Archived: Friday, November 20, 2020 4:18:18 PM
From: Dembowski, Rod
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 12:54:45 PM
To: Debbie Tarry; Will Hall; David Baker; Rob Karlinsey; Buchanan, Brandon; Elaine Cook
Cc: Logsdon, Kristina; Evans, Elizabeth; Cole-Tindall, Patti; Zahilay, Girmay
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Sheriff's Office - next steps with a revised Charter
Sensitivity: Normal

Meant "and Amendment **6**, which eliminates certain language in the Charter that precludes altering duties of the Sheriff's office."

Rod Dembowski
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On Nov 19, 2020, at 12:51 PM, Dembowski, Rod <Rod.Dembowski@kingcounty.gov> wrote:

Colleagues -

As you know, contract relationship between the King County Sheriff's office and your cities is an important County-city relationship. Earlier this month, King County voters approved all seven amendments to the County Charter. Of particular interest is Amendment 5, which will return the Sberiff to an appointed position with council confirmation starting 1/1/2022, and Amendment 5, which eliminates certain language in the Charter that precludes altering duties of the Sheriff's office.

Understandably there is great interest among contract cities regarding the implications of these changes. While we are at the very beginning stages and I can only speak for myself, I wanted to share a few thoughts.

Regarding amendment five, I added language to the charter review commission's proposed ordinance to ensure that a stakeholder process would be convened at the recruitment, appointment, and confirmation stages. When I have spoken about this, I have specifically stated that our contract cities must be represented on any such stakeholder group. I believe that the council will draft an ordinance creating the group and that it will be convened early next year. The legislation has not yet been drafted and I welcome your suggestions.

Regarding amendment six, it makes no actual changes to the duties of the sheriff's office. Those would need to be accomplished by ordinance or by directive from the Sheriff, depending on their nature and timing. Given the complexities of the system, some changes such as minor policy adjustments that are internal only to the office may be much easier to complete than larger scale reforms regarding the type of services delivered to the public. One of the hallmarks of the system we have had to date is that cities choose a range of services from the sheriff's office that they want. In other words, our city partners have had, and I believe should continue to have, a strong voice and determine how to provide public safety in the community that you represent. That doesn't necessarily mean that we can provide all services or services in a way that every city would do on its own. That's not today's model.

In consultation with my colleague Girmay Zahilay, chair of the law and justice committee, on which I serve, I understand that he intends to convene initial meetings are the committee to assess today system and begin to explore options about what reforms makes sense and are achievable. These will start early next year. I know he has a strong interest in providing additional response options to callers to the 911 system beyond police or fire. I too am interested in those models. The 911 system is complex in and of itself and I believe this is a vision that will take years to successfully implement on a large scale.

I wanted to reach out to express my commitment to you to ensure that you and your views are at the table each step of the way as we explore these options. I welcome your input, suggestions and concerns. And I know that there are differing views among our contracting cities. While there may be a formal role for them collectively, I want you to know that you have my ear on each of your particular concerns.

I think it might be helpful, if you are interested, to have a conference call in December to share our initial thinking about the process and what your interests are. I'm going to ask Elizabeth on my staff to find a time to make that happen.

Thank you all for your partnership. I look forward to working on these issues with you.

Please feel free to share this message with your fellow Councilmembers.

In partnership,

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