

**D. Contract between City and Friends of the Commons**

Moore explained the User Support Manager is employed part-time by the Friends of the Commons. The City gives the Friends \$36,000 annually to cover the position. He noted the User Support Manager does not report directly to the City Manager. Moore suggested the position might work more effectively as a contracted position under the City Manager. He noted the City could then expand the role from User Support to a broader Commons Support, with more duties.

User Support Manager Leon Sterner reported he believes the system is working well as is. He noted his supervision from the President and the Treasurer of the Friends is effective. He argued the community center aspect of the Commons is hugely different from City Hall and requires different skills. He argued there is not much awareness about the nuances of the community center component. Sterner stated he does things that are not part of his actual role, such as setting up rooms, preparing for Council meetings, or fixing things. Sterner noted his position is established at 20 hours per week but takes much more time than that, noting some weekends he will work more than 20 hours over a day and a half. Sterner asked that the Treasurer of the Friends be consulted before making any changes.

Moore noted the User Support Manager is the only position that does not report to the City Manager. Manager Davies reported the council is reviewing all of the contracted positions and the City Attorney had advised they not fund employees through other agencies. She noted both she and Sterner currently do things that are not part of their job description. She believed asking Public Works at \$30 per hour to leave a water or sewer project to come take care of an issue is not a reasonable use of their time for “odd” tasks – cleaning up broken glass outside for the safety of the school children, putting a knob back on, moving tables and chairs, etc., which she has often had to do. Davies suggested it would be more efficient for the City to have the User Support position under the Manager’s direction, with those added miscellaneous needs added. She noted a contracted position would avoid specifying when or how much a Commons Support Manager would work and instead specify tasks to be performed.

Shelly Shrock asked who is responsible for Commons janitorial maintenance. Manager Davies reported that Sterner had dropped his contract at the end of June, and the City hired a new custodian in July.

Sterner envisioned a candidate for his position to have human resources experience, problem solving, mediation, and handy person skills. Moore clarified the intent is not to take away from what Sterner does but to add to the job responsibility. Sterner noted City Hall employees are “binary” while the community center role is more “algorithmic”, so they don’t understand what he does. Sterner was concerned about being supervised with a binary approach. Manager Davies explained a contracted position would not be “supervised”, as long as the duties are fulfilled.

Commissioner Shrock asked Sterner if the new reservation system would free up his time. Sterner indicated the impact of the new reservation system would be minimal to his work. Sterner cited a recent example of a person calling about renting tables and his suggesting using the multipurpose room and the kitchen, telling her the event would likely fall under the “Private” category, with the rate for the multipurpose room of \$150 per day.

Gordon asked what duties would be added to the Commons Support Manager position and how

much the salary would be adjusted. These specific factors had not yet been established. The question before the Commission is only whether the City should contract the position.

Valentine stated there are practical aspects about a non-profit having an employee. Currently, they use a volunteer to do the accounting, but the work is well beyond that of a volunteer position. She believed the current situation is complicated by the volunteer nature of the Friends and the Friends would prefer not to have an employee. Valentine expressed great appreciation of the work and insight Sterner provides. Moore agreed the Friends should not be burdened with managing an employee, as its mission is solely to raise money for the Commons.

Johnson suggested the City needs to better understand the components of the position. Hempen summarized that the City would benefit from turning the position into a contracted position, and Sterner could renegotiate his salary if he believed he was under-compensated.

Bob Langley suggested they not get too detailed in the position description as that might lead to a reduction of actual services provided by the User Support Manager.

Bass moved to recommend to the Council that the City execute a Commons Support independent contractor position for the position currently known as User Support Manager under the Friends of the Commons, a position that would report to the City Manager: Aye – 6; No – 0.