



Request for City Council Committee Action from the Department of Intergovernmental Relations

Date: October 23, 2006

To: Intergovernmental Relations Committee

Subject: 2007 Legislation. Legislative Agenda; Municipal Governance Section

Recommendation: Discussion of Section for possible inclusion in 2007 Legislative Agenda

Previous Directives: Council has supported items related to pensions, contracting and service districts.

Prepared by: Gene Ranieri

Approved by: Steven Bosacker, City Coordinator _____

Presenters in Committee: IGR staff, Merry Keefe, Cindy Reichert, Heather Johnston

Financial Impact: Publications proposal as well as the pensions and contracting proposals could reduce costs or provide revenue. Financial analysis will be completed if legislation is adopted.

Supporting Information:

Municipal Governance

Minneapolis' ability to conduct business in an orderly and efficient manner is frequently regulated by state law.

Priority issues for Minneapolis:

- Legislation granting the Minneapolis Employees Retirement Fund (MERF) the authority to invest funds with the State Board of Investment (SBI).
- Legislation removing the "liquidity trigger" in the current MERF statute, which requires the City of Minneapolis to fully fund each retiree's pension immediately upon the date of retirement. The proposal will reduce and extend the City and the State's payments to MERF to 2020, the date set for full funding of MERF's liabilities.

- Legislation expanding the current state statute for cities of the first class to add litter and recycling containers as amenities in the public right of way that advertising can be affixed upon with a permit.

Minneapolis supports:

- Legislation to allow the public impound lot operators to bring a deficiency claim against the owners of abandoned vehicles as is currently allowed for private towing lot operators. The deficiency claim is to recoup losses not covered by the sale of their vehicles.
- Legislation necessary to create Downtown Special Service Districts.
- Pension reform legislation that provides responsible pension management and governance while addressing the City's long-term financial obligations and maintaining the City's commitments to retirees. Legislation relating to any of the City's three closed pension plans must contain a local approval clause.
- Changes to the Uniform Municipal Contracting Law to allow units of local governments the same statutory authority as the State of Minnesota to use a request for proposal (RFP) process and award contracts on a best value basis, when it is not advantageous to set forth all the actual, detailed requirements at the time of solicitation (a requirement of a Request for Bid solicitation).
- ~~Amending general prohibitions on the issuance of liquor licenses within 1,500 feet of a state university.~~

Other Items to the 2006 Agenda by Council Action:

- ~~Special liquor license for a restaurant located at 5411 Penn Avenue South~~

New Items for 2007 Agenda

- Appointed Positions. In 2003, the City passed a special law that would allow the City to determine which positions in Minneapolis should be in the appointed unclassified service. The City needs to repeal the numerous special laws that had been enacted between 1960 and 2002 establishing specific unclassified appointed positions in Minneapolis. (IGR Staff)
- Elected Metropolitan Council (CM Glidden & CM Gordon)
- Elections:
 - develop statewide standards for instant runoff voting/single transferable vote (CM Glidden)
 - amend general law to permit election judges to chose to be unaffiliated as it related to party preference or eliminate the party preference requirement to be an election judge (City Clerk)
- Permit web publication of official documents (City Clerk)
- Pensions:
 - Support legislation updating all actuarial assumptions of the Minneapolis Police Relief Association and the Minneapolis Fire Relief Association.

City Clerk. The City Clerk's Office has developed three legislative proposals that relate to publication of official documents and election procedures. The publication issue relates to the use of the internet to publish information. One election proposal would amend the general law regarding election judges while the other would provide for a statewide process for instant runoff voting.

Publications. The Minnesota legislature has authorized cities to publish information on a limited basis on the internet. However cities are mandated to use the print media to publish public notices, meeting summaries, ordinances and other information. Technology is available that would provide information to citizens that could reduce costs.

The League of Minnesota Cities (LMC) has taken the lead in amending the publication statutes. For 2007 the LMC policy recommends that the legislature authorize cities to designate a daily/weekly publication: elect alternative means of communications such as city newsletters, cable television, and city web sites and expand the use of summaries. The legislature should also eliminate outdated or unnecessary publication requirements.

In prior years the city has worked with the LMC on this issue. It is recommended that the committee consider publication methods as proposed by the LMC as a support item of the 2007 legislative agenda.

Elections. Election judges are required by state law to declare affiliation with a major political party. In some instances potential judges do not have a party affiliation or there are not enough judges of one party to staff a voting place. The city clerk's office, like the LMC, is proposing that general election law be amended to allow unaffiliated persons to be election judges or eliminate the requirement that election judges declare political party affiliation.

If the city charter amendment on instant runoff voting is approved enabling legislation may be needed to implement the charter amendment. Legislation may be necessary to provide the city with the authority to promulgate rules to implement instant runoff voting.

Metropolitan Council. During the 1990's the legislature heard several proposals to elect the Metropolitan Council members. The bills included public funding for the campaigns and established four year terms. In 1997 the elected Metropolitan Council bill passed the House and Senate but was vetoed by the Governor. Since 1997 the bill has been introduced but it has not made it to the floor.

In 2005, Rep. Frank Hornstein and Sen. Wiger introduced an elected Metropolitan Council bill. (A link to the bill's summary follows <http://ww3.house.leg.state.mn.us/hrd/bs/84/HF0558.html>). The bill was approved as amended by the House Local and Metropolitan Affairs Committee and referred to the Civil Law Committee where it was not heard. No action was taken in the Senate.