



CITY OF KIRKLAND
City Manager's Office
123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3001
www.ci.kirkland.wa.us

MEMORANDUM

To: Dave Ramsay, City Manager

From: Marilynne Beard, Assistant City Manager
Robin Jenkinson, City Attorney

Date: February 23, 2010

Subject: CITY COUNCIL ETHICS CODE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

RECOMMENDATION:

City Council receives a recommendation from the Council ethics subcommittee regarding the proposed process for developing an ethics code and authorizes staff to begin implementation.

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:

At the February 2 meeting, the City Council appointed a Council subcommittee charged with creating a process for developing a community-based ethics code. Mayor Joan McBride, Councilmember Dave Asher and Councilmember Doreen Marchione were appointed to the subcommittee. On February 23, the subcommittee met and proposed the following process and timeline:

Scope

The subcommittee agreed that the Council should develop a code of ethics as well as code of conduct.

Process

Expert/Citizen Committee

The City Council expressed interest in appointing an ad hoc committee, of five to seven members, to develop an ethics code and code of conduct. The subcommittee discussed the types of expertise and/or experience that would assist in writing an effective ethics code including:

- Direct experience in government (especially municipal government)
- Current or former elected officials
- Participation by the faith-based community
- Ethics practitioners
- Academics in the fields of ethics or law
- Legal expertise, e.g. attorney or retired judge (an analyst or attorney from the Municipal Research and Services Center or the Public Disclosure Commission was discussed).
- Service on non-profit or public agency boards

The subcommittee agreed that Kirkland residency was not a requirement, but that it should be taken into consideration in combination with the areas of expertise noted above. Potential committee members may

be solicited directly by the City Council or may submit letters of interest to the City Council. A list of interested individuals will be forwarded to the Council subcommittee which will make a recommendation to the full Council.

Code Development Process and Interface with City Council

While the committee selection process is taking place, the City Council will be asked to provide input on particular elements that they want the ethics code or code of conduct to include. This will take place at a regular Council meeting in March.

Once a committee is selected, the members will meet once with the Council subcommittee to receive a summary of the Council's interests and to have an opportunity to ask questions before they begin their work. The committee will receive staff support from the City Attorney and Assistant City Manager and will have at least one mid-point check-in with the Council subcommittee. Staff will provide regular updates to the full City Council on the progress of the committee at regular Council meetings. The committee will select a chair from among its members. It is anticipated that the process should be completed within approximately six months with consideration given to summer schedules. The subcommittee suggested that the ethics committee develop options for Council consideration rather than one "finished" product. The subcommittee also stressed the importance of formal adoption of the code of ethics/code of conduct and that individual council members should also formally commit to the code. All new council members would receive training and would also be asked to formally commit to the adopted code.

Suggested Timeline

March 2, 2010

City Council Meeting

-City Council receives subcommittee recommendation on process, modifies as needed and authorizes staff to implement

-An announcement calling for letters of interest from members of the public interested in serving on the committee will be made under the "Announcements" section of the agenda

March 3 – 19

Committee Recruitment

-Call for letters of interest from interested individuals that meet the criteria adopted by the City Council

-Individual City Council members contact individuals that meet the criteria to determine if they are interested in serving on the committee. Interested individuals will be asked to submit a letter of interest.

March 16, 2010

City Council Meeting

-City Council provides direction with regard to specific elements to be included in an ethics code or code of conduct

Week of March 22

Subcommittee Meeting

-City Council subcommittee meets to review letters of interest and to develop a recommendation to the full Council for committee membership

April 6, 2010

City Council Meeting

-City Council formally appoints committee members

April – June

Committee Meetings

June

Joint Meeting of Ethics Committee and Council Subcommittee

-Conduct mid-point check-in with Council subcommittee

September, 2010

Ethics Committee Presents Recommendations to City Council

Summary and Next Steps

If the City Council concurs with the process and timeline described in this memo, staff will conduct an outreach effort to solicit letters of interest.