

Closed Caption Log, Council Work Session, 06/12/12

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>> Mayor Leffingwell: Good morning.

I'm mayor leffingwell.

Calling the work session of the austin city council to order june 12, 2012, meeting in the board commission room in austin city hall, austin, texas.

Calling to order at 10 minutes after 9:00.

We'll go to our first item, which is the discussion of the november 2012 election matters and official direction.

We'll get a quick briefing from staff.

And the moment we have been waiting for has arrived.

>> Good morning, sabina ramero.

Our presentation this morning is november 26 election action and steps, we'll focus on the charter amendment aspects of the discussion.

Just to give you an overview -- the items council has already taken action on, council placed three charter amendment items on the november ballot.

One the proposing a move of the city elections from may to december.

One is a personnel item that will change appointment only gaikses.

One is the city attorney item.

And then council has enacted four ordinances were were charter committee ordinances, the item regarding the

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jurisdiction of the ethics review commission, the creation of a campaign database, a bundeling item and an ordinance addressing reporting in the nine days before election day.

Today's discussion is an opportunity for council to provide staff with guidance on the remaining election administration items.

We have here on this slide a bundle at the top of the slide, the four items that we'd like council to address not just in terms of their substance but also in terms of how council would see us transitioning to any new arrangement.

They are geographic representation, term length, term stagger, the holding of a november election either odd or even years, depending on your term length and stagger discussion, and then the final two remaining items are the use of an independent redistricting commission and whether to require the required number of initiative and referendum petition signatures to be the same as the number required for charter amendment.

With that, staff will hand the floor over to council and we are here to answer questions if we can.

>> Mayor.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Council member.

Member.

>> Martinez: Go ahead.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: I want to ask a question about the may to november issue we voted to put on the ballot.

We haven't addressed the question of ballot language on this or any of the others.

In this particular instance, i think ballot language is pretty important because there is a potential for it to be in conflict with other items that might be on the agenda.

So when do we begin to address this question of ballot language?

[09:10:06]

>> John stein.

Each of the ordinances called for ballot language.

By ballot language, if you mean what will appear to the voter to vote yes or no on, each has ballot language attached to it, already.

You can change that if you don't like it, but they all have it.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: I know on this particular item we talked about the potential for conflict.

Is that so-called trapping language in this item?

>> No.

>> Remember, we had the discussion, but I don't remember any final --

>> that's on the ballot as a separate item.

Presumably, the voters could vote yes or no on may or november, but -- and then the things that sabina just said out for you could -- would be working with either a may or november date.

So, for example, if you chose to go to a four-year term with elections -- staggered elections in even years, that might be a may date, and even years was staggered elections, or a november date, depending on how the voters went with that, so that would stand alone.

>> I think the items we may want to clear up is the items you already had discussion and a vote on to put on the charter.

There were ordinances attached that had ballot language, and we can bring those back for you to look at those and tweak those.

The items that we're talking about today that sabina just laid out, I don't believe you've seen anything related to that and, so, we will draft that and also be able to bring that back to you and have a discussion.

But those that have already been voted on, that language, i believe, was included in those

[09:12:01]

ordinances, and we just need to get that back to you so you can look and determine whether or not you want to tweak it or added a additional language to it.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: I think we just need to make sure that it does what we intended, because I haven't seen the actual language, but we had the discussion about how to deal with potential conflicts, particularly with this item.

>> And I have that ordinance in front of me and the ballot language we put into the ordinance was "shall the city charter with amended to move the city's general election date "

and your point, we can bring this back and amend it should the body decide to combine the items or change the language in any way, there is still time to do that.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Well, i do think there potentially needs to be something in there in the event an item is not put on by the city council, to say notwithstanding any other chart provisions or amendments approved by the voters, this charter election that this item basically stands -- it

takes precedence, moving on we election knot withstanding anything to the contraries, this ensure elections will be moved permanently from may to november.

So we'll get something back on that.

Council member martinez.

>> Martinez: I wanted to touch briefly on that topic and all listed.

I intend to bring an item to council june 28th meeting, and my goal is to have that resolution speak to each and every one of these items listed here by staff, starting with geographic representation.

While it's no secret I am supportive of the 10-1 single-member district man, that

[09:14:00]

is what the resolution will contain, but I hope to flush out the term length, the term stagger.

Also I'm in agreement with you on the november election move that whatever ends up on the ballot, if the citizens adopt it, that that be binding to the point to where we move in that direction.

The petition that's going around the community now that many folks are signing on to, they're signing on to, in my opinion, simply from a 10-1 perspective.

That's all we're hearing, and people are saying there are four single-member districts, but when I read all four pages of this petition, it is troubling to me many of the provisions that are in here, the first of which keeps the elections in may and explicitly states the first election be held may 2014, and then the subsequent may 2016 and the following may of 2017.

That, to me, the troubling, because I don't believe many of the folks that are signing on to this petition are aware --

>> Mayor Leffingwell: That's exactly what I was talking about, councilor.

Excuse me for interrupting.

>> Martinez: I know that's what you were talking about.

That's what I'm talking about as well.

>> Martinez: So I support the independent redistricting commission's ideas and concept, but, again, if you read through the petition circulating through the community it has specific qualifiers and disqualifiers that I don't necessarily have an opinion about but they're pretty strict and would preclude many, many folks who might want to serve in this capacity in

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helping us draw these districts and subsequently redrawing them after each census year.

It also removes authority -- this petition removes authority from the council in that it explicitly states that if the commission directs the council to fund an outside legal team to defend the independent commission's district drawing, that we shall do so.

It doesn't say we may not.

It doesn't say we have the authority to vote.

It explicitly says if the commission directs the council to do so, it shall be done.

That, to me, is troubling.

We relinquish our authority as a body when we -- when something like this gets adopted.

That's okay, if that's what the citizens want, that's what happens.

But that's troubling to me.

I don't believe that our hands should be tied in that regard.

I think this council should continue to retain authority, especially as it relates to drawing the initial district lines and redistricting.

You know, I just -- I maintain that we are the governing body and we should ultimately be able to represent the citizens and make decisions as we do on many other issues.

So, for those reasons and others, while I support the efforts of going to single-member districts, I've always been a supporter of single-member districts, I will try to bring that item forward and mayor pro tem coal is going to co-sponsor that with me, and I hope that the council will take all of these things into consideration on this item because I do believe we should have this election in november and we should decide on these matters.

I just can't fully support everything that's in the community petition that's going on.

So I would like to work with staff to draft language that addresses those conflicting areas such as the mayor just mentioned with the may to november and then I would like

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to further flush out what independent redistricting commission would look like if the council would retain that authority to establish that commission.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Let me ask a quick question, mayor pro tem.

Is it necessary to spell out what kind of redistricting commission we're going to have, whether it's an independent or otherwise, in the charter?

Or can the commission or the method of establishing districts be done by ordinance?

>> If the council retains the ultimate authority on the districts, then the district commission could be handled by ordinance, but the council is the ultimate sovereign body for the city, so if it were to relinquish power over a particular subject matter such as redistricting, it could not do that unless the fundamental law of the city, that is the charter, took that power away from it and vested it somewhere else.

So the only way that you could have an independent redistricting commission that the council could not overrule would be created in the charter.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: So the short answer is, no, it doesn't have to be in the charter?

>> If it's not in the charter, it's ultimately advisory.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Right, the council could establish a method for describing districts?

>> Sure.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Or we could even establish an independent commission of some kind.

>> Yes, you could.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: And i think that would be -- personally, my preference would be not to address this item in the charter.

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[09:20:02]

Did you have a quick follow-up?

>> I did on the same subject.

I wanted to ask sid, you've given us estimates on time lines for getting things done.

The community petition going around now also has hard and fast dates and it says in one provision regarding the independent redistricting commission that it shall be established no later than july 1, 2013.

But in order to hold an election as stated in the community petition in may of 2014, wouldn't we need to be close to being done by the end of july, august 2013 so that we can prepare for the election cycle that would begin that fall?

>> There are a number of moving parts in that question.

From a strictly doj point of view, as we've discussed before, they get 60 days to review and give you a preclearance of law and they can ask for another 60 days.

So that piece of the puzzle is to build in 120 days or think they're going to get an answer within the 60 and take your answer, which is most jurisdictions do.

The city has got a couple of internal timeline elements, one of which is that you like to have, among other things, the beginning for the period for fundraising to be 180 days before the election.

That can be, I think, parallel to the preclearance process.

I don't think that you have to have preclearance of your districts in order for that provision.

The obstacle there, other than

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just administrative.

The additional piece of the doj calendar is that you want preclearance in hand if you can have it before early voting starts, and in particular you really want it before candidate signup so that everybody knows what they're signing for.

Otherwise, you really have some problems.

So depending on what the state uniform election date calendar says for candidate signup which is typically in january for partisan elections, and when do we sign up for typical may elections for the city, february?

>> February or march.

>> Early march is the current deadline for city election signup, so you would want preclearance by then.

So count back 60 days before the first of the year.

So if the redistricting commission begins in july and really gets on it, I confess i looked at the time line and do not recall now what the plotting out of the timeline in the resolution is.

I think it gets you there but it's close and there can't be a waste of time.

>> Martinez: Gets us to where?

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Preclears in time for candidate signup, assuming you get preclearance in 60 days.

Gets you candidate signup in march 2014 in time for a may 2014 election.

Certainly, if the election is moved to november and these time timelines in the resolution were adopted, that would be plenty of time to get you to a november election.

The problem, as we've discussed

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before, is a november 2013 election.

That's where the difficulty, i think, comes in going through all of the process that's called for for the independent redistricting commission in the resolution being circulated.

Very hard to have those specific time periods for signup for application process for all of that stuff at the intervals that are specified and still get to a november 2013 election.

But a 2014 election wouldn't be an obstacle.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Mayor pro tem.

>> Cole: I plan to bring the item with council member martinez assuming we can work out the details with the staff about stagger and term.

Well, I'm not even sure how many details we actually need to put in the charter amendment.

I'm going to support the 10-1 system because it provides the largest possibility for an african-american to be elected.

We've just been challenged in that regard because of the dispersion of african-american.

And, so, I will be supporting the 10-1 system and plan to bring that with council member martinez.

I attempted to sponsor an item, council member spelman and i, to give us more flexibility about the dates by starting earlier with an independent redistricting commission.

So I have a question to you, sid.

If we go ahead and pass an item that says we are going to geographic representation, can we also pass an item establishing an independent redistricting commission?

Not necessarily without the details that are put in the

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citizens committee, but we can start that so we have the option of a may 2014 election or an 2013 election so we have that flexibility.

>> We touched on these points, maybe not all at once.

When you say pass, being the council passing or the charter amended?

>> Cole: If the next council meeting, not this week, but june 28, we pass a resolution specifying what we're going to put on the ballot, either a 10-1 or some other structure, if we settled that question, I'm trying to figure out when it is perfect for doj.

Can we also setting at the same time the question of an independent redistricting committee?

>> Lots of complications, which is why I'm staring into space.

Part of the problem -- I'm going to list the problems first.

>> Cole: Just because we established -- the mayor just established we could set up the commission by ordinance, didn't have to do it by charter?

>> The caveat, if you do that, you set up a commission that does not have ultimate independent control of the final plan that's adopted, not what was in the agr proposal.

If you want an independent commission over which you have control -- that is, you have the final say, you can reject whatever plan they recommend -- then that kind of redistricting commission can be established by ordinance.

>> Cole: Well, I think what we talked about before -- and if i

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I'm not remembering it directly, please help me, but what we talked about before, if we could have an independent advisory commission by ordinance before the election and then, after the election, rename that as an independent commission, maybe without althe details necessarily that agr is calling for, but that helps us with the timeline.

>> The first part of the answer is it depends on what passes.

>> Cole: Exactly.

>> And if what passes does not call for an agr-like independent commission with all of those specific details for appointment process and all the rest, which it could mimic, and/or without ultimate power, independent authority to establish the plan, then an advisory committee that you established before the fact subject to ratification by the voters in adopting a single-member system could be at council's discretion renamed or appointed.

Council has the appointment authority to be that commission.

But if that passes in the package of amendments to the charter calls for a specific, independent district commission authority, then the council -- and specifies a specific manner of application and appointment, I don't think council's preestablishment of an advisory committee can supplant that.

>> Cole: Okay.

So I understand we can create by resolution an item on the ballot for geographic representation, and we could also create an independent advisory commission.

And I understand that that's

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contingent on what the citizens may put on the ballot that is in conflict with that, but we could start that process right now under council's discretion?

>> I think that's correct.

>> Cole: All right.

Thank you, mayor.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: I would just like to bring forth an item that proposes a hybrid system with four-year term lengths, staggered terms in elections occurring in november of even years.

So if I could get some language to that effect, I'll see if i can get a co-sponsor.

>> Mayor, would you mind rereading the points?

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Hybrid systems with four-year staggered terms and electionos curbing in november of even years.

And the main reason I'm proposing the four years is you can't have it in even years in november unless it's an even number of years term, so it's either got to be two or four or six or eight years.

>> How many hybrid seats do you have in mind, mayor?

>> Mayor Leffingwell: I think that's open to discussion.

I would like to -- that could be sort of blank members and two at large members plus the mayor.

I would personally like to start negotiations --

>> still talking about 6-2-1?

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Yes.

Council member morrison.

>> Morrison: I think one of the challenges at the we have is that each of these -- challenges that we have is each of these scenarios we're talking about potentially being on the ballot has some number of the

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parameters.

It has the structure of council.

It may or may not have an independent redistricting commission.

It may or may not change the term lengths, it may or may not change the stagger, it may or may not change from mayo may or november.

In each one of the scenarios, we would have to come up with a transition plan.

>> Right.

>> Morrison: The first question is, does the transition plan for any scenario have to be part of the charter amendment or is there some discretion for council to work that out?

And my second question -- and this is the real heart of my concern here -- is it possible, as much as possible, put each of these different items that i just listed on the ballot independently, and then we come up with, once we figure out did the structure change, did the may to november change, did the term length change, although whether or not we even have that on the ballot is up for discussion.

It's not something I necessarily know.

So would each of these be put on the ballot independently and then we see which in totality get passed and we have a transition plan based on what gets passed.

Because I'm concerned each of the packages we might put on the ballot has a different combination, somebody might really like one of them, but doesn't have an independent redistricting commission but can't support it because it supports everything but really wants to have our independent redistricting commission.

I don't know if I made myself clear.

>> Is that a response?

>> Morrison: Yes, but also a question for staff about the

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practicality of doing that independently -- independent items versus a plethora of combinations.

>> Well, I just want to clarify that what I proposed is a single item that contained these elements and the reason they kind of like to have to work together.

>> Morrison: I understand that.

If we did separate them all and people were not for your terms, then we would work with figuring out a stagger.

So the other thing I want to mention is that the length and the stagger are explicitly things that the -- if this is possible -- that the task force did not recommend to us.

It's not that they recommended not doing them.

They considered them and did not recommend that we put them -- they did not come through in our recommendation.

So, anyways, it's especially the length and the stagger cause a lot of complications in the potential scenario and figuring out how many there are.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: The stagger causes complications?

>> Cole: Well, you have to think, if you're going to change the length, then it adds in terms of the transition a lot of complications, yeah.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Yeah, but we have stagger now, of course.

>> Morrison: Right.

And if you're going to talk about four-year terms, you need to talk about de-staggering.

But could you comment on the issue of elementary components on the ballot as opposed to various scenarios and packages?

>> It's conceptually possible to do it that way to put each of these things on the ballot as a separate item.

You don't know what you're going to end up with exactly because

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potato head, you can put this nose, these eyes, these ears.

But, yes, conceptually, you could do it that way and we could figure out a way to make it work.

>> Morrison: And if we did put them on independently, you don't know even what you have to think about in terms of transition until you know what the results are, so would there be a way to sort of give council a way to figure that out once the results of the election are known?

>> Yes, the charter would then -- we would have to come up with words in the charter that would authorize the council to have the power to create a transition from a to b.

That would add some time to the implementation because the transition would be separately pre-clearable event.

That would put another pre-clearance process into the timeline.

>> Right.

And I guess I'd just like to sort of -- at first blush, I'm attracted to the idea of doing it independently because I think that each of these things really are sort of independent decisions for people.

And, so, I think we have a better chance of getting the real sense of the community on each one of them as opposed to having to, you know, figure out what people may or may not have supported of a given package.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: You hit on it earlier in practice qualities, we've talked about it before that one of the difficulties that John alluded to is you have everything independent, don't know what you're going to get, and some of the things that are independent fit better with some of the other things than some of the remaining things and the practicality is you may end up getting two of three, for

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instance, and the two don't really go together very well.

November elections with three-year terms.

But it is possible, I think, to meld all of those and, as John said, the charter provision -- a charter provision can provide that council has the authority to provide the decision to what ultimately is the package.

>> Morrison: I guess my concern is we might end up with no changes if they all -- if all the changes get so complicated.

>> I still agree so many of these things are interrelated and they're pretty simple, but if we consider them separately, we may end up with the potato head with one eye and two noses or something like that.

>> Morrison: If I could respond.

If term length and term stagger were going on the ballot, it would make sense to put them together.

Geographic representation and whether that's just hybrid or 10-1 could stand alone.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: That's not what I'm referring to.

>> Morrison: I understand that.

Independent redistricting can stand alone and may stand alone.

A stagger that shows a complication to a combination.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Just to clarify, November is already standing alone.

That's already something we've approved and we're applying that to even November instead of alternately odd and even, which, as we've discussed, there's a potential for big differences in ELECTORATES NOVEMBERs VERSUS

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Even moves.

I think that would provide for a more uniform process.

>> Morrison: We have uneven landscape even with our may elections.

Once I ran and there were primaries going on and another time I ran and there were no primaries going on.

So there were some differences.

The community will have to decide that.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Admittedly, what we have is not perfect, that's why we're dealing with the situation.

>> Morrison: Hopefully we'll move forward to something better.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Onward, yes.

Who's next?

Tovo?

>> Tovo: I just have a few quick questions at this point.

I guess I want some calculator on what the charter committee proposed with regard to stagger.

As the mayor pointed out, we have stagger now.

They decided, reading from the recommendations of review, the charter revision committee did not make a recommendation as to whether may or november is preferable and they recommended no change to stagger term lengths or term limits.

They made no decision regarding whether term should be cut short or lengthened for transition.

>> Tovo: So, in other words, they were satisfied with three years and the current stagger.

Mayor, what are you proposing in terms of stagger?

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Well, could be november of even years.

So every even year, you would have approximately half the council up for election similar to what we have right now.

It's just that the only way to make even years work is to have four-year terms.

>> Tovo: Or, as you said two, years.

And, so, I guess my --

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>> Mayor Leffingwell: And, so, the staggering part, I forgot to address.

The staggering part is basically keeping what we have now.

But I think it needs to be clarified that we will continue to stagger, which is presumably the way it would work, if this were to pass, is there would be one initial election -- that's one of the alternatives -- there would be an election where everybody was elected once and some of those, if you're going to stagger, we'd have to make some provision for that transition.

Some of the members would only serve two years.

>> Tovo: You're proposing there just continue to be a stagger as part of your -- because of the time?

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Well, kind of been my sense that there is a preference out there to maintain stagger terms.

I personally don't care must have about that part of it.

I think that's what the public and people and the council members -- council want to see, then that's fine.

>> Tovo: And then I want to go over some of the details of the resolution, council member martinez and mayor pro tem, that you plan to bring forward.

So, as I understand it, it will have the components of a 10-1 plan.

And I lost track of what you said beyond that.

Did I understand that you're going to work out some suggestions for term lengths and stagger and those items and bring that in?

>> I would hope that I could speak to that, yes.

>> Tovo: Okay.

>> But my intention, the side I'm on, if the body decide to amend this, that's the body's decision.

Honestly, mayor, I don't hear anything you're saying I'm necessarily in disagreement with except the hybrid.

[09:44:01]

If you want to amend my resolution, try that as opposed to put two competing items on the agenda.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: It is a possibility but, you know, I'm just trying to give staff some direction so they can come up with some contingent things for us and we can make that decision later, but I think we need to start working on alternative language.

>> To further clarify, because council member tovo mentioned a minute ago the idea of two-year terms in november, that would not work because you could not stagger two-year terms and keep them on even years.

>> Tovo: No.

I've got the math on that, thanks.

So I guess my question to both parties bringing forward resolutions, does it make any sense to just resolve the geographic representation question or to talk about that issue separate from term lengths and stagger?

Because there may not be disagreement on term lengths and stagger in november versus may.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: You mean just have one item for --

>> Tovo: Resolutions need to include the details or should we just discuss 10-1 versus a hybrid independent of each other?

Just -- I'm not sure I have an opinion about it, I just throw it out as a question.

You know, it's the intent of having that level of detail.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: I think it is a possibility.

>> I wanted to respond to the question you asked of council member martinez and myself.

I agree with everything he said.

[09:46:00]

The only thing I want to make sure, it's almost consistent with what council member morrison was saying.

I don't think we have to make a decision forevermore about term length and stagger right now.

I think we can just talk about a transition plan, which is maybe everybody up right after it passes in november 2013 and then ultimately we say, after the election, because we have a clearer sense after people vote whether they care that much about even or odd or whether they care that much about stagger because that's what's truly in conflict.

And then we can make a decision, I think by resolution, about those items.

So that is my question.

So then it's a little cleaner.

We don't have to make those decisions.

Is that possible, sid?

>> Well, certainly possible, but the caveat is it depends on what passes.

If what passes has got a mandatory, independently redistricting commission with all the timeline detail we have been talking about in the agr resolution and what you're talking about --

>> Cole: Well, I'm contemplating, because I think it changes everything if we have an outside citizen's group agr actually get the number of required signatures and put an item on the ballot.

That is a new ball game.

So I think we have to deal with what we can do right now and what we want to do.

And, so, I'm asking if it's possible for us to produce an advisory committee now, put one of the plans on the ballot, a-21 or -- or 6-2-1, a 10-1, and then to say the council will develop,

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you know, a transition plan consistent with the election on term limit stagger and charter and actually put those on the ballot like council member morrison is contemplating.

>> When you say "put a plan,"

did you actually just mean put a structure change on the ballot, that is the choice between 10-1 and --

>> Cole: No.

>> Because you don't mean a specific plan?

>> Cole: I'm envisions one thing on the ballot, either a 6-2-1 or some other structure, a 10-1, but just one structure on the ballot.

And then second, there is the item that gives council the discretion to develop consistent with the independent advisory com transition plan.

Plan.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: But that doesn't have to be the charter.

>> On the assumption we're not investigate deal with the complication of a citizen petition that mandates --

>> Cole: I don't want to deal with a citizen petition.

>> Yeah, you have a lot of discretion to structure what's on the ballot.

>> Cole: Do that and we could actually get feedback on the ballot about the two items, term length and term stagger, can we get that?

Can we put to the voters -- and I think that's what council member morrison was saying -- two years, three years or four years?

>> You could.

>> Cole: And could we put to the voters stagger or no stagger?

And then we already have our authority to work out inconsistencies?

>> There is the rub.

If you separate -- I'm just thinking out loud with you.

If you separate, for instance, the stagger questions, do you

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want a two-year stagger yes or no, because all of these ballot items are up or down.

They're yes or no.

You can't say choose a two or a three or a four.

So you would have one item that says do you want a two-year term, another that says do you want a three-year term, another that said you want a four-year term and two of them pass.

>> Cole: How could two of them pass?

>> If they're all separate, everybody get to vote for each of them, it's possible all three pass.

So there is some draftsmanship required to make that level of separation work.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Let me just say, it starts in having elections in november of even years, so if you have even years, you have to have even term lengths and that's why i want to tie those together.

Mr. martinez?

>> Martinez: Mayor, I'm not trying to correct you, but i want to provide what I heard as context.

I think council member cole was asking can we put an item on that's an either/or question, and I understand the answer in all our conversations thus far to be no.

What I thought I heard from council member coal was can we put an item on that says 6-2-1 or 4-10-1 and you said no.

When she talked about term lengths, she said, can we put an item that two, three or four-year terms.

The answer is no.

Is we put three items, one that says two, one that says three, one that says four?

The answer is question, but therein lies the problem if two of those pass.

>> Correct.

>> Cole: Mayor?

[09:52:00]

>> Morrison: We could, however, with regard to term limits put one item on the ballot that says do you want to change from three to four.

It doesn't give anybody an option about two, but we are at three right now, and, so, changing from three to four gets the voters on a three or four.

Correct?

>> Mayor Leffingwell: I think the answer is that you always have to present a binary choice.

Fancy way of saying that you have to dictate either a yes or no choice.

Multiple choices doesn't work.

>> And the real answer is that in about two weeks we'll vote on this and see what the majority of the council wants to do.

>> You notice the slide up till a moment ago said provide staff with guidance on and we haven't been providing you much staff guidance.

The first issue is that I would like to have some additional information before I can safely land on the issue of how many council districts we want in a single-member district system.

A lot of the discussion behind 10-1 has been that we need a certain number of districts to the african-american district.

I'm not sure 10 is a hard and fast number.

The difference between eight, nine, ten council districts is really appreciable.

Is there a way to get some combination, sid, if you or i invited other staff people to come up with a fairly firm estimate to the extent where we have african-american opportunity districts or

[09:54:00]

asian-american opportunity districts or any kind of opportunity districts with a certain number of district, or would it be potluck?

Is there a way wick get a fairly firm number?

What's the best we can get with six, seven, eight, nine and ten?

>> We've done that.

>> Well, we parted from that road.

The short answer is, yes, as a practical matter, what you would do is one of two things.

You can just look at the numbers, and if we're looking at voting precincts, the building locks, for instance, you can look at the distribution of african-american adult percentage of population in each of those vetting districts and ask how many of them have 50% or more, and then go down from there to the level where you build a district that has the requisite total population.

Which means we would get different answers for districts.

At some point, you will stop getting significant mathematical percentage benefit from increasing the size further.

Whether that occurs before ten or well after it, I can't say.

>> That's the break point I'm interested in.

At one point was the production point of african-american opportunity start to flatten out and if the difference between eight, nine and ten doesn't matter, I suspect, if I could make a bold political statement, it could be a whole lot easier to sell a district with eight council members than 10 council members on it because a lot of

[09:56:01]

people would be concerned about the council being too big.

On the other hand, if it can't be done unless we have ten council member districts, we need to know in advance to craft something we all can live with.

>> There are a couple of ways.

The the simplest conceptual approach is to loo at an ordered list of particular units that you're looking at, whether census blocks or preferably voting precincts, and just go down the percentage of the minority groups, voting age population, until you end up with a sufficient total population to constitute a district of the -- for the appropriate district plan's eyes or districts.

That overlooks the fact that most of those concentrations of population are not going to be perfectly adjacent.

So we've got some geographic distribution problems that dilute that a little bit.

So you then want to go in and actually try to draw for a number of districts an optimum minority district.

It might not be a majority.

And then the final piece of that is beauty in the eye of the beholder, how much percentage is enough because, if you go to another larger number of district, you're always going to get an incremental increase in wherever minority group you're looking at.

How much is enough will be the other question.

>> There always will be a tradeoff between gerrymandering

[09:58:00]

and opportunity.

We can germander a 20% african-american --

>> I don't think it's possible.

>> If we wanted to go to 38 or 40, I think I did that exercise crudely.

>> You did say three dozen a year ago.

>> Something on that order.

We actually could get a majority voting age.

>> Okay.

But although there is inherently -- we have to do a balance between how much gerrymandering are you willing to put up with in order to get the maximum amount of opportunity.

But what you're suggesting is there is a way of putting reasonable constraints on what the districts look like and come up with a fairly firm answer to the question.

>> I think that's direct.

Let me also say something i think I've said.

African-americans as a group typically have high turnout rates.

That is not as true for other groups.

>> We see that emperically in various places in travis county and texas.

If that could be done within a reasonable amount of time and effort, I would personally benefit from having some metric for how the extent to which we get opportunity for various racial groups at six, seven, eight, nine, ten, and maybe pushing the envelope a little bit further, 11 and 12, for a sense of what the whole production function looks like.

Is that something that's difficult or time consuming to do?

>> It will take a little time.

It won't take a lot.

Easy to do for african-americans because they have a fairly singular geographic concentration in northeast austin.

Harder to do for hispanics and perhaps harder still for asians because they are so much more dispersed.

But I think it's still more.

>> Okay.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: So that's what you do for the three groups, asian, hispanics and african-americans?

>> I can undertake that, yes.

>> I appreciate that.

The second issue is less for the staff and more for my colleagues.

It looks like we've got a list of things to which some of us have landed on and some of us haven't.

I haven't landed on the number of council districts because i need a sense for what we're getting up and gaping for different numbers.

But as far as staggers and term lengths and other things, would it be valuable for us to have a conversation with some of the appointees from the charter revision commission who have actually gone through this stuff in greater detail than we've had a chance to, just have a conversation about why did you pick this or that and what did you think about sources of information that you relied on for deciding what to do here and there, why would that not be a valuable thing to do?

>> I think we pretty well know what their opinions are.

We had a lot of input.

They actually came to the council one day and spoke to the council on the things.

Whether or not they addressed those specific items at length or not, I don't remember.

>> I know what their opinions are because I can read it in the committee's recommendation.

What I know less about is what caused them to have those opinions and to -- I had a discussion with the charter revision as commission members with why they think the way they did or what they would have thought had a different option come up.

You know, I don't know whether anybody else would find that valuable or not and I certainly don't want to waste anyone else's time.

Vick that conversation on my own if I wanted to, but I want to throw that out as a possibility to help us come to closure and land on a series of options we feel comfortable with.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: All that is fine.

I just think we're running out of time here and we need to have something on the table to actually start the discussion.

That doesn't mean it will wind up the way it starts out, but if we can put a couple of diverse and principal options on the table, maybe we could have the discussion on june 28 song we can have it.

I mean, the deadline we set for our as many as is august 2, and the next meeting after june 28 is august 2.

So I really think we need to start flushing this process out.

If we just continue to have informal discussions about it without knowing what the components are going to be, then we're going to be looking at OURSELVES ON AUGUST 2nd, Trying to make a decision then, which is basically too late, i think.

>> I like that idea.

If we were to put together some kind of -- I don't know what the format would be of next week, perhaps early next week, that would allow us to have a fuller discussion and really land somewhere on the 28th and still meet our deadline.

So I don't know if we're talking about a --

>> I think really having the items on the agenda puts it on up for discussion.

That will start the discussion.

People can sign up and speak on it and get their inputs and the result of that might be a modification of one or both proposals or a completely new one.

>> Morrison: I guess I'm envisioning something less formal where it's a back and forth conversation.

>> Spelman: I was less interested of the discussion among ourselves but the injection of new information from someone who has more thoughts than we have.

>> Morrison: That would be possible someone signing up and SPEAKING ON THE JUNE 28th.

>> Spelman: We could do it at the work session prior to the 28th.

>> That's what would suggest.

We invite the members of the redistricting committee to come in but at least identify two of the spokespersons who have been two of those who have spoken to us as a body which is -- but anybody can speak if the question comes up.

I was going to suggest we do it at the work session.

Even though an item can be -- anyone can sign up on an item thursday and discuss it, I would like a little more time to contemplate information that may be provided to us as opposed to trying to potentially amend or change something on the fly at the council meeting.

>> Am I correct, is june 26 the date for recommendations regarding the bond package at work sessions?

>> If council is comfortable with two large items on the work session agenda, of course, that's fine.

I just wanted to point that out.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Thank you for that information.

I think we basically have to deal with it.

Council members poresson.

>> Morrison: Speaking of the work session, we recently got final recommendations from the joint subcommittee working on the water utility financial plan and wanted them to give a presentation at our work session that day because I want to be sure people get the information about the outcomes of all the water rates for next year before we get too deeply into the budget, but maybe I'll have to see if that's not such a great day and find another day.

They do have some really good work and I think to be able to do more than just read a report, but to actually hear about it is going to be important.

>> Okay.

I'd like to have something to work with, start flushing it out as I asked for, and I think council member martinez, likewise, has a proposal, too.

>> Tovo: In thinking through THE 26th, I BELIEVE IT'S OKAY For me to talk about this.

ON THE 26th, WE'RE ALSO Scheduled to talk about the composition of the lake austin task force.

So we may need to think -- that's a lot of information to manage in one meeting.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: We had already talked about that.

>> Tovo: We need as a group to decide on the nominations to vote thursday.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: I thought we'd go through the normal process of putting the names up and voting in a council meeting.

>> Tovo: We envisioned and maybe the staff memo talked about this, we have a list of experts staff have compiled and my intent is we each select from that list and then also try to get a representative body of neighbors and to do that I think we might be better off doing what we did for the charter review committee which is in our work session which is who we're thinking about to make sure we have a representative body.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: I personally am not going to support requiring councilmembers to make nominees from a pre-set list of people.

I understand the qualification criteria part of it, but as far as I'm concerned, I absolutely would not support that.

I think that's not the way i understood it.

I think that's each individual council member's right and privilege to put forth the nominees that they want to put forth.

>> Tovo: We're scheduled to talk about it on the 26th at the work session and I just want everyone to be aware so we manage our time effectively.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Okay.

>> Tovo: And just to clarify, I did not compile that list.

That was produced by our staff who were looking at the qualifications.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: I didn't say you did.

I just said from any pre-screened lists of people.

I just don't think you can ask or require that of individual councilmembers to say you have to pick your nominees from this list.

>> Tovo: I understand your point, thanks.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Council member morrison.

>> Morrison: The list of experts, it was just background research done for us and in no way something we were required to do, and I appreciate the work because it offers a lot of possibilities that I'm certainly looking at.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Well, yeah, and I appreciate it as an advisory thing.

Here's a list of people to pick from.

I personally have already selected the people that I'm going to --

>> Morrison: I guess I don't know who suggested that we were required to select from that list and I guess maybe that's something that you heard.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: If i misunderstood, I sincerely apologize.

>> Tovo: Thanks for the clarification.

I think the thought was we may not have expertise in hydrology and some other technical issues to be able to identify an expert who would serve on the committee and be a useful resource, so the staff prepared that list.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Well, we have, across the spectrum of our 60-odd boards and commissions and a lot of those positions we have qualification requirements, but they have always been considered advisory.

We like to have a person here who has this qualification or that qualification, and that's fine, and I appreciate the offering of names of people that have these qualifications.

I'm just saying, as long as it's advisory, that's fine.

But I don't think any council member will be restricted absolutely from nominating whoever they want to.

Council member riley?

>> Mayor Leffingwell: I wonder if we should be considering the possibility of extending our work session on the 26th into the afternoon, since we are talking about very, very significant issues that will affect us for a long time, and i would hate to see us get to the point where, typically, on a work session day --

>> Mayor Leffingwell: We'll advise all council members there is a likelihood that 26th work session will go on past.

>> So we can extend into the afternoon.

I'll plan on leaving my afternoon open to have a full discussion with respect to both the bond election and charter amendments.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Good.

I hope we'll be able to retain a quorum for a larger discussion.

>> The calendar is behind you, the final slide and presentation, just to give you a sense, as we discuss the calendaring issues.

>> We are supposed to be providing guidance to staff and I just wanted to add my voice to those already heard.

Seems like we're headed towards a few items.

Seems like we would have that one stand alone item decided on to move the elections to november.

We could have a separate stand alone item on whether citizens would like to shift the term length three years to four years, and that really would address the staggering issue, that one simple question would determine whether voters really -- how voters care about the staggering.

I suppose it would leave some options off the table, but seems like it would cover it adequately.

We need to have a separate item covering a geographic representation.

I would like to ecocouncil member spelman's request for information in sid and your time and others so we could have a good sense of how electoral prospects for various minority groups would be affected by the various possibilities ranging all the way from six districts up to, say, ten, so we have that good understanding of how each of those options would impact the electoral prospects.

>> I'll work with ryan to coordinate that.

>> Riley: I wanted to touch on the issue of the independent redistricting commission.

Two ways to handle that.

One way to do it would be to have a separate item saying that -- you would have to work on the wording, but the concept would be that, in the event that we have geographic representation, then district lines -- should district lines be drawn by an independent redistricting commission whose determination is final, that seems like that is a discreet, severable decision we could put to the voters.

There might be some voters include to support it.

I can see some argument for tying the independent redistricting commission together with the geographic representation item, and I think we may just need to give that some further thought because we could go either way on that.

Does that sound accurate to you, too?

>> I think that's absolutely correct.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Council member morrison?

>> Morrison: There is one other item on the previous slide and that's whether to require petition and referendum significant to be the same as required for charter amendments.

Can you remind us as the differences there this was a recommendation, am I correct, from the task force?

>> No, it's from the council.

>> This was recommendation number 3 from the charter revision committee, yes.

The current charter reads that, in order bring forward an initiative, a petition signed by qualified voters of the city equal in number to at least 10% of the qualified voters of the cities necessary.

A charter amendment, on the other hand, has a lower threshold and, so, the suggestion was to bring these more in tandem so that it is an option to do an initiative, an ordinance as easily as a charter amendment.

Of course, you could do an initiative more often because the two-year rule does not apply.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: It did begin as a recommendation from council.

>> I would like to see that on the ballot, so if anyone is interested in co-sponsoring that with me and staff could help with that.

>> Yeah, I'm certainly interested.

What I would like to ask is what is the effect of an ordinance adopted by the citizens on the council in terms of the ability to amend change or even overturn that ordinance once it's adopted by citizens?

What happens at the council level?

>> The charter provides definitely language in front of me.

They get in front of me quickly.

That an ordinance, there is a limit on how soon you can amend it and after that time it requires a simple majority to amend it.

>> So what would a super majority be if we had ten single-member districts and a mayor at large?

>> Well, we could -- if council is increased, we'll have to go through the charter and make sure all the places that talk about super majorities are consistent with the size within the charter.

But we would take whatever percentage that was talking about and apply it to the new number.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Is it two-thirds or four-fifths?

>> Morrison: Three-fourths.

>> Nine-sixteenths?

[Laughter]

>> Mayor Leffingwell: What's three-fourths of eleven?

Nine.

It would take nine votes.

>> So that same provision would apply to things like ballot petitions.

We would take whatever the percentage is now, six out of seven council members and apply that so whatever the council ended up being.

>> An initiative ordinance says an ordinance so adopted.

It means by initiative.

May be repealed, amended anytime after the first of two years by a favorable vote of six members of the council.

So if we went to a larger council, we would also have to amend all those different places in the charter where it talks about numbers.

So we would find whatever number -- if we went to an 11-member council, we would take whatever number was analogous to six as to seven as blank is to eleven and plug that number.

>> Morrison: I'm surprised there is actually the number "6"

in there.

That's worrisome because, to me -- I guess the question is are you sure we don't need to actually put something in the ballot language that says, and, which the way, we're going to go through and change anything that's explicitly a number because --

>> it wouldn't have to be on the ballot -- on the proposition that was actually on the ballot, but we would, in fact, have to do that.

>> Morrison: But we put it in the ordinance column?

>> It would be in the ordinance that calls a charter amendment election says these words will appear on the ballot to be voted yes or no and those words obviously don't carry all of the details that are going to have to be changed.

And then it says, if this proposition is approved by the voters, then the charter will be amended to read as follows.

Then it looks like an ordinance where we strike out the old language and put in the new.

So every place we have the number 6, you will have to strike that number 6 and put in 8 or whatever the new number was.

>> Morrison: The point being, that will be in the ordinance that calls the election.

Not just an after the fact, oh, by the way, we'll go clean it up.

>> No.

And the ballot proposition is obviously very shorthand compared to all of the different places in the charter that we have to touch to affect many of these changes.

But if you had everything on there on the ballot proposition, then the people would grow old reading it before they were able to, you know, cast a ballot.

So understand -- the legal understanding is that the proposition is shorthand.

The voters have educated themselves in other issues and understand what they're voting on when they vote yes or no.

>> Morrison: Great.

In any case, staff could help us put forth a resolution in the change and the number required?

>> Absolutely.

>> Morrison: Thanks.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: So i guess we're done with this and we can go on to specific items on the agenda that people want to discuss.

And if I can make a suggestion, council, I'd like to make sure that more people get a chance to discuss their items, let's limit one question -- one item per council member, and then, when all members have had a chance to ask a question, we can go back and go through the rounds again.

Who's first?

Council member morrison.

>> Morrison: I have a question for my colleagues that sponsored item 21 which is the item on performance measurers for taxicabs and accessible taxicabs and extra permits that allow them.

The question I have is, in the first "be it resolved," the city manager is directed to create performance measurers and there are a lot of variables that are -- a lot of variables that are calculated.

In the second paragraph it says, after a one-year transition period, if a franchise holder does not meet the standard described above -- and what wasn't clear to me is what is the standard?

I see the performance measurers are listed but I don't know what they have to mean.

>> May i?

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Yes.

>> I agree the language doesn't seem all that clear and maybe we could work with transportation and legal to clear up the language on that.

The idea is we're shifting to one basic measure, and that is whether the -- how the wait time for a person needing a wheelchair accessible cab, the average wait time for people needing wheelchair accessible cabs compares with the average wait time for all customers for that cab company.

So, in other words, if you called that cab company, your wait time should not depend on where you need a chair -- need one, a taxicab that's wheelchair access b or not.

>> We're looking for them to be the same and that's the standard they're going to have to meet or the franchise holders are subject to losing the permit?

>> Not necessarily the same.

What we're saying is a person need ago wheelchair accessible cab should not have to wait any longer than other people.

So, really, if the cab company is trying to meet the standard, may end up with wait times shorter for people needing here chair accessible cabs.

So not necessarily the word for equity -- well, we are in need for equity, but the goal is to focus on the wait times for those needing wheelchair accessible cabs.

>> And I fully support that.

I'm just wondering if they -- just think out loud here and not necessarily thinking what I'm saying is right or wrong, but would they be able to argue if the wait time for a wheelchair accessible is longer, in fact, they need more wheelchair accessible ones and this would actually move him in the other direction.

I'm just trying to think through the logic.

>> It is a challenge.

ray munday, who helped us with the taxicabs, before he came to austin, did a report on this specific issue in 2010, and it was done on an international basis.

It actually looked at the problem in europe as well as the of providing while wheelchair accessible cab service and pointed out it's very difficult to do this, that wheelchair accessible cabs are expensive to buy.

It's expensive to convert a regular vehicle into one that's wheelchair accessible and they're also more expensive to operate.

No matter how you handle it, they are more expensive.

So the idea was to give the cab companies as much flexibility as we could to see what they can do to meet this basic performance measure.

Instead of dictating that the cab companies must have a certain number of cabs on the road for a certain number of hours per year and meet certain criteria for each cab, we're going to back away from that altogether and say you guys come up with some kind of incentive system that works and, when we say works, what we mean is someone in a wheelchair should haven't to wait any longer than anybody else.

And it is in the nature of an experiment to see what incentive systems they could come up with.

Munday, in his 2010 report, points to a number of city that required different systems.

Many will have a centralized system for wheelchair accessible cabs.

In austin, there has been some experiments with incentive SYSTEMS AND SOME HAVE NOT Worked out well.

The basic problem we have is just providing more cabs is that companies, once they get the cabs, they don't necessarily have an incentive to use those for wheelchairs because obviously a wheelchair accessible cab can serve anybody and we would expect them to serve all kinds of customers and it's inherently in a cab company's interest financially to just serve people who don't need wheelchairs because that's cheaper.

So you have to be very careful.

We do need some basic measure.

Is since we're giving these additional permits free, essentially we're saying you can exceed an ordinary cap but we don't have any accountability or any metric that says, you really need to measure up now that you're getting extra cabs.

You really need to perform a good service.

My hope is, if we put this basic test in, you've got to hit the standard or you will start losing your permits, then they will have enough incentive to work hard on hitting that basic performance.

>> Morrison: I appreciate that.

It says if they don't meet the standard, the franchise holder is subject to but doesn't mean mandatorily anything will happen.

So as an experiment, you will be able to look at it.

Do you know off the top of your head how many each of the franchises have?

We have another item to point out a certain number to one of the franchises.

>> We have an ordinance, 6 to 5% of the fleet should be wheelchair accessible.

And the item that you see on the ageneralda, item 16, gets into the numbers for yellow cab and it brings their number up to 6.5.

>> And the other ones are at the 6% number now.

>> Yes.

>> Did you notice I snuck?

Another question about an item?

[Laughter]

>> Mayor Leffingwell: This just establishes criteria and potentially subjects future granting of permits.

Is that correct?

>> What would happen, if you're not hitting that performance measure, the company would be subject to its wheel their accessible permits to be concerted into regular permits, if those particular cabs are not meeting that performance measure.

We will have that down to the specific wheelchair accessible cab.

Once someone -- if a cab company fails to meet that performance measure, then we'll look to those specific permits and start converting those back to regular --

>> but that would require an additional action by the council?

>> That's right.

>> I wanted to ask, since the accessible permits are based on a percentage of overall permits within your fleet, will the performance measurers also be weighted based on the number of cabs in your fleet?

Just because each franchise is 5% of their fleet be accessible, when you have a fleet of o 50 5% is not readily available and will never meet the performance measurers.

Only the cab company with 465 permit will have a better shot at meeting the performance measurers.

So I completely agree with performance measurers, but they have to be balanced and weighted in that those individual companies are capable of doing, not just what we want as an outcome.

>> Of course, we're not comparing the performances of a small cab company against the performance of a larger cab company.

We're just saying for any cab company, even if you only have got 50 cabs, it will affect your wait time for customers generally.

And what we're saying is the wait firm that one company, the wait time for people in wheelchairs shouldn't be any longer for people who are in wheelchairs.

>> I agree.

But the wait final for the smaller cab companies are longer because the sizeno carrierringconnect 57600

>> Spelman: What I think councilmember martinez is getting at is the number of cabs on the street is going to have an effect on wait times, not just the percentage of total cabs in your fleet.

One reason is if you get people who call in sick and aren't going to have the cab that day you will have more fluctuation.

So instead of having three cabs on the street that are wheelchair accessible, you might only have one or two.

That would have a huge effect each though on average they have six and a half percent, on any given day they might have considerably less and they would have a huge effect on wait times.

So I think this does put a big company at an advantage relative to the small companies because that's the way the math works out.

>> Martinez: The other thing I would like to --

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Wildfire we go -- before we go on to another subject i would like to say I agree with councilmember martinez and spelman because if you're only required to have, say,

four cabs that are wheel they're equipped and you get two calls, you've lost 50% of your capability there.

Whereas if you are required to have 20 accessible cabs and you have two calls your capability hasn't been affected very much.

>> Spelman: Or if you get 10 calls, if it's still proportionate, you still have 10 cabs out there rather than one or two.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Yeah, that, but I think it's taken care of in that nothing actually happens as a result of this.

>> Martinez: That's the point I was trying to make.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Okay.

I misunderstood.

>> Martinez: The point I'm trying to make is in this resolution we direct and grant the authority to the city manager to come up with this performance criteria and then implement it by september 1 of this year.

That's troubling.

I think that we should know what those performance measures are.

We should know the potential of those performance measures.

And I would like to personally see those before we enact them.

So unless we can get that changed, I don't think I'll be able to support this resolution because we don't know what those performance measures are.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: That is different, but what i just asked chris a minute ago is that nothing would actually happen without a separate action from the council.

>> Riley: Well, we will have to look at that language.

The expectation was in general, whenever we have the system hired out, that in the future if the cab company is not performing -- suppose the cab company just decides this is too much of a pain.

We're not going to carry people in wheelchairs.

Well, then there ought to be some administrative ability -- there ought to be some repercussions to that decision and those repercussions could -- ought to be able to be administered by staff.

That it should not take a separate action.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: What would that action by staff be?

>> Riley: It would be a matter of saying since you've got all these extra permits for the sake of carrying wheelchair customers and you're no longer doing that, we will now consider those permits to be regular permits and those will be counted against the release of future permits.

So in that sense there would be -- the rubber would hit the road at the time of the annual -- when we do additional permits every year and the number that -- that are now going to be considered regular permits instead of wheelchair permits, that would be subtracted from the allotment that the company would otherwise get for the following year.

>> Tovo: Could I jump in here for a minute?

So as the co-sponsor of this I want to say that I think that maybe councilmember riley and I could sit down and look at -- and in light of some of the comments, maybe make -- I certainly would be open to an additional check-in with council at the point that some of this has been established, but point is some of the wheelchair accessible cabs, I think I'm correct in citing these numbers, have carried zero passengers in the last year.

And that's just not acceptable.

If a company is getting extra permits to carry wheelchair riders who need a wheelchair accessible cab, then they ought to be functioning that way if there's a demand for it.

So I think it's really critical that if we have cab companies coming forward and saying they have permits who need passengers who need a wheelchair accessible cab that we have a method of collecting data that shows how the cabs will be used.

So I think the intent here is really a good one and i hope we can all rally around the intent, which is to make sure that the transportation staff getting the data they need to really assess how those wheelchair accessible cabs are being used because we certainly heard from communities of riders who need them who say they wait an hour, two hours for a cab and that is a problem we need to address.

And so the data is important.

I think councilmember morrison, you had asked won't they -- couldn't it be an argument that they come back and say the waits are very long and so we need more permits?

But I think we'll have the data for the transportation staff to be able to look at how the cabs have been used to see whether they are getting lots of calls and are using those cabs and still not meeting the demand or if those cabs are always off serving other people and that's why they're not -- there are long wait times.

But I take your point that we need to make sure that there is a consideration for different size companies and I certainly think that's doable.

Again, the main intent as i see it is so make sure that people who need a wheelchair accessible cab don't have to wait longer than other customers.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: I think speaking for myself, i certainly agree with the intent, but again, how do you make this work?

If the complaint is that you have wheelchair accessible cabs and they're not being used for that purpose, are you going to require this cab and this driver to basically stand by, be on call for that type of service?

How else would you do it?

>> Tovo: That's certainly one option that a cab company could consider.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Then the driver of that cab is not going to be a very happy cab driver, I would think.

Councilmember morrison.

>> Morrison: Just a couple of points.

I fully am behind the intent and I think there are some things to work out here.

In particular I think there's a way to adjust it so we can take into account different cab companies and we have such different sizes of cab companies.

And one possibility -- I do think it takes some thought and probably analysis to be able to capture an appropriate number.

One possibility might be to ask staff to work with the utc to try to come up with that to look at some options for what those measures should be and to come back.

Of course, that might not HAPPEN BY SEPTEMBER 1st.

The other thing that i wanted to ask about is if in fact this goes into effect and the special permit then become -- and they don't meet the performance measures, the special permits become regular permits, they will count towards their allocation, but could they then go forward and ask for a six percent added to the special permits because they now have no special permits?

And I wouldn't want that to be allowed.

So I hope that we can address that in here too.

I assume that's not your intent.

>> Right.

If I may, yes, you raise a very good point.

The six percent rule would lead to some issues that aren't fully addressed by this resolution.

This resolution is really an interim measure aimed at getting our house in order, getting accountability measures in place and moving in the direction of achieving parity for people in wheelchairs.

Now, there are outstanding issues that are not addressed by this resolution, including for instance what is the right number of wheelchair accessible cabs that any fleet ought to have.

Six or six and a half percent may not be the right number.

And related to that is the question that you raise about what about a company that didn't meet performance measure in the past but would still like to be able to provide that service in the future.

Then it's absolutely something that we can expect to continue conversations about together with the city and stakeholders.

But my hope was that we would be able to begin moving in the right direction with this resolution as an interim step in the interest of meeting what is really a very urgent need on the part of people in wheelchairs.

>> Morrison: So I guess the question really comes down to does it make sense to put something in place operational very very soon that is sort of half done, but it's a start, versus trying to get a little more clarity before we actually put it in place?

>> Riley: And even with this in place, it would be a full year -- there would be a one-year transition period.

So we would still have ample time, even if this passed on thursday, there would still be ample time to deal with exactly what the repercussions would be if the company didn't achieve the performance measures.

>> Spelman: I like councilmember morrison's idea about having the urban transportation commission have a look at the details.

And one reason is because one place where you might want to land is some sort of cooperative dispatching arrangement where if you've got nine wheelchair accessible cabs on the street at any given moment, then all three of the companies might decide we're just going to dispatch the

closest one regardless of whoever it happens to be so we can provide best service collectively and not have to be bound by what each of us individually could or couldn't accomplish.

That would provide better service, probably wouldn't hurt company revenues very much at all, and might just be the best solution to the problem.

But it seems that's the way it's precluded on performance measures to each individual cab company.

Is that your intention or is that not precluded somehow?

>> Riley: I don't believe that sort of thing is precluded by this language.

Surely what you're describing is a concept that is not addressed by this resolution.

But this resolution would leave room for cab companies to develop a system like that.

>> Spelman: This is about six percent of the total avenue is wheelchair, people who require wheelchairs?

That's the genesis of the six to six and a half percent per company?

>> Actually, we're not really clear on where that number came from.

>> Spelman: That seems to be all the more reason for us to have another set of eyes to look at the details of this stuff because i could easily imagine if we end up with a much higher volume of wheelchair requiring customers, we might not be logically possible to cover that demand with only six percent of cars.

>> Riley: And bear in mind that austin is aging and there may well be a greater need in the future for wheelchair accessible cabs than there is today.

I'm not even sure that the right answer is to set some arbitrary percentage like that.

But really if we focus on that -- on the basic measure about the wait times, you don't even really need to get into that.

If someone in a wheelchair is no longer than other folks when they call for a cab, then do we really need to dictate exactly what percentage of a fleet is devoted to wheelchair accessible cabs?

The idea was we wanted to step back from and provide flexibility to the cab companies to do -- to put whatever measures are in place for them to achieve the basic performance measure.

>> I understand that.

And you're right, if we're through the gate and folks in chairs get the same service everybody else gets, we're done, but if we don't get that, which is kind of what I suspect is more likely, then we're kind of in a dilemma.

Do all the companies fail at all the same levels or what.

I'm not sure what we would do under those circumstances, but my best guess is we won't find ourselves in a situation where people in chairs get the same service as people without chairs because we don't know how many of them we are and we know we're only talking about six percent of the entire fleet, which I would suspect most of the companies are going to be dispatching to non-chair requiring customers just to keep them busy, at least some of the time.

>> Riley: Right.

One last note.

I would note that the resolution, the current language of the resolution does direct the city manager to explore the use of centralized dispatch for accessible trips.

That is a model that has been used in some other cities and I think that with this resolution that there would be room to explore that possibility here.

>> Spelman: Thank you for calling it to my attention.

I had overlooked that.

>> Tovo: Mayor?

As I understood it the six to six and a half percent was something that entered into our ordinance because it was more or less the average across the country and it was not based on empirical data particular to austin, but again I think that we have another resolution on thursday's agenda that contemplates providing more permits to a company as a means of trying to address a solution of wait time and what this resolution contemplates is trying to move us towards some measures that make better sense and also some -- will require companies to collect the kind of data that allows us to really figure out how best to serve it, but as i see the important goal we need to obtain from the resolution is to make sure that companies have enough flexibility to try to address that the way time in whatever way makes better sense for their company.

And for some companies, and I think several have contemplated this, it may make better sense to hire a driver, have them be an employee of the company and then have them focus strictly on wheelchair accessible cab riders.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Salaried.

>> Tovo: Yes, thank you.

So the solutions may differ from company to company.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Yeah.

I think what I have to gather out of all this discussion and there seems to be no end to the amount of discussion we can have about cabs, is that I'm all in favor of addressing the question and collecting data and all that.

I think what I have problems with is imposing as a result of this action some kind of further action without coming back and discussing it with the council.

>> Morrison: Mayor?

I just want to throw -- to second that.

I see a couple of ways forward.

One would be to ask us to go to the utc.

The other would be in line with what the mayor said and have them start collecting the data and with the intent that the wait times be the same, make that clear.

And when the data is collected after a year or whatever to come back to council, show us -- and the utc, show us the data, see if it makes sense to take the action or some other action.

So that would be another way to clearly show your intent, but not impose the action itself and allow the action the issue to come back to council.

>> Riley: Mayor, i appreciate all the comments.

Just in terms of timing on this, we do have three taxi items on the agenda, 15, 16 and 21.

I think our discussions on this would benefit with the input of taxi drivers as well as folks in the disability community.

I think for all those folks it would be easier if we could set some time certain.

And on these three items.

And we have reached out to the taxi drivers and chance to win we heard was for 6:30.

So I wanted to bounce that off the council and see if 30 would be an acceptable time for a time certain?

>> Mayor Leffingwell: If that's what you want to do, fine, but if you'll look at the agenda --

>> Riley: An earlier time would be better than no time at all.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: We have, I believe, it's 21 items that are set for a time certain of 4:00.

Something -- excuse me, no.

11 Items that are set.

11.

My math was a little off there.

So if we could set it at 2:00 would be better.

>> Riley: 2:00?

Okay.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: All right.

So I'm going to take a turn here since nobody -- 23.

I believe there will be a change or a correction to this item.

It's more than three -- i think it's more than three vista members that will be dealing with.

I think it may be as many as eight, but I will have to check on that.

Just for info.

That change will be made if appropriate on thursday.

>> Tovo: Mayor, since you raised that issue, can you give us a sense of what kind of work they'll do?

>> Mayor Leffingwell: They're working now.

We have vista volunteers working in different departments in the city.

I have one that's working in my office and does a number of things.

One of the things she's doing right now she's on her with the honor flight folks.

And there are others.

The city manager may want to talk about what other city departments vista volunteers are working in, but the point is they're made available to us to help in ways and certainly welcome suggestion from councilmembers about what might be good and appropriate uses.

>> Tovo: Are all that will be -- that this measure addresses, are they all designated to certain projects at this point?

>> Mayor Leffingwell: At this point I don't believe so.

Are they?

>> I don't think so.

I think we're open to having them work in various places in the organization where we have a need for that kind of support.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: So we welcome your suggestions.

>> Tovo: Thank you.

I have one I'll share with you.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Any other specific items that nip would like to discuss?

-- That anyone would like to discuss?

I was just going to say hearing none --

>> Tovo: Sorry, I'm trying to narrow it down to one.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Councilmember tovo.

>> Tovo: I think I would like to talk about number 11, please.

No, actually, I think i would like to talk about a different item.

I've written the wrong number.

I would like to talk about the item that is a budget amendment to address additional staff for the fire department and also for neighborhood planning.

That would be number 8.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Okay.

>> Tovo: I guess this is probably a question for the city manager.

I know we had a discussion during budget sessions about some of the unmet needs in various departments.

I would like to talk a little bit about why-- were there any thoughts to the phasing positions.

If there is a bottleneck and certainly the staff presented information suggest there is or documenting that there is, it seems to me that at some point the influx of additional staff will handle that bottleneck.

So what kinds of thoughts and considerations did the department give to hiring some number, but not necessarily a full 11, so they can see how quickly that bottleneck gets managed and we don't have 11 permanent employees.

>> I see greg coming into the room, but I'm going to remind you of the conversation that we had during the early budget discussions.

This doesn't just solve apotele neck problem.

The issue is that they're backlogged in terms of review.

And as I recollect the conversation with staff and when we were in here previously when they were presenting their budget, this level of staffing if i recollect, greg, it positions you hopefully to deal with the backlog and to get you up to where you used to be in terms of your ability to review plans as i recollect.

And then we were going to look going forward to see what we could do to improve on that in the future.

Is that not correct.

>> Tovo: City manager, if I could suggest, a bottleneck and a backlog are relatively similar terms.

I'm using bottleneck because that's the one in our backup.

But I guess my question is still the same.

If there's a bag log at some point the -- backlog at some point the new employees will get us through that.

>> I remind you we showed you a photograph as an occasion of a significant backlog that they do have.

Bottleneck is part of the problems too because of the shortness of staff that results in the backlog.

>> Tovo: That's why I said the staff documented that for us, but there is indeed a backlog.

>> Right.

>> Greg guernsey, director of planning development and review.

It's not just a backlog.

We have an increase in development generally.

Even if we were to catch up we would fall back behind because we physically can't keep up with amount of work that's coming in.

We actually project that we'll see additional growth in the next couple of years and even in the statesman this morning you saw a huge number of buildings going up.

The number of staff being added would help us meet our performance measure.

We strive for about 80% to have commercial plan and reviews turn around and now we're only about 30, 35.

And so even if we were to catch up, we would still start falling behind.

Right now these are positions that I would be asking for in next year's budget.

They're timely to help try to get me back on board, but I'm still going to keep some temporary plan review people on board to also have some temperature inspections on board to help address that backlog.

Those positions would go away and then hopefully the staff that we would add to be trained and up and running to handle the amount of work that is coming in and the future projects that come in.

We know that apple is coming.

It's not here yet.

I still have a couple of hotels that are coming.

I've got at least 20 school projects that are lagging behind that I'm having trouble getting out right now.

But there are other projects that are coming and that additional work load, each if I get caught up I'll fall back behind again because there isn't physically enough staff to keep us moving forward.

>> So it's your best estimate that 11 really are necessary for the ongoing projections that you have.

We won't be in a position two years from now that the backlog has been cleared and you need to contemplate staff layoffs.

>> If you recall about two years ago we actually got rid of I think about nine positions.

Some of those includes inspection positions.

Last year we removed I think 10 positions from the department that we didn't fill.

And so some of these positions are in inspection, some are in commercial plan review, some are in the development assistance center which has seen a tremendous increase from just a couple of years ago because so many people are coming on and are interested in building.

The demands for lots are also increasing in Austin, so there's two of these positions are doing at looking at doing residential review as well as commercial review.

So we do have a lot of development that's occurring and the staffing level hasn't really been able to keep up with that demand.

>> Tovo: Thank you for that additional discussion.

And then I want to talk a little bit about the three --

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Can I follow up on that particular before you go on to the next part of your question?

All I can say is I hear everyday about some real tragic story about people who are unable to get their projects approved in time or their experienced some kind of really big hardship, loss of income, having to pay rent on a place that they can't use because they don't have this.

I think this is just -- this is just a comment.

I think we needing to way behind hiring additional people and additional ways such as outside contracting to get this work done.

And address this problem immediately, not after we hire people and get them trained or immediately.

And I think there are ways to do that and I think it is a problem that can't wait for the whole process, the normal process of hiring additional people and training them to happen.

Sorry for interrupting.

Go ahead.

>> Mayor, just to respond very quickly, I've worked with mark washington in our hr department to do a pilot for about 120 days.

I would actually pay staff over time, after hours review and we've gotten volunteers on the fire department side and volunteers on my department side to do these additional reviews.

These are folks that wouldn't necessarily be able to receive overtime, but this is a particular situation to handle the backlog, also to assist with training new staff that would come in.

But one part that we are talking about which was brought up during the fee study was seeing if we could get actually a way to do expedited projects for a certain price.

The city of dallas offers this type of service.

They charge about a thousand dollars an hour to do this service, but then there are staff that are brought in and the development community actually pays for that additional cost for that service.

So that's another thing that I would be exploring in the coming months.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: I think that's a great suggestion to give people the option, if you want this expedited service you have to pay a little bit extra, but at least you have that option.

>> And we do that right now for small projects, these things are quick turnaround.

We had a discussion about this in april and earlier in part of this expansion of staff would actually assist by doing the quick turnarounds because we're only able to do them two days during the week and the idea is we would do them five days a week.

So if some small business is trying to occupy an existing lease space that's vacant or a change to go to a different building, those are the customers that really don't take a lot of my staff's time, but there's not staff able to do that at this time.

So they bill these to get those reviews out without pulling other staff that are looking at the larger condo buildings or apartment buildings or more complex buildings.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Can't you with something as simple as allowing them to pay for their own development review as a private party?

I know they can't do everything, but they can do most of it?

>> We're not set up to do that currently under our fees that we charge.

That's something I'll be looking at in the next couple of months to see if we can't.

>> Tovo: guernsey you had mentioned that you had temperature staff assisting you?

Did you mean your regular staff assisting with after hours?

Or do you have some temporary staff?

>> We have temporary plan review, we have only four full time plan review outside of their managers that do look at all the apartments, all the condos, all the commercial buildings.

Those things from samsung to austinian down to an apartment or the 7-11 and they are the building review staff that will have temporary staff that we've hired to assist them to keep up with everything.

>> With regard to the three full time equivalents in the fire department, I assume these are to do the inspection as required of the additional.

>> There are doing inspections and also review.

When we get these very large buildings, whether they're hospitals or hotels or institutional buildings, the amount of plan review that's done by my staff is also shared by the fire department.

So we work very closely with the fire department.

Not only do they look at plan review, but also site plans.

My commercial building plans are actually kind of delayed because the fire department doesn't have enough staff physically to review their plans as well.

So those same review full purpose annexions that occur in my department for looking at plumbing or electrical, mechanical, fire department looks at those for exiting requirements and the safety requirements, some are more complicated projects, like samsung where they're using complex gases and those require particular review.

So those are things that they're looking at, they're just as much a need as I am for staffing so we can make sure we can have the quick turnaround.

>> Tovo: Those positions will be strictly review.

>> The inspections are those in my department.

These are more serving in a review function.

>> Because we have heard some concerns about the level of inspection, the level of inspectors that are available from the fire department, and in particular I think a concern about there not being enough inspections -- fire department inspection staff for our downtown buildings.

So I guess that -- that was part of my concern.

>> What may be helpful is i think some of the inspection staff are actually brought in to assist with the reviews because there's just not enough of them.

So if there were more people doing the reviews than those people that might be doing some of the inspections could actually get out in the field more than coming in and trying to deal with the plans and trying to come through the office right now.

>> Tovo: So it's your assessment that some of the staff from the fire department who are currently doing reviews can go back and assist with the hi-rise inspections?

>> Maybe coming in and doing some of the review.

I've actually had to pull some staff back in in critical times, if I don't have someone being able to do the plan review, I'll bring someone in, an inspector come in to do part of the plan review plan to assist with them and go back out in the field.

I think that same thing is happening in part of the fire department as well.

>> Tovo: Thanks.

I guess that would be good to nail down.

I guess we have concerns --

>> I could talk to chef kerr and we could have that for you on thursday.

>> Tovo: Thanks.

And I guess my last question is one for the city manager.

During our budget discussions I know this was an unmet need that really rose to the high level of concern.

One that I mentioned was -- had to do with the parks department and some of the youth programs that were being cut for austin residents for this summer.

And I think councilmember martinez asked where that wasn't coming back for a budget amendment.

I'm just wondering whether that is -- the summer has started and those programs are I assume not in place.

So I know this is a critical need, but why didn't we have any additional discussion about that?

>> Burt lamberas --

>> Tovo: Sorry, I was told that was a different direction.

>> Not on the agenda.

>> I think you can ask the question, but limit the discussion about the issue and maybe ask that it be brought back for another meeting.

But I think you can different ask him the question and he can provide an answer, but limiting the discussion among the group.

>> Tovo: Okay.

Thanks.

>> I can provide a response?

>> So we can ask the question and the city attorney can provide a written response.

>> Spelman: Kathy, are you done?

>> Tovo: I think so given our pattern of one question per person until we get around the circle.

>> Spelman: I think it's a good pattern.

Do you have a follow-up?

>> Morrison: I have questions on number 8 also?

A couple of topics.

Is greg still here?

>> Somebody have greg come back, please.

>> Morrison: Thank you for a couple of follow-ups on number 8.

And one thing that jumped out at me is you mentioned that we have some temporary folks in place, which i think is great, that are doing plan review.

How do you manage to get expertise in temporary employees that can actually do plan review?

Because it's not necessarily a simple task.

>> No, but there seem to be a lot of people that are interested in moving to austin, and we were fortunate enough I know for -- we actually lost a position to our sister city to south in san antonio.

There was an employee who was commuting and he was offered a position in san antonio and he took it.

So actually one of the temporary plan review people actually was successful and became a permanent employee now of the city.

But we do have people that are interested in working temporary.

I think they're looking for a foot in the door with the city or to get experience, so we've been successful in filling those positions.

>> Morrison: So we're having to do basically on the job training for them?

>> We do.

And those that we have, they'll do the more simple type reviews.

They won't get into probably the more detailed reviews that might require a greater knowledge of commercial design standards or something along that line, but the certificates usually for those building trades are more national, plumbing, mechanical, the international building code is recognized and used in other cities as well.

>> Morrison: Okay.

And then I wanted to mention that beyond this item 's and everything, the first part of it is that we're raising our fees, development and review fees, and that's what is going to be funding our new positions based on the cost of service study that's come out now, which I think is very important.

And one of the things i wanted to ask about that is we know we haven't raised many of our fees since '94.

>> '93.

About 90 percent of the land development fees in the city of austin have not changed since 1993.

>> Morrison: So that department beat out austin energy for being longer --

>> I don't know if I'm envious of that.

>> Morrison: Congratulations if that's what you were working for.

>> Spelman: You're not scheduling work sessions for us, are you?

>> Morrison: No, I am not.

[Laughter] but what I did want to highlight is some of them are pretty significant recommended increases by our cost of service, but what you have implemented is at most a 25% increase.

>> That's correct.

>> Morrison: And just to let you know I'm interested to know what the actual target amount is for some of those and if my staff hasn't already we do plan to submit a question that asks you to fill in for those that were capped at 25 percent, a column that will tell us where they eventually -- where we're planning to get --

>> we can provide that information to you.

>> Morrison: And last question is this implements the fee increase now.

Are we planning to do another 25 percent with our 12-13 budget or are we going to wait until 13-14?

>> The fee increase that's proposed would go into EFFECT JULY 1st.

There would be no fee increase for these fees not for another year and three months or so.

So this is a little early rather than coming in the fall.

So the answer is no, there would be not another ding to the development community or property owner or someone trying to develop under our codes that would occur in the fall.

>> Morrison: Okay.

I think it's important that we get this started and i appreciate you all getting this in place because it's one of the arenas where we're looking for revenue, where we've got development going on we need to make sure that it's supporting itself for the services that we the city are providing.

>> And each of these are really independent items of the other.

The fee study, my predecessor victoria had been looking at this shortly before I became the director and we had the fee study.

This is the first part of the fee study.

It looked at about 421 fees.

And then there will be an additional set of fees that we'll be looking at next year that we'll be looking at site subdivision -- subdivision related fees, which were not analyzed here.

Also some other miscellaneous fees.

The positions themselves were not included in the fee study.

So when we look at some of the cost of service issues, they don't really reflect the additional cost that these employees will be in here.

And the fees are based on an average or blending of inflation, the comparable cities and cost of service.

>> Morrison: And clearly there are some fees that are capped at 25 percent, so it will be interesting to see how much further they will need to go.

Thank you.

>> Spelman: Greg, you -- putting 11 more people on the street is the fastest way of getting through our bottleneck and clearing the backlog, but another way of accomplishing the same thing is to improve the process.

And I know there have been a lot of discussions at improving development processes over the years.

I wonder if you could talk about where we are with respect to that.

>> One exciting thing about two of the positions that are proposed in the budget are ones that deal with it issues.

Basically I'll have someone doing a review of the business process and one that will actually be creating software to implement.

For instance, your pop-up process that you implemented last december where you had storefronts operating for a temporary amount of time, my amanda system that I use for tracking and permitting and everything really isn't integrated to have that function.

So it's not a big enough project for ct and m to recognize, but this would be something that my staff will be able to do in-house and do some amendments to the software that we have to try to implement the smaller projects.

Also those things that may deal with getting some fees to be paid online, that also may be helped by having additional staff.

Right now we have more of a web-based process for processing all the building permits and inspections.

So I have staff looking at that part right now.

>> Spelman: That sounds like it could lead to a dramatic improvement of what we've within doing before in moving files and physical documents.

>> There might be pictures of just a stack of thumb drives sitting on a desk rather than drawings that are larger than my body around sitting on the floor.

That's something that we're trying to strive for to cut down on paper, make us a little bit more efficient.

Certainly lower the cost to also submitting drawings to the city.

>> Spelman: So instead -- ultimately instead of a picture of thumb drives, we have a picture of clouds because it's all being sent up to the cloud and pulled down from the cloud and we don't have to touch anything.

>> That's a possibility.

>>

>> Spelman: I know austin energy is doing a lot of work and the water department has been doing a lot of statistical work and the city has done a lot of quality management.

Has there been a discussion in your department about using one of these production systems to think through how we can get through the process on a broader level?

>> I don't think we've had an in-depth discussion on that.

I've worked with austin energy because they assisted the development services portion of the department back in 2006 when we actually went to the amanda system.

Those discussions are about to occur again.

I think when we talk about updating the city plan development code that is the optimal time to really have the discussion and have that in place as we're going to a new code.

So in the grand scheme of things if we can improve the process and then actually get to the code rewrite, then I think things will become much more simpler and smoother in the future.

>> Spelman: Because a lot of the bottle necks in your processes are mandated by things in the code.

And if we can smooth out the code we can smooth out your process.

>> That's true.

>> Spelman: Okay.

Thank you.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Okay.

Any other topics for discussion?

Kathy?

>> Tovo: I just asked a question, so I want to be sure none of my colleagues have none.

I want to be sure, I think the assistant city manager lumbreras could give us background.

I was looking at number 4, which is the interlocal agreement with travis county.

So it sounded like the city's piece of this is to help mostly with payroll and supplying in that piece of it.

I guess I wondered and maybe this is questions that you would handle through the q and a process, but i wondered how long the city has participated in the coaboratn, whether you knew if it had extended back and what numbers are we talking about in terms of the number of youth certainly served each summer.

>>Bert lumbreras,ite off the top of my head I'm not aware of the length of time we've this I've been with the city zoning district years and we've had this agreement in place.

Primarily the way the agreement works is that the county, travis county has a staff that actually does the recruitment and does all the facilitation in terms of the outreach to the youth.

The numbers in the past have ranged to -- it been about 750 youth.

But I will verify that number with you.

It actually works out to be a great partnership because they do a lot of the work in terms of processing the youth outreach and the youth.

Then we work very closely with them in terms of placement.

We have a number of sides that we provide placement to the youth to provide the quality training and the real life work experience.

And that's where the payroll kicks in because we kind of share the placement of the youth on their side.

They tend to handle.

And then the placement of the youth on our side we tend to handle on the payroll.

But yeah, we've had a long-standing agreement with the county and it's been an effective partnership for at least for six years and probably much longer.

12 Years I've been told.

>> That sounds great.

Thank you.

50 is -- I was trying to get a sense of the scope, whether it was a couple hundred or more than that.

Do you have any examples of where these youth are employed?

You mentioned that the city get jobs for some of them.

>> I would be more than happy to get you a list of where we have youth.

I know we placed them in everything from library facilities to recreation centers and some of the offices here at city hall, hrd as some examples.

But I would be more than happy to get you a listing of where we've had listings in the past.

>> Tovo: Thank you.

It sounds like a really interesting program and i appreciate the additional background.

>> Sure.

>> Mayor Leffingwell: Any other items we want to bring up?

In that case, that completes our agenda.

Without objection we're adjourned at 11:20.