

The Committee on Legislative Affairs & Elections met on Monday, September 12, 2022 at 6pm in the City Council Chambers.

The meeting was recorded by ECTV and can be viewed on the City of Everett website.

Members present were Councilor Michael Marchese, presiding, Councilors Alfred Lattanzi, Stephanie Smith and Darren Costa.

The Committee considered an Ordinance offered by Councilors Stephanie Martins and Stephanie Smith: An Ordinance establishing Paid Family Medical Leave for municipal employees in the City of Everett.

City Solicitor Colleen Mejia and Councilor Stephanie Martins, the Sponsor were also present.

Councilor Martins noted that her original proposal that she had submitted months ago was voted down since it required the City to contribute to the plan, but stated that this proposal was completely different since it did so without costing the City or employees. She provided the Committee with an overview of the plan that allowed an employee 12 weeks of paid family leave of 100% coverage of salary over the first 4 weeks – 75% over the next 4 weeks – 50% over the final 4 weeks. The plan applied to births and adoptions, serious health conditions that incapacitates eligible employees from work as well as eligible employees who care for a family member with a serious health condition. The time must be taken with the first year following the birth or placement of adoption. Councilor Smith referenced that the City Solicitor had provided some feedback to the proposal and offered some comments and proposed amendments. Solicitor Mejia confirmed the proposed changes that she was recommending especially in Section 1 so as to protect the City from unfair labor practice since this plan would need to be presented and approved during the bargaining process with City Unions. Councilor Costa expressed concern about employees taking this time off during critical times and Solicitor Mejia responded that coverage would be provided with overtime to other city employees. Chairman Marchese expressed concern over potential costs to taxpayers, but Councilor Martins assured him that there would be not contributions made to plan by the City. Councilor Smith requested that the Committee grant further time to review the proposed comments and changes offered by the City Solicitor.

The Committee voted: to grant further time.

Respectfully Submitted,

John W. Burley
Clerk of Committees

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The Committee considered an Order offered by Councilors Michael Marchese, Wayne Matewsky and Richard Dell Isola: An Order recommending that the City Council explores options for a more structured usage of their meetings public participation periods.

Councilor Smith informed the Committee that she had reached out to many surrounding communities regarding their public participation structure and provided the Committee with two options based on her findings. She stated that with the exception of the City of Chelsea all other communities only allow discussion on agenda items only. She explained that Option 1 would only allow public participation on agenda items only prior to the start of a city council meeting and Option 2 would allow discussion of agenda items prior to the meeting and non-agenda items that fall under the limited scope of the City Council to be discussed at the conclusion of each City Council meeting. Chairman Marchese remarked that he was in favor of Option 2 but felt the period of time should be extended to 30 minutes leaving it up to the President to determine how long people could speak based on the number of people interested in speaking. Councilor Costa also agreed that he liked Option 2 but wanted to have the City Council be more responsive to those citizens that have a public safety or maintenance type concern addressed so that they don't have to wait until the end of a meeting to discuss. Councilor Smith suggested bringing back the City Council Maintenance worksheet to the City Council agenda. Councilor Smith suggested that Rule 10A be amended so that the period of time allowed for public participation would be amended from 20 minutes to 30 minutes which passed unanimously. Councilor Smith offered an amendment to Rule 10B paragraph 1. ii by deleting Section B. 1. ii in its entirety and replace with "The second section of public participation called General Public Participation shall include speakers who wish to speak on items that do not appear on that meeting's agenda. The topics for discussion under this general public participation shall be limited to those items within the City Council's scope of authority. Comments and Complaints regarding City Council members or City Personnel are prohibited unless those comments and complaints concern matter within the City Council's scope of authority" which passed unanimously and Rule 10L be amended by adding at the end the following: "Comments and complaints regarding City Council members or City personnel are prohibited unless those comments and complaints concern matters within the scope of the City Council Authority".

The Committee voted: to report back to the City Council with a recommendation for Favorable action on Option 2 – RULE 10 Public Participation as amended.

Respectfully Submitted,

John W. Burley
Clerk of Committees

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The Committee considered an Order offered by Councilor Michael Marchese: An Order to amend the City of Everett Charter Section 4-1, by giving the mayor a voice but no vote on the Everett School Committee.

Councilor Smith recommended that the proposal be addressed as a ballot question since she believed that any charter change should be presented to the voters for an ultimate decision. She informed Chairman Marchese that she would be happy to get the signatures to insure it gets on the ballot. Councilors Costa and Lattanzi concurred that it should be presented as a ballot question. Chairman Marchese announced that he would assist Councilor Smith in obtaining the necessary signatures.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

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The Committee considered an Order offered by Councilor Michael Marchese: An Order to amend the City Council Rule 4 by creating a new sub-section (G) so that it no reads as follows: In no event shall a meeting of the City Council extend beyond 10PM unless 2/3rds of the Council present vote in the affirmative. Votes will then be taken hourly.

The Committee unanimously recommended favorable action.

The Committee voted: to report back to the City Council with a recommendation for Favorable action.

Respectfully Submitted,

John W. Burley
Clerk of Committees