



CITY COMMISSION AGENDA REQUEST



DATE July 6, 1994

SUBJECT Staffing Recommendations for the City Commission Office

AMOUNT _____

SOURCE _____

OMB _____

- Bid/Contract/Lease
- Change Order
- Budget Transfer/Supple. Appropriation
- Status Report
- Policy/Discussion
- OTHER (Specify): _____

REQUEST ACTION ON: July 13, 1994

HISTORY

Prior to 1988, the City Commission Office was staffed by a Receptionist and a Secretary to the Commission, who were responsible for handling all clerical, secretarial and receptionist duties. Any special needs of the Commissioners, such as drafting correspondence, research projects, attending community events, etc. were conducted by the individual Commissioners or provided by the appropriate Appointed Official or his staff. In mid 1988, the Commission made the decision to establish two Aide to the Commission positions (to be shared by the four Commissioners), to convert the Secretary to the Commission position to an Aide to the Mayor, and to expand the role of the Receptionist to that of Secretary/Receptionist. The Aides to Commissioners positions were classified by the Employee Relations Department as a pay grade 14, the Aide to the Mayor was established as a pay grade 16, and the Receptionist was classified as a Secretary IV which was a pay grade 10. These positions were filled in late FY 1988. Subsequent to initial classification, in March, 1990, the Employee Relations Department conducted a City-wide classification and pay study for all non union positions, excluding Executive and Senior Management. As a result, the Aides to Commissioners positions were classified as a pay grade 15, the Aide to the Mayor was classified as a pay grade 18, and the Secretary IV was classified as a pay grade 12. In May of 1989, in a City Commission team building session, the Commission expressed four specific concerns about the Commission Office structure, as follows: 1) the employment process; 2) employee evaluations; 3) office management, and; 4) general office administration. Accordingly, the City Treasurer-Clerk was directed to draft a document delineating the reporting relationships of the various Commission staff, as well as the processes for hiring, firing, disciplining and evaluating those positions. After discussion with and review by each individual Commissioner, the Treasurer-Clerk proposed guidelines for the management of those employees in a July 12, 1989 agenda item. Attached for your review is a copy of that item, which was approved by a 4 - 0 vote with one Commissioner absent. Commissioners Lightsey and Meisburg were the only current Commissioners on the Commission at that time. Although Commissioner Meisburg was absent from the meeting he had reviewed the item and indicated his concurrence with the proposed structure. In summary, the adopted structure provided the following:

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Approve Option I.A. and IIA.

Department Head

City Treasurer-Clerk

- Each Aide would be shared by two Commissioners.
- In filling a vacant Aide position, the Employee Relations Department would screen applications to determine eligibility of individual applicants, the Treasurer-Clerk would review the applications and make a list of those he recommended to be interviewed, and the two Commissioners would review and add to or delete from that list. The two Commissioners would then either separately or jointly interview the selected applicants. With the Treasurer-Clerk's assistance, the two Commissioners would make a final determination as to the applicant they both found preferable.
- The interviewing and hiring of the Aide to the Mayor would be the sole responsibility of the Mayor.
- Evaluation of all Commission staff positions would occur coincident with that of other City employees. The two aides would be evaluated individually by their Commissioners, the Aide to the Mayor would be evaluated by the Mayor, and the Secretary/Receptionist would be evaluated by the Aide to the Mayor.
- In the event of the need for disciplinary action, the Treasurer-Clerk would provide coordination between and assistance to the Commissioners.
- An Aide to the Commission could be terminated by either of the Commissioners, and the Aide to the Mayor could be terminated by the Mayor. Accordingly, those positions were not afforded career service protection (ie: they work at the pleasure of the Commissioners or Mayor). The Secretary/Receptionist was afforded career service protection and, therefore could be terminated only pursuant to City Personnel Policy.
- The Aide to the Mayor would serve as the Commission Office coordinator, but would have no direct supervisory or managerial responsibility over the Aides to the Commission.
- The Treasurer-Clerk would handle all administrative and managerial responsibilities of the Commission Office.

On October 4, 1991, at the Initiation of then Mayor Lightsey and with the consent of the City Commission, the role of the Aide to the Mayor was expanded to include responsibility for approving personal and sick leave requests of the Commission Aides and Secretary/Receptionist, setting standards and protocol within the Commission Office, making decisions relative to how citizens would be handled when they call or visit the Commission Office, and otherwise directing staff (to the extent that direction was not in conflict with a Commissioner's direction).

In July, 1991, a Secretary II position was added to the Commission Office staff to provide additional secretarial support to the Aides.

At several recent City Commission meetings issues related to the reporting and working relationships of the Commission Aides, as well as their pay grades and severance pay eligibility, has been raised. Accordingly, the

Employee Relations Department and the Treasurer-Clerk were directed to examine those issues and bring a report and recommendations back to the Commission.

FACTS AND ISSUES

The Employee Relations Department has conducted a review of 13 local governments in Florida (12 cities and Leon County, which is the standard group of governments surveyed for salary and benefit comparisons for employees at this general level) to make a determination as to the appropriate pay grade assignment for the Aide to Commissioner and Aide to the Mayor positions. The review included consideration of the duties and responsibilities of the Aide positions. Their survey, included as Attachments A and B to this agenda item, indicate that a one pay grade increase would be appropriate for each of those positions (from pay grade 15 to 16 for the Aides to Commissioners, and from pay grade 18 to 19 for the Aide to the Mayor). Section 704.04-J of the City Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual provides that "When the pay grade of an existing classification is increased, an employee shall receive an increase to the minimum of the range or five percent, whichever results in a higher salary, not to exceed the maximum of the new pay grade." In keeping with that policy direction, upon approval of Employee Relations recommendations, the three Aides would each receive a 5% pay increase. Given the lack of career service protection, the positions should be made eligible for severance pay under the same policy and level as exists for Senior and Executive Management employees. In the event of termination of employment, the Aide would be eligible for one month of severance pay after the first year of employment as an Aide, and for one additional month of severance pay for each additional two years of such employment, up to a maximum of six months of severance pay.

In an effort to examine other issues related to the Aides, staff contacted the governments surveyed by Employee Relations, and asked questions about the number of Commissioners each Aide serves, what the reporting structure is (who hires, fires, evaluates and disciplines them), what the responsibilities are, if they have career service protection and, if not, if they are eligible for severance pay. Unfortunately, there was little commonality among those governments as related to these issues. Of the thirteen, governments surveyed, three indicated that they had an Aide to the Mayor only, three indicated that they had Aides to the Commission only, and three indicated that they had both, with one of those (Orlando) having four staff assistants reporting directly to the Mayor. The ratio of Aides per Commissioner ranged from one Aide for every two Commissioners up to one Aide for every four Commissioners. None had one Aide per Commissioner. In every case but Orlando, where there was an Aide to the Mayor, there was only one. Given the nature of Orlando's form of government (strong mayor), however, that is not a relative comparison. Overall, for cities having Commission Aides, Tallahassee slightly exceeded the norm.

Of the governments having aides, the reporting structure and management relationship also varied significantly from one to the next. For one, the Aide to the Mayor serves as a staff manager (recall that only three of the Governments have Aides to the Mayor and Aides to the Commissioners), for some the Aides are supervised by their Commissioners, and for two, a Deputy City Manager supervises them. While there was not a norm here, Tallahassee's situation seemed to be a good blend of the way the other governments handled reporting and management.

In terms of responsibilities, the responses generally were at one extreme or the other. In several cases, the Aides handled only secretarial duties while other staff (in the Manager's or Clerk's office) handled higher level responsibilities such as attending meetings on their behalf, preparing research reports and drafting speeches, and dealing directly with the press and the public. In several other cases, the Aides provided complete staff support to their Commissioner. Generally, as would be expected, the fewer Aides per Commissioner, the lower the level of responsibility of the Aides. In each case where there was an Aide to the Mayor and Aides to the Commissioners, the level of responsibility of the Aide to the Mayor was significantly greater than that of the Aides to the Commissioners.

The issue of severance pay was split about 50 - 50. In all cases but one where career service protection was not afforded, severance pay was provided pursuant to formal policy. In that one case, the city did not have a formal policy on severance pay, but the general practice was to grant it to a non-career-service employee who was terminated for non performance related considerations.

As previously referenced, in 1989 the Commission approved a process for the reporting and management of the Commission. Staff has formalized that process, as amended in 1990 to reflect the role of the Aide to the Mayor, into the attached proposed policy (Attachment C). While the above information does not necessarily indicate that this approach is the best, neither does it give concern that the City is taking the wrong approach. It appears, in fact that our approach is fairly middle of the road for governments that have Aides to their Commissioners and/or Mayor.

FISCAL IMPACT

If staff's recommendation for increasing the Aide's pay grade and providing a 5% pay increase is approved, the fiscal impact for the remaining portion of this fiscal year would be an estimated \$1,410.00 (\$5,640.00 annually). Given the funding remaining in the Commission budget, a supplemental appropriation would be needed to cover the remainder of this year. Should the recommended adjustment in pay grades be approved, a request for a supplemental appropriation will be brought back to the Commission in August or September at the same time as the request for a supplemental appropriation to support the City Manager search activities.

OPTIONS

- I.A. Approve Employee Relations' recommendation for a one pay grade increase and for a pay adjustment as provided by City Personnel Policy, for the Aides to the Commissioners and the Aide to the Mayor.

- I.B. Identify problems with the survey and establish other appropriate pay grades for the Aides to the Commissioners and the Aide to the Mayor.

- II.A. Approve the proposed policy delineating the reporting and management of City Commission Office staff, including the elimination of career service protection and provision for severance pay for the Aides to the Commissioners and Aide to the Mayor.

- II.B. Amend the proposed policy delineating the reporting and management of City Commission Office staff to reflect the desires of the Commission.

- II.C. Take no action, thereby relying on the previously approved process for the reporting and management of City Commission Office staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Approve Options I.A. and II.A.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Employee Relations report on the Aides to the Commissioners.
- B. Employee Relations report on the Aide to the Mayor.
- C. Proposed policy on Commission staff reporting and management.

Salary Survey

Administrative Aide to the City Commission

| <u>CITY</u> | <u>MIN</u> | <u>MAX</u> |
|---------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Clearwater | No Match | |
| Daytona Beach | No Match | |
| Ft. Lauderdale | 27,810 | 36,525 |
| Gainesville | No Match | |
| Hollywood | No Match | |
| Lakeland | 19,427 | 27,331 |
| Largo | No Match | |
| Miami Beach | No Response | |
| Orlando | 23,192 | 33,342 |
| Pensacola | No Match | |
| Pompano Beach | 26,296 | 37,002 |
| West Palm Beach | 23,546 | 35,506 |
| Leon County | 23,816 | 38,106 |
| Mean | 24,016 | 34,635 |
| City of Tallahassee | 21,008 | 33,467 |

Prepared by Employee Relations - June, 1994

Salary Survey

Aide to the Mayor

| <u>CITY</u> | <u>MIN</u> | <u>MAX</u> |
|---------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Clearwater | No Match | |
| Daytona Beach | 21,070 | 32,677 |
| Ft. Lauderdale | 36,962 | 50,939 |
| Gainesville | No Match | |
| Hollywood | 27,718 | 40,709 |
| Lakeland | No Match | |
| Largo | No Match | |
| Miami Beach | No Response | |
| Orlando | --- | 41,953 |
| Pensacola | 20,100 | 50,000 |
| Pompano Beach | No Match | |
| West Palm Beach | 25,438 | 38,542 |
| Leon County | 23,816 | 38,106 |
| Mean | 25,851 | 41,847 |
| City of Tallahassee | 24,357 | 38,812 |

Prepared by Employee Relations - June, 1994

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