



MEMO TO: Finance, Administration, and Communications Committee of the Whole

FROM: Michelle M. Hart, MMC, City Clerk

DATE: October 23, 2018

SUBJECT: Internal Process of Preparing Items for the Council

I. PURPOSE For Info Only Potential Agenda Item Scheduled for Council Action

II. RECOMMENDATION

There is no staff recommendation associated with this briefing. The briefing informs of a city staff project to streamline and provide consistency, transparency, and accountability across the city within the internal legislative process. “Internal legislative process” means the administrative planning, setting, and creation of items/topics that will ultimately come before the Council in some form for discussion and/or action.

III. DEPARTMENT CONTACTS

Maxine Whattam, Chief Operating Officer; 425-556-2310
Michelle M. Hart, MMC, City Clerk; 425-556-2190

IV. DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND

The City Council is familiar with the “Granicus” process. Members of the Council may remember the City’s previous efforts to LEAN the former paper process that existed with respect to the compilation and distribution of the Council’s agendas, packets, and associated materials. Some members may remember the purchase, design/build, and implementation of the electronic process (“Granicus”) to replace the paper process. This system allowed for calendaring; holistic, centralized tracking; implementation of electronic workflows; and production in a wholly electronic environment. It raised both the levels of efficiency and transparency with respect to the information being provided from the staff to the Council and to the public.

Under direction of the Executive Office and the leadership of the Mayor and City’s Chief Operating Officer, City staff is building a similar internal process to assist in guiding and tracking their work and discussions leading up to delivery of topics to the Council. Although not part of the Granicus system, an architecture of file folders has been established on the City’s network to house the work coming forward through the process. Discussions begin at a departmental manager’s meeting. If approved to move forward, the topic is placed on an agenda for an “internal committee” staff meeting. These staff

meetings closely mirror the Council's Committees of the Whole, and include: Parks, Planning, and Public Works (3Ps); Public Safety (Police and Fire); and Internal Services (Executive, Finance, TIS, and Human Resources). Memos detailing the items coming forward are prepared and presented for these staff meetings. At this point, if approved, items then move forward for a Council Committee of the Whole meeting. A formal memo and respective attachments are now required for Council Committee of the Whole meetings.

The project is an exercise in formalizing the way items are created, discussed, and are moved forward for Council consideration. The return on investment in creating such a process is tangible -- creation of a system whereby all items are known at all times; formats and expectations are standardized; advanced planning and calendaring are required; and transparency and accountability are an inherent part of the fabric of review.

Staff from the Executive Office are currently meeting with directors and managers throughout the City to train them in the new process. Staff is as well currently scoping for a permanent tool, such as SharePoint, to provide a more formal and functional architecture to house this process, other than the city's network drives.

This established platform of holistic planning of items coming forward to the Council will provide staff an easier way to see how many "touches" an item has had before the Council. The Council is aware of the Mayor's administrative "3-Touch Rule" staff guideline. The Mayor created this guideline for staff to ensure that items are vetted to the extent the Administration and the Council desires them to be. The guideline has been relatively esoteric for those working to bring items forward, as some items require three points of discussion, others more, and others, less. This is certainly item-dependent and predicated on both the wishes of Administration and the wishes of the Council. The internal process discussed here will highlight for Administration the path that each discussion item takes.

V. TIME CONSTRAINTS

There are no time constraints associated with the project; however, the City is targeting an early 2019 rollout with respect to the permanent architecture to house the process.

VI. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Workflow Slide