

The City Council for the City of Junction City, met for a work session at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, August 27, 2019, in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 680 Greenwood Street, Junction City, Oregon.

**PRESENT:** Mayor, Mark Crenshaw; Councilors Sandie Thomas, Robert Stott, Andrea Ceniga, John Gambee, Dale Rowe, and Bill DiMarco; City Administrator, Jason Knope; City Attorney, Mark Wolf; HR/Administrative Services Manager, Stephanie Moran; and City Recorder, Kitty Vodrup.

**1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

Mayor Crenshaw called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. City Prosecutor Contract Discussion**

Administrator Knope stated that the Finance and Judiciary Committee had been working on reviewing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the City Prosecutor and wanted Council input. During the Committee review, the question came up of whether or not to make the City Prosecutor position an appointee of the Council. Being an appointee of the Council would provide clarity that the Council would supervise the position and interview, hire, discuss philosophy, and have interaction and policy oversight without micromanaging. Currently, the personnel services contract for the City Prosecutor was approved by the Council, but default supervision fell to the City Administrator.

In response to a question on the RFP process, Administrator Knope stated that the RFP process recently done for the City Engineer included developing the RFP and scope of work, posting the RFP and receiving proposals, committee reviewing proposals and making a recommendation to Council, and then the Council appointing the position and approving a personnel services contract. It was noted that for the current judge's position, the Mayor and four Councilors conducted the interviews and set a two-year contract with renewable terms, so there would be more Council interaction and regular review.

Administrator Knope noted that the Charter specified that the Judge was an appointee of the Council, and the Council could appoint other positions as appointees, such as the City Attorney, City Engineer, and City Public Defender.

Discussion followed and the Council consensus was in favor of making the City Prosecutor, City Attorney, City Engineer, and City Public Defender appointees of the Council. It was noted that Council could supervise these positions or appoint a Council Committee to supervise.

Administrator Knope responded that he would work with the Finance and Judiciary Committee to update the City Prosecutor RFP, per Council direction. He would also work with legal counsel on a resolution to make the four positions appointees of the Council and bring that back to a regular Council meeting.

Finance and Judiciary Committee Chair DiMarco expressed appreciation to the Council for the discussion and input.

**3. City Manual and Personnel Policy Update**

Administrator Knope shared that the Finance and Judiciary Committee also wanted to bring this discussion to the Council for review and input. Recent events highlighted the need to look at City policies and procedures to see if there was a way to more effectively respond to issues or employee complaints without violating personnel policies or employee rights.

Discussion followed and it was noted that especially in this age of social media, accusations could spread rapidly, and it was asked if there was a way for the City to share truth sooner, without violating City policies, the complaint process, or an employee's rights. Mayor Crenshaw added that social media was not a way for a citizen to make a valid City complaint about the conduct of any City employee.

Administrator Knope noted that the City's Personnel Manual was due for a comprehensive review and it would be beneficial to also review and tie in any ARSOPS (Administrative Rules and Standard Operating Procedures), union contracts, and other policies and administrative rules to make sure all policies were up to date. He added that having effective processes and policies in place for how to respond to issues and complaints was important in protecting both an employee and the City.

Attorney Wolf stated that in revamping the Personnel Manual, they may be able to find something that allowed the City to respond to complaints in a more efficient manner and to follow best practices, while protecting employee rights. He added that public employees have certain constitutional rights that private employees do not have and those should be considered in the updates to the manual.

Councilor DiMarco added that this discussion dovetailed with the discussion of code enforcement. The City currently followed a policy of only responding to code violations that were initiated through the complaint process, whereas in the past Public Works and the Police Department had the ability to act on health or safety violations. He thought it would be good for the City to explore and have further discussion on code enforcement policy.

The Council consensus was in favor of having a comprehensive review of the Personnel Manual and other polices.

Administrator Knope stated that he would have HR/Administrative Services Manager Stephanie Moran take the lead and work with legal counsel to begin the process of updating the manual and bringing sections to the Council for review and input at future Council Work Sessions. He noted that there were currently 13 chapters in the personnel manual, and it could take a year for Council to review.

Mayor Crenshaw stated that he wanted to make sure that it got on the record that it was inappropriate for the City Council to enter into any discussion that dealt with the discipline of any City employee, except the City Administrator. He continued that recently the Council had been receiving some politically pointed comments to try and get them to act against one of the City's employees and that could go nowhere. Whether he was re-elected as Mayor or not, he would stand up for the rights of the City's employees and would not allow pitchforks and torches and discussion against employees to be held at a Council meeting. He noted that at school board meetings, they read a phrase before public testimony that they would not talk about any specific employee or their action, and maybe he would need to say something similar so that it was heard more often.

Finance and Judiciary Chair DiMarco thanked Council for the discussion and input.

**4. Adjournment**

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

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Kitty Vodrup, City Recorder

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Mark Crenshaw, Mayor