suggested we actually increase the salary of the Director of Operations in order to attract the most qualified candidates. Again, increasing this salary is not under the direct authority of the Mayor's office or the Board, but the proposed reduction sends a signal from the Board that will make it more difficult to hire a great and qualified candidate.

Most importantly, in the past, direct attempts to control the salaries of non-union personnel by the Board of Representatives, or the Board of Finance, have often led to accusations of political or personal favoritism and resulted in driving most all non-union personnel into the unions, actually resulting in higher costs and benefits.

Thank you for consideration.