

**MINUTES
GENERAL COUNSEL COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING OF MARCH 12, 2026**

Present: Council Member Blackwell, Council Member Salafia, Council Member Pulino, Council Member Sweeney and Council Member Fulton

Staff: Deputy General Counsel Kori Wisneski, HR Director Justin Richardson

Public: Erik Costa

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Public Comment:

The Chair noted that no members of the public were present for comment besides Chief Costa, who was there to speak on a specific agenda item.

Council Member Salafia made a motion to waive the rules to allow Chief Costa to speak when the relevant agenda item is reached, and Council Member Fulton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes

Council Member Salafia made a motion to approve the February 12, 2026 special meeting minutes and Council Member Fulton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. New Business

A. Ordinance – Fees for special police work (31-11)

Attorney Wisneski explained that recent contract negotiations increased private duty pay for officers from \$60 to \$70 per hour. However, the fees charged to vendors have remained lower than in other communities. The proposed ordinance revision, initiated by Councilwoman Blackwell, changes the authority of the Chief of Police and the Public Safety Commission from setting the rates to making recommendations to the Common Council for final approval. Chief Costa reported that the Public Safety Commission met on March 5 and approved raising the vendor rate to \$125 (up from \$98) to cover the new contract costs. Attorney Wisneski clarified that the City Charter does not prevent this policy change. A separate resolution specifying the new rates will be sent to the Finance and Government (F&G) committee for further processing.

Council Member Fulton made a motion to approve the ordinance as presented and

Council Member Salafia seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Old Business

A. Recruitment Efforts

Director Richardson provided an update on the ongoing efforts to recruit truck drivers for the city, noting that a statewide recruitment flyer has been developed and is currently being distributed. Although the internal posting period has concluded with no internal applicants identified, the official external recruitment phase is scheduled to begin on Friday, March 13, 2026. Additionally, an open house focused on citywide recruitment and community engagement is scheduled for April 14, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. at the Recreation Center.

B. Baker Tilly Update

The commission discussed the progress of the Baker Tilly organizational study and the next steps for implementation, specifically addressing several pending questions submitted by Councilwoman Salafia. Director Richardson noted that while responses from Baker Tilly were delayed due to bereavement leave, answers are expected by the end of next week. There is currently a strong push to move from theory to action, though it was noted that full implementation of any recommendations could take up to six months. To facilitate this process, Councilwoman Blackwell suggested a small-group meeting between the Mayor, the General Counsel, and a subset of the Council to decide which of the three proposed options to pursue. The Council is scheduled to caucus on March 26 to select the representatives for this internal leadership meeting.

C. Vacancy Report

A discussion ensued regarding the current Vacancy Report, noting a recent meeting with the Mayor and the Finance Director concerning upcoming budget preparations. During these sessions, it was revealed that the administration plans to recommend reducing the salaries of several vacant positions to \$1.00 as a strategic budgetary measure. It is still being determined which positions will be budgeted at \$1.00 in the Mayor's budget.

6. Adjournment

Council Member Salafia made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Council Member Fulton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned.