

Procedures Committee 10/26/2021

Present: Commissioners Barowitz, Kebede, Washburn

Called to order 6:02 p.m.

Expression of sympathy and good wishes to Commissioner Waxman, who is dealing with a serious case of COVID-19 in her family.

Kebede: Motion to Approve Minutes

Barowitz: Second

Minutes of 10/12 meeting approved unanimously.

Commissioner Kebede reviewed his research into **communication between city staff and elected officials** in other cities. He found three different models in practice:

- Executive supremacy - Executive (e.g., manager/mayor) sets rules. No legislators approval
- Limited executive power - Executive sets rules but must be approved and may be amended by legislators
- Legislative supremacy - Legislators set rules

He found that limited executive power would be the most practical way to ensure that elected officials and an executive manager work together to create rules for this contact, including informal communication, even if their relationship is troubled. Commissioner Barowitz pointed out some ambiguities in the existing charter. Commissioner Kebede noted that the current charter has the strongest executive-supremacy statement he saw in his review of current practices.

Commissioners agreed on an approach that uses the charter to ask executives and legislative branches to work together on a policy in this area.

Code of ethics: This question was brought to the commission by School Committee Chair Emily Figdor, who noted that elected officials in Portland are not required to follow any particular ethical rules. Commissioner Barowitz noted that he has previously called for a system of disclosures, and that there is some language in the city code that refers to conduct which all officials swear to uphold. Commissioner Kebede suggested a similar approach as with the previous item, where the charter mandates development of a code rather than specifying its details.

Preamble: The proposed revision, along with the proposed land acknowledgment, will be brought to the full commissioner, with the caveat that we will continue to seek input from Indigenous leaders on whether the acknowledgment should be included.

Citizen initiatives: Leave most of the rules up to the city council, but install in the charter: the timeline, signature requirement (as a percentage of votes cast in Portland in the last gubernatorial election, not a firm number), and requirement for clear congruence between the title of measure and text of the initiative.

Councilor pay: Research is ongoing, we expect to have a recommendation within a couple of weeks.

Executive pay: Commissioner Barowitz suggested we look at this as well. He was invited to do some research. Commissioner Kebede noted that many cities peg chief executive pay to median household income.

Action items:

Commissioner Kebede:	Draft language on communication policy
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Commissioner Barowitz:	Research executive pay
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Commissioner Washburn:	Draft language on disclosures and code of ethics Prepare report for full commission Share minutes for review
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Commissioners Kebede and Barowitz:	Draft language on citizen initiatives
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Commissioners Kebede and Washburn:	Continue to seek Indigenous input on land acknowledgment
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Barowitz: Motion to Adjourn,
Kebede: Second
Motion passes unanimously.
Meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.