
From: Robinson, Celeste <celeste.robinson@minneapolismn.gov>
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 2:52 PM
To: City Clerk <cityclerk@minneapolismn.gov>
Cc: Wonsley, Robin <Robin.Wonsley@minneapolismn.gov>; Omar, Qannani <qannani.omar@minneapolismn.gov>
Subject: FW: Public Safety Contract Concerns

Hi all,

Per the conversation in AEO today, here is the correspondence that CM Vetaw raised and Chair Wonsley would like to be uploaded to the LIMS file as supporting documents. Please let me know if there is a different format that would be preferred.

Best,

Celeste Robinson | Policy Aide
Minneapolis City Council | Council Member Robin Wonsley | Ward 2
Celeste.Robinson@minneapolismn.gov | [Sign up for our newsletter](#)

From: Barnette, Toddrick <toddrick.barnette@minneapolismn.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, February 7, 2024 4:44 PM
To: Wonsley, Robin <Robin.Wonsley@minneapolismn.gov>
Cc: Anderson Kelliher, Margaret <margaret.andersonkelliher@minneapolismn.gov>; Nelson Brown, Luana <luana.nelsonbrown@minneapolismn.gov>; Chavez, Jason <jason.chavez@minneapolismn.gov>; Hernandez, Ivonne <ivonne.hernandez@minneapolismn.gov>; Jeffries, Jared (he/him/his) <jared.jeffries@minneapolismn.gov>; Robinson, Celeste <celeste.robinson@minneapolismn.gov>; Omar, Qannani <qannani.omar@minneapolismn.gov>; Bradford-Kesti, Dylan (he/him/his) <dylan.kesti@minneapolismn.gov>; Brown, Larissa S <larissa.brown@minneapolismn.gov>; Osborne, Burt (he/him/his) <Burt.Osborne@minneapolismn.gov>
Subject: RE: Public Safety Contract Concerns

Good afternoon!

It is my belief that trust is essential when giving advice and having conversations with the Mayor's Office and my staff. It's crucial the information during those discussions are not shared with others in order to ensure we are freely expressing our opinions and ideas without fear of reprisal or political pressure in decision-making, as well as for maintaining professional relationships. Unless there is a legal obligation, I will not disclose my advice and conversations with the Mayor's Office or my staff. The memo states: "During the 2024-2025 Budget Process, the administration-specifically, OCS and NSD-will bring forward a comprehensive budget that details NSD's evolving staff needs considering the department's then-current structure and the Community Safety Design and Implementation process. For this reason, it is not recommended that this reallocation proceed at this time."

As far as the Ryan Companies contract, I could not find any requirement for a final report. Jared Jeffries will see if he is able to find anything for you.

Sincerely,

Todd Barnette

From: Nelson Brown, Luana <luana.nelsonbrown@minneapolismn.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, February 7, 2024 8:39 AM
To: Wonsley, Robin <Robin.Wonsley@minneapolismn.gov>; Bradford-Kesti, Dylan (he/him/his) <dylan.kesti@minneapolismn.gov>; Brown, Larissa S <larissa.brown@minneapolismn.gov>; Osborne, Burt (he/him/his) <Burt.Osborne@minneapolismn.gov>
Cc: Hernandez, Ivonne <ivonne.hernandez@minneapolismn.gov>; Jeffries, Jared (he/him/his) <jared.jeffries@minneapolismn.gov>; Robinson, Celeste <celeste.robinson@minneapolismn.gov>; Chavez, Jason <jason.chavez@minneapolismn.gov>; Omar, Qannani <qannani.omar@minneapolismn.gov>; Barnette, Toddrick <toddrick.barnette@minneapolismn.gov>
Subject: Re: Public Safety Contract Concerns

And I misspelled my own name!

Luana

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Nelson Brown, Luana <luana.nelsonbrown@minneapolismn.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, February 7, 2024 8:36:51 AM
To: Wonsley, Robin <Robin.Wonsley@minneapolismn.gov>; Bradford-Kesti, Dylan (he/him/his) <dylan.kesti@minneapolismn.gov>; Brown, Larissa S <larissa.brown@minneapolismn.gov>; Osborne, Burt (he/him/his) <Burt.Osborne@minneapolismn.gov>
Cc: Hernandez, Ivonne <ivonne.hernandez@minneapolismn.gov>; Jeffries, Jared (he/him/his) <jared.jeffries@minneapolismn.gov>; Robinson, Celeste <celeste.robinson@minneapolismn.gov>; Chavez, Jason <jason.chavez@minneapolismn.gov>; Omar, Qannani <qannani.omar@minneapolismn.gov>; Barnette, Toddrick <toddrick.barnette@minneapolismn.gov>
Subject: Re: Public Safety Contract Concerns

Hello CM Wonsley

Apologies for the delayed response. I did not prepare answers to the questions below for today's AEO meeting as the commissioner plans to respond to the answers to your questions. My understanding is he hasn't had a chance to get to them yet.

Luaba

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Wonsley, Robin <Robin.Wonsley@minneapolismn.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 4:28:17 PM
To: Nelson Brown, Luana <luana.nelsonbrown@minneapolismn.gov>; Bradford-Kesti, Dylan (he/him/his) <dylan.kesti@minneapolismn.gov>; Brown, Larissa S <larissa.brown@minneapolismn.gov>; Osborne, Burt (he/him/his) <Burt.Osborne@minneapolismn.gov>
Cc: Hernandez, Ivonne <ivonne.hernandez@minneapolismn.gov>; Jeffries, Jared (he/him/his) <jared.jeffries@minneapolismn.gov>; Robinson, Celeste <celeste.robinson@minneapolismn.gov>; Chavez, Jason

<jason.chavez@minneapolismn.gov>; Omar, Qannani <gannani.omar@minneapolismn.gov>; Barnette, Toddrick <toddrick.barnette@minneapolismn.gov>

Subject: RE: Public Safety Contract Concerns

Commissioner Barnette and Director Nelson-Brown,

The draft agenda for AEO was shared with me today and I noticed that there are several contracts for Neighborhood Safety. While I did receive the recap email about last week's meeting, I have yet to receive any answers to the questions I raised in my email below. These are serious outstanding questions that I need clarity on. Do you intend to answer these questions at the AEO meeting? If so, I will pull the items to discussion and let the clerks know they can expect slides from your office. Otherwise, please let me know when I can expect an answer to my questions.

Sincerely,

Robin

From: Wonsley, Robin

Sent: Wednesday, January 31, 2024 5:22 PM

To: Nelson Brown, Luana <luana.nelsonbrown@minneapolismn.gov>; Bradford-Kesti, Dylan (he/him/his) <dylan.kesti@minneapolismn.gov>; Brown, Larissa S <larissa.brown@minneapolismn.gov>; Osborne, Burt (he/him/his) <Burt.Osborne@minneapolismn.gov>

Cc: Hernandez, Ivonne <ivonne.hernandez@minneapolismn.gov>; Jeffries, Jared (he/him/his) <jared.jeffries@minneapolismn.gov>; Robinson, Celeste <celeste.robinson@minneapolismn.gov>; Chavez, Jason <jason.chavez@minneapolismn.gov>; Omar, Qannani <gannani.omar@minneapolismn.gov>; Barnette, Toddrick <toddrick.barnette@minneapolismn.gov>

Subject: RE: Public Safety Contract Concerns

Director Nelson-Brown,

Thank you for this further context. Unfortunately, I will not be able to attend Thursday's meeting. In lieu of my attendance though I would like the discussion to include answers to my questions that I will include below. I will follow-up with Council Member Chavez directly to discuss what next steps, if any, are necessary.

Towards the end of the year, an executive at Ryan Companies was given a contract to do organizational work for the Office of Community Safety as it relates to the Minneapolis Safe and Thriving Report. From my understanding the scope of work was completed in December. **Can you or the Commissioner send a copy of the final report that gave guidance on this implementation?**

I want to acknowledge Director Nelson-Brown that both you and the Commissioner came into this role late last year. That being said, what is confusing me about this email is that there seems to be agreement in the structural issues within NSD. It is even stated that these concerns have been brought to the administration. **If that is the case, can you both explain to me why information was provided in a memo to council that clearly stated that no further support was needed to ensure that NDS was set up for success?** As a reminder, I have copied part of the memo here that was circulated for council and the public in response to several budget items brought forward:

NSD Deputy Director of Finance and Administration (Amendment #6) and Senior Project Manager (Amendment #4) Impact:

This would be adding positions into NSD that are not being asked for, at this time, from the Community Safety Commissioner and Director of NSD. We need to listen to these staff experts and allow them time to assess what the needs are for the NSD, then we can consider adding additional staff at their recommendation. 2024 Council Budget Amendment #6 proposes moving one FTE from CPED to NSD for creation of a "Deputy Director of Finance and Administration."

2024 Council Budget Amendment #4 proposes moving a collective \$159,799 from CPED and the Mayor's Office to NSD to create a Senior Project Manager FTE. OCS and OPS advise that these proposed amendments not proceed at this time.

During the 2025-2026 Budget Process, the administration – specifically, OCS and NSD – will bring forward a comprehensive budget request that details NSD's evolving staff needs considering the department's then-current structure and the Community Safety Design and Implementation process. For this reason, it is not recommended that this reallocation proceed at this time.

As you can see above, both you and Commissioner Barnette were listed as the expert staff who recommended that no additional support was needed for NSD. **Was the above information incorrect? Did you give this advice to the Mayor's office to include in this memo?** If so, why did you make this recommendation when according to the timeline that was laid out, there have been significant concerns about NSD capacity that have been discussed even prior to the legal issues that arose in November. There also seems to be clarity on where the gaps and support are needed because of the role the Health Department played as providing supporting staff. Please help me reconcile these very different statements that are counter to each other. **If you were aware of significant problems in November, why did you encourage Council to not support the NSD in allocating more resources?**

During the police bonus discussion at Council, Commissioner Barnette was asked if he spoke to other departments regarding their potential needs for funding. At the time, he shared he did not. While that was disturbing to hear, I had assumed that he would have taken corrective action after the bonuses were denied. **Commissioner, did you speak to your staff, specifically NSD about potential needs they may have had going into 2024?** If so, I again am asking to understand why this memo says resources were not needed. What was the plan for 2024 when you both were fully aware of the significant deficiencies that were in the department? I want to understand the choices that were made that have led to us already having severe issues one month into the year.

Please be ready to have answers to these questions at tomorrow's meeting. I look forward to getting a recap email from Council Member Chavez's office that will include this information.

Sincerely,

Robin

From: Nelson Brown, Luana <luana.nelsonbrown@minneapolismn.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, January 30, 2024 9:31 AM

To: Bradford-Kesti, Dylan (he/him/his) <dylan.kesti@minneapolismn.gov>; Brown, Larissa S <larissa.brown@minneapolismn.gov>; Osborne, Burt (he/him/his) <Burt.Osborne@minneapolismn.gov>

Cc: Hernandez, Ivonne <ivonne.hernandez@minneapolismn.gov>; Jeffries, Jared (he/him/his) <jared.jeffries@minneapolismn.gov>; Robinson, Celeste <celeste.robinson@minneapolismn.gov>; Chavez, Jason <jason.chavez@minneapolismn.gov>; Omar, Qannani <qannani.omar@minneapolismn.gov>; Wonsley, Robin <Robin.Wonsley@minneapolismn.gov>

Subject: RE: Public Safety Contract Concerns

I am available on Thursday 2/1 at 1pm in person. I've provided some context below to assist in discussion. It is lengthy however I find it necessary to highlight some areas prior to discussion.

Neighborhood Safety is at critical mass. Since August 2023 I've been consulting with administration about the lack of infrastructure in the neighborhood safety department. Commissioner Barnette is the first person to uplift and vocalize my concerns. Let me start by giving my observations and interventions in the department and close with an updates on invoices and contracts.

1. **Staffing.** Without adequate staffing this department will not be able to deliver on the innovative ideas that are being brought forth. In my first presentation to council, I showed the OVP org chart which remains current. OVP was severely understaffed and under resourced for the massive work with which it was tasked. This continued as the office became a department and worsened as the support of a fully functioning department (health department) was eliminated. The current staff were not trained to take on the duties that were previously held by teams of staff in the health department. At the time there was no need and then overnight, there was. Yet that training and learning period did not happen. When untrained staff are tasked with critical duties it opens the door for litigation and litigation ensued on 11/9. In September of 2023 I presented administration with a new organizational chart designed to provide the structure needed to support the department's processes and demand without the support of the health department. In the absence of leadership beyond NSD I began to work with human resources while still learning city processes. To date the needed positions have yet to be developed and filled. This is not due to a lack of work. This is due to processes that are ill equipped to handle a task of this magnitude quickly. Unfortunately, this has a direct and immediate result on the citizens that we serve. This has caused me a great deal of sadness, grief and stress as I took this job for the people, not the title.
2. **Contracts and RFP processes.** As department head I set an intention to carefully review and revise all processes, procedures and protocols including contracts, RFP's and review and selection processes. A part of this action was connecting with the City auditors for a full review of NSD current processes. This collaboration happened well before litigation because the shortcomings left by the removal of the office from the health department were glaring. We are currently in the middle of that audit. Despite the audit there was one immediate action that needed to be implemented to protect not only the city but the organizations that we fund and the citizens that we serve. The collection and proper filing of documentation at the time of receipt of the invoices. The number of data requests for Neighborhood Safety is steadily increasing. This documentation needs to be on hand simultaneously with invoices as they are submitted. This has been communicated to our contractors. However, in doing our due diligence we consistently must request this from contractors as soon as invoices are received. Compounding this process is a severe lack of staff. Much of the invoicing and contracting process was previously completed by multiple dedicated staff in the health department. For a short time, we were able to request assistance from those health department staff and they obliged despite this request being outside of their dedicated work duties. 13.43 [REDACTED]. Now, this work has been reduced to two people, me and the NSD contract administrator. In the case of the Minneapolis invoices there is a program manager dedicated to this initiative. Their responsibility included approving invoices and drafting and releasing the RFP. This staff was effective at these duties when the process included support from the health department, but not effective without the support of the health department. It was a huge learning curve. Learning and completing the tasks that have been added to the invoicing and contracting process became overwhelming 13.43 [REDACTED].

In addition to the Minneapolis contracts expiring, 90% of contracts in the Neighborhood Safety Department were set to expire the exact same day. NSD has over 100 contracts with multiple varying conditions, multiple funding sources and **two** staff to handle it all. Despite this impossible task, all invoices in question have been sent for payment and waivers have been sent to request amendments to current contracts. Releasing RFP's in the Minneapolis initiative would be to the detriment of citizens as we already have a delay in getting boots on the ground. Amendments are set to be heard at PRC on February 6th and with the support of council can be in front of council at what used to be POGO on February 12, 2024. I am requesting that council provide any support you can to assist us in appearing to request amendments on February 12th. Otherwise, we will be waiting until the next available date which is February 29th. Our staff has worked around the clock to ensure boots are back on the ground as quickly as possible. We have communicated our intentions to seek amendments with the currently funded contractors and all agree that this is the best course of action to follow to ensure the best services to our citizens. Our additional reasoning will be outlined at PRC.

As for an in-depth look at the organizations mentioned. The TOUCH invoices (November and December) did not reach my desk for approval until January 9th. I immediately responded to our program manager directing them to request one document from the vendor so the invoice could be paid as there was zero documentation accompanying the invoices. This was the same for all Minneapolis invoices. All reached my desk in early January. As of yesterday, all have been approved for payment AND all documentation has been received. I want to highlight these invoices are large in amount. Paying these amounts with zero documentation is a high-risk action for reimbursement contracts. Next step is set for amendment as well and includes increased funds from our current budget. As we continue to work with Hennepin we are in collaborative discussion around exactly how much is needed to provide services well. This will be an ongoing discussion as services are provided.

I am happy to discuss further the current processes involved in invoicing, amending, and developing contracts as well as soliciting new talent through the RFP process and point out the areas of delay. It is important to understand that to effectively mitigate what is happening now, intentional steps would have needed to begin in July of last year. My first day in the city was July 17th. Four days later the support and more importantly the guidance I was supposed to have disappeared four days later. I am hopeful that a result of this upcoming meeting yields solutions to the critical needs in our department. NSD deserves to have the support and resources needed to deliver on the initiatives with which we have been tasked.

Luana Nelson-Brown, MSPH
Director, Neighborhood Safety Department
City of Minneapolis
250 S 4th St. Rm 110
Minneapolis, MN 55415
Luana.nelsonbrown@minneapolismn.gov