



King County

Metropolitan King County Council Committee of the Whole

STAFF REPORT

Agenda Item:	X	Name:	Patrick Hamacher
Proposed No.:	2019-B0110	Date:	June 26, 2019

SUBJECT

A briefing on the history and process for setting labor policy and implementing collective bargaining in King County.

SUMMARY

The King County Charter was adopted in the general election of 1968 and took effect on May 1, 1969. Included in the original version of the charter was section 890, which allowed for the County Council to enact an ordinance providing for the representation of the County's employees. If passed, this ordinance was directed to name the executive as the bargaining agent for the County. The first County Council enacted such an ordinance as Ordinance 197, passed on October 20, 1969 and included as attachment 1 to this staff report.

BACKGROUND

The King County Charter, Section 220.20 sets the powers and duties of the King County Council. One of these duties is to "establish the compensation paid to all county officers and employees," in addition the County Council establishes policies through the adoption of ordinances and motions.

The King County Charter, Section 320.20 also sets the powers and duties of the King County Executive. One of these duties is to sign all contracts and another duty, as highlighted in Section 890 and KCC 3.16 is to act as the bargaining agent of King County during negotiations with the County's employees and their representatives.

These sections, taken together, designate the County Council as the entity that sets the policies for collective bargaining and is required to approve any such agreements. The County Executive is the bargaining agent and responsible for effectuating the collective bargaining process and agreements for the County.

ANALYSIS

King County currently has a set of adopted labor policies, Attachment 2 to this staff report. This briefing is intended to serve as an overview of the process and setup of the various collective bargaining responsibilities. To that end, there is not a detailed analysis of the current labor policies. However, Table 1, includes the labor policy number and the topic covered. As noted, a complete version of labor policies is included as an attachment to this staff report.

Table 1: List of Labor Policy Topics

#	Topic
Lab 1-010	Contract Consolidation
Lab 1-020	Diversity in the Workforce
Lab 1-030	Project Labor Agreements
Lab 1-040	Performance Evaluations
Lab 1-050	Continuous Improvement
Lab 2-010	Labor/Management Committees
Lab 2-020	Labor Management Partnerships
Lab 3-010	Mediation
Lab 3-020	Binding Arbitration
Lab 3-030	Interest-based bargaining
Lab 4-010	Timeliness of Labor Contract Negotiations
Lab 5-010	Compensation
Lab 5-020	Overtime
Lab 5-030	Benefits
Lab 6-010	Reduction-in-Force
Lab 6-020	Contracting Out of Work
Lab 6-030	Use of Temporary and Part-Time Employees
Lab 7-010	Civilian Oversight of Sheriff's Office
Lab 7-020	Sheriff's Office Implementation of Report Recommendations (disposed)
Lab 7-030	Legislative Branch Employees and Officials (disposed)

The labor policies are typically written at a high level to provide policy guidance and bargaining direction. These policies are not typically written at a level of detail necessary for use in an actual labor agreement. Two examples of the high level nature of the work are:

1. **Lab 3-010: Mediation** - The County encourages, but does not mandate, alternative dispute resolution, such as voluntary mediation, as preferable to an adversarial process or litigation for resolving conflicts and grievance.
2. **LAB 6-030. Use of Temporary and Part-Time Employees:** Use of Temporary and Part-Time Employees: It shall be the policy of King County to promote equitable employment practices and operational efficiency by having ongoing stable, predictable bodies of work, which are halftime or more, performed by career service employees. Additionally, it shall be the policy of King County to maximize the use of fulltime employees and consolidate less than full time positions whenever possible.

In both cases, the language likely included in a collective bargaining agreement would be much more complex. It would contain the information necessary for use in the event of a labor dispute or grievance and would lay out the criteria to be used in each case.

INVITED

1. Megan Pedersen, Director of Labor Relations, King County
2. Dustin Frederick, Public Safety Employees Union, Coalition Co-Chair

ATTACHMENTS

1. Ordinance 197
2. Current Labor Policies