

The Committee on Legislative Affairs & Elections met on Monday, September 8, 2025 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 Robert Van Campen, presiding, Councilors Michael Marchese, Katy Rogers, Stephanie Smith and Stephanie Martins, as ex-officio.

Appointee John Russolillo and Mayor's Chief of Staff Erin Deveney were also present.

The Committee considered an Order offered by Councilor Stephanie Martins, as President: An Order requesting the confirmation on the appointment of John Russolillo, to the position of Director of Human Resources for a one (1) year term ending June 4, 2026.

Ms. Deveney provided the Committee with a summary of other candidates who applied for the position of Director Human Resources which also included their years of experience in the field of Human Resources. Chairman Van Campen remarked that he speaks highly of Mr. Russolillo but referenced the summary in which several candidates had Human Resource experience where Mr. Russolillo had no experience in Human Resources. Ms. Deveney discussed the process but agreed that Mr. Russolillo didn't work in Human Resources before but did have Human Resource experience in his managerial position and she noted that since he had been appointed in the Acting Director of Human Resource capacity the Department was functioning well. Councilor Martins asked Mr. Russolillo to provide the Committee with an overview of his background which he agreed to do as he previously did at the last Committee meeting. Councilor Martins announced that she was in favor of his appointment but wanted to make sure that he wasn't taking the job that someone else was already doing. Ms. Deveney informed the Committee that there were no internal candidates nor were there any Everett residents that applied for the position. Chairman Van Campen expressed concern that there was a pattern by the Administration to fill positions with political hires with connections while not hiring the best qualified candidates as reflected in this situation where Mr. Russolillo had zero experience in Human Resources while several candidates who did were bypassed.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

John W. Burley  
Clerk of Committees

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The Committee considered an Order offered by Councilor Stephanie Martins, Stephanie Smith, Holly Garcia and Robert Van Campen: An Order recommending the acceptance of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 59 Section 50 – Good Landlord Tax Exemption

Councilor Martins requested further time on the matter, but recommended that Councilor Marchese be added as a Sponsor too.

The Committee voted: To grant further time.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Appointee Kiara Freeman was also present.

The Committee considered an Order offered by Councilor Stephanie Martins, as President: An Order requesting the confirmation on the appointment of Kiara Freeman to the position of Chief Procurement Officer for a one year term ending September 1, 2026.

The Committee was in receipt of Ms. Freeman's resume and asked her to introduce herself and share her background. Ms. Freeman stated that she moved to the City of Everett in 2021 and had been working as a Projects & Capital Planning Coordinator for the Massachusetts State College Building Authority since July 2018 which included procurement oversight, including public bid notification, solicitation and awards. Councilor Martins remarked that she heard positive things on the job Ms. Freeman was doing as Chief Procurement Officer for the City and remarked further that she was happy to have a smart qualified person for the job. Chairman Van Campen concurred that he was glad to see she has the qualifications to do the job.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

John W. Burley  
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Appointee Ryan Smith and Mayor's Chief of Staff Erin Deveney were also present.

The Committee considered an Order offered by Councilor Stephanie Martins, as President: An Order requesting the confirmation on the appointment of Ryan Smith, to the position of City Auditor for a one (1) year term ending September 1, 2026.

The Committee was in receipt of Mr. Smith's resume. Mr. Smith informed the Committee that he had been serving as Assistant City Auditor from 2016 to present and had already been performing many of the functions of overseeing City Ledger, payroll & invoice auditing, and State and Federal Reporting requirements. Chairman Van Campen asked who he would be reporting to and Mr. Smith responded to the Mayor and CFO but noted that his Supervisor would be Mayors Chief of Staff Erin Deveney. Chairman Van Campen expressed concern that it didn't look like a separation if he was still reporting to the CFO. Councilor Marchese concurred that there really wasn't any separation. Councilor Martins also noted that she had a concern with supervision. Chairman Van Campen asked Ms. Deveney what was the reporting structure and Ms. Deveney responded that the position of City Auditor was a direct report to the Mayor. Councilor Martins referenced that the whole purpose of establishing the City Auditor position has requested by the Massachusetts Office of the Inspector General was to avoid future potential conflicts with reporting to the Office of Mayor. Councilor Smith noted that she had worked with Mr. Smith and acknowledged that he did a great job as Assistant City Auditor but echoed Councilor Martins concerns and felt that there should be additional steps on who the Auditor reports to other than just the Mayor and as a result she announced that she would be voting against the appointment because she doesn't believe it will correct the situation.

The Committee voted: To report back to the City Council with no recommendation.

Respectfully Submitted,

John W. Burley  
Clerk of Committees