

The Committee on Rules & Ordinances met on Wednesday, February 15, 2012.

The meeting was audio taped for the record.

Members present were Alderman Sal Sachetta, presiding, Aldermen L. Charles DiPerri, Councilors Dave Rodrigues, Rosa DiFlorio, Lorrie Bruno, Rosemary Miller and Cynthia Sarnie. Non members present were Aldermen Michael Marchese and Joseph McGonagle.

Member absent was Alderman Robert Van Campen.

Communication received from Alderman Robert Van Campen that he would be on vacation and unable to attend.

The Committee considered an Ordinance offered by Aldermen Joe McGonagle, Robert Van Campen, L. Charles DiPerri and Councilor Lorrie Bruno: An Ordinance to prohibit aggressive solicitation and solicitation in certain places within Everett.

City Solicitor Colleen Mejia and Mayors Chief of Staff Melissa Murphy-Rodrigues were also present.

Alderman McGonagle explained that he wanted to stop the activity of people banging on car windows looking for solicitations since it didn't make the City look to good. He thanked City Clerk Michael Matarazzo for drafting the proposal and Police Chief Steve Mazzie for already stepping on enforcement on this type of activity. Alderman Marchese, Councilor Bruno and Councilor Sarnie all agreed on the need for such legislation with Alderman Marchese also requesting action against people aggressively pursuing flower sales on public ways. Alderman DiPerri questioned who the enforcing authority would be under this proposal. Ms. Mejia responded that it would be the Police Department through a non criminal disposition process. Alderman DiPerri asked if a non criminal disposition process would work in this matter. Ms. Mejia stated that in some instances it would. Alderman DiPerri asked if the Police could detain someone for performing this activity. Ms. Mejia explained that she was not sure if they could where it was a non criminal disposition penalty but she agreed to do some research. Councilor Rodrigues concurred with Alderman DiPerri on the enforcement issue and inquired if there was a pan handling ordinance that prohibited this activity. Ms. Mejia agreed to look into. Alderman McGonagle closed out the discussion stating that this type of activity was a public nuisance that he was looking for this Ordinance to become a deterrent

The Committee voted: To report back to the Board of Alderman with a recommendation to grant further time so that the City Solicitor and Police Chief could review the proposal and offer their recommendations at the next meeting..

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Member absent was Alderman Robert Van Campen.

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The Committee considered an Ordinance offered by Councilor DJ Napolitano, as President: An amendment to Chapter 17, Section 17-6 Obstructions in Streets and Gutters by adding new paragraph (b)1. A-Frame signes and other signs for advertising purposes shall not be allowed on public property without a permit from the Board of Public Works.....

City Solicitor Colleen Mejia, Acting City Service Director Peter Pietrantonio and Mayors Chief of Staff Melissa Murphy-Rodrigues were also present.

Alderman DiPerri inquired in the City Services had their own regulations. Ms. Murphy-Rodrigues responded that they did and also noted that they voted on this proposal. Alderman DiPerri asked why the City Services Commission just didn't make it a regulation. Ms. Murphy – Rodrigues indicated that they were looking to add more teeth to it but could just keep it as a regulation if the Committee so desired. Councilor Sarnie stated that she was not in favor of nickel and diming the small businesses for a permit to place these types of signs out only 3 times a year. Councilor Bruno asked if it was the sole intent to eliminate these types of signs on public ways. Ms. Murphy-Rodrigues responded that it was to keep sidewalks handicap accessible. Councilor DiFlorio stated that she was in favor of the permitting process since it required those that did obtain a permit to have liability insurance as a means to protect the taxpayer. Councilor Miller agreed with the need for a permitting process where it protected the City. Alderman Sachetta stated that he was opposed due to the number of calls he had received from small businesses also in opposition.

The Committee voted: To report back to the Common Council with a recommendation to refer back to Sponsor.

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Member absent was Alderman Robert Van Campen.

Communication received from Alderman Robert Van Campen that he would be on vacation and unable to attend.

The Committee considered an Ordinance offered by Councilors DJ Napolitano and Dave Rodrigues: That the Ordinances of the City of Everett be hereby amended or drafted, as necessary, to require the disclosure of all accounts payable and payroll of the City of Everett, making all information accessible on the city website

City Solicitor Colleen Mejia and Mayors Chief of Staff Melissa Murphy-Rodrigues were also present.

Councilor Rodrigues explained that this proposal is similar to what has been done at the State level so that taxpayers know how money is being spent. He noted that his intent was to meet with the Mayor to discuss the concerns on how to implement. Councilor DiFlorio expressed concern on who would update this information on line and if the plan was to create another position to have someone do so. Alderman Marchese suggested that it be updated on a quarterly basis when the burn rates were completed. Councilor Sarnie questioned what the cost would be to implement and if it required new software since she didn't want the City to incur any additional costs to implement this proposal. Ms. Murphy-Rodrigues informed the Committee that the State had to pay 1.8 million dollars to implement with a new software program but noted the cost to the City would be less. Councilor DiFlorio remarked that it would not be a simple task.

The Committee voted: To report back to the Common Council with a recommendation to refer to the Mayor to study costs and that they report back their findings in 60 days to the City Council.

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Member absent was Alderman Robert Van Campen.

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The Committee considered a Resolution offered by Alderman Michael Marchese and Sal Sachetta: That no department head, including the Mayor and Superintendent of Schools, shall not come looking for additional monies in the event they overspend their budgets, and that cuts be automatically are to be made to respected budgets except for natural disasters like snow removal.

City Solicitor Colleen Mejia, Director of Veterans' Services Joe Hickey and Mayors Chief of Staff Melissa Murphy-Rodrigues were also present.

Ms. Murphy-Rodrigues provided the Committee with a list of several accounts that could experience increases due to unforeseen events.

Alderman Marchese referenced the recent request for additional monies the School Department requested as the reason for this proposal. He implied that the City Departments should work within their budgets. Alderman Sachetta agreed but noted that the Veteran's Department would be exempt. Mr. Hickey cited the reasons his Department would be exempt. Councilors Sarnie and Rodrigues stated that an Ordinance wasn't needed to address this matter since the members still had the right to vote no if they didn't feel the additional funds were warranted. Alderman Sachetta stated that an Ordinance would get the Department Heads to think about making the necessary cuts before overspending their budgets. Councilor DiFlorio noted that this wouldn't stop a Department Head from coming before the City Council for additional moneys if it was considered an emergency as was the recent request from the School Department.

Alderman Marchese agreed to work on a proposed Ordinance with Alderman Sachetta and present to the Committee for its review at the next meeting.

The Committee voted: To report back to the Board of Alderman with a recommendation to request further time.

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The Committee considered a Resolution offered by Alderman Michael Marchese and Sal Sachetta: That the City explore implementing a program that would allow new businesses, according to their size and amount of employees, to qualify for a discount of commercial rates as start-up proving a specified amount to reach out 175%.

City Solicitor Colleen Mejia, Assessor Pam Davis and Mayors Chief of Staff Melissa Murphy-Rodrigues were also present.

Alderman Marchese stated that basically he was looking at providing a TIF agreement to entice new businesses into the community. Ms. Davis explained that her office was looking at lowering the tax rate for commercial properties, but suggested that small businesses should contact the Community Development office since they would be in a position to assist in obtaining small business loans as a means to entice new business into Everett. Ms. Davis explained further that TIF's were typically designed for large businesses based on there needs which only encompassed tax relief on only the expanded portion of the building/property. Alderman Marchese remarked that he wanted to get businesses to come here rather than Chelsea. Ms. Davis explained that the City of Chelsea receives quite a bit of State Aid and that even though they may have lower commercial tax rates they usually have higher assessments. Ms. Davis indicated that there were ways to get the Commercial rates down and she agreed to provide Alderman Marchese with some ideas in writing. Alderman Marchese agreed to stop by her office to obtain her written recommendations on ways to lower the commercial tax rate.

The Committee voted: To report back to the Board of Alderman with a recommendation to refer to the Assessors Office.

Respectfully Submitted,

John W. Burley
Clerk of Committees