

City of Seattle



Director City Budget Office

**Confirmation Packet
January 30, 2014**

Benjamin D. Noble



City of Seattle
Mayor Edward B. Murray

January 30, 2014

The Honorable Tim Burgess
President, Seattle City Council
Seattle City Hall, 2nd Floor
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Council President Burgess:

I am pleased to transmit to the City Council the following confirmation packet for my appointment of Ben Noble as the Director of the City Budget Office.

The materials in this packet are divided into two sections:

A. Director name

This section contains Ben Noble's appointment and oath of office forms, his resume, and the press release announcing his appointment.

B. Background Checks

This section contains the Mayor's Office report on Ben Noble's background check.

Ben Noble has worked for the Seattle City Council since 2000, and has served as the Director of the Council's Central Staff since 2006. In this role he has managed a staff of sixteen professional policy analysts who provide research and recommendations to all nine Councilmembers, and led the Council's annual budget review process. This work has provided him a rich background and considerable experience in the full range of policy issues that Seattle faces. For several years before joining the City, Ben worked in the private sector conducting policy analysis for a variety of local and regional governments on a consulting basis. Ben moved to Seattle in 1989 to attend the University of Washington, where he completed masters and doctorate degrees in economics.

The Honorable Tim Burgess

January 30, 2014

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Ben's extensive legislative experience, strong understanding of the City's budget, budget process and fiscal policy are the perfect fit for his leadership role as City Budget Director. Ben is a tremendous asset to the City of Seattle and I urge you to confirm him.

If you have any questions about the attached materials or need additional information, please contact Uriel Ybarra of my office, at 206-684-8162, or via e-mail, at uriel.ybarra@seattle.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed B. Murray", written over a horizontal line.

Edward B. Murray
Mayor, City of Seattle



Edward B. Murray
Mayor of Seattle

January 1, 2014

Benjamin D. Noble
Seattle, WA 98102

Dear Ben,

It gives me great pleasure to appoint you to the position of Director of the City Budget Office effective January 1, 2014 at an annual salary of \$170,000.

Your term of office is concurrent with that of the Mayor ending on December 31, 2017. Your appointment as Director is subject to City Council confirmation. Therefore, you will need to attend the confirmation hearings of the full City Council.

I look forward to working with you in your role as Director of the City Budget Office and wish you success. We have much work ahead of us, and I am confident your leadership will be a great addition to our team.

If you have questions about your employment with the City of Seattle please contact Galen Mauden, our Human Resources Director, at (206) 684-0516.

Sincerely,

Edward B. Murray
Mayor of Seattle

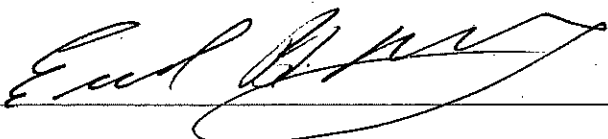
cc: Human Resources

SECTION

A

City of Seattle

Notice of Appointment

Name: Benjamin D. Noble	<input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> Executive Appointment <input type="checkbox"/> Legislative Appointment
Appointed to: Director, City Budget Office	Date of Appointment: 1/1/2014
Authority (Ord., Res.): SMC 3.14.110	Term of Office From: City Council Confirmation To: December 31, 2017
<p>Comments: Ben Noble has worked for the Seattle City Council since 2000, and has served as the Director of the Council's Central Staff since 2006. In this role he has managed a staff of sixteen professional policy analysts who provide research and recommendations to all nine Councilmembers, and led the Council's annual budget review process. This work has provided him a rich background and considerable experience in the full range of policy issues that Seattle faces. For several years before joining the City, Ben worked in the private sector conducting policy analysis for a variety of local and regional governments on a consulting basis. Ben moved to Seattle in 1989 to attend the University of Washington, where he completed masters and doctorate degrees in economics.</p> <p>Ben's extensive legislative experience, strong understanding of the City's budget, budget process and fiscal policy are the perfect fit for his leadership role as City Budget Director.</p>	
Authorizing Signature: 	Name and Title of Officer Making Appointment: Edward B. Murray, Mayor



**CITY OF SEATTLE - STATE OF WASHINGTON
OATH OF OFFICE**

STATE OF WASHINGTON

COUNTY OF KING

I, Benjamin D. Noble, swear that I possess all the qualifications prescribed in the Seattle City Charter and the Seattle Municipal Code for the position of Director of the City Budget Office; that I will support the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Washington, and the Charter and Ordinances of the City of Seattle; and that I will faithfully conduct myself as *Director of the City Budget Office*.

Benjamin D. Noble

**Subscribed and sworn to before me
this _____ day of _____, 2014**

(affix seal)

Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

Benjamin D. Noble

Employment History

Director

City Council Central Staff, Seattle Washington, 2006 - 2013

Manage a staff of nineteen professionals and paraprofessional, including seventeen policy analysts who provide research, recommendations and develop legislative initiatives for individual Councilmembers and the Council as a whole. Manage the Council's annual budget review process. Provide direct staffing and oversight for the full range of policy issues that come before the City Council. Oversee and manage the Legislative Department's finances, including the development and implementation of the Department's budget.

Supervising Analyst / Legislative Analyst

City Council Central Staff, Seattle Washington, 2000 - 2005

Joined the Central Staff as Legislative Analyst, with a specialization in economic issues and quantitative analysis. Promoted to Supervising Analyst in 2003. Supervisory duties included quality control, mentoring, staff evaluations, and consulting with the Central Staff Director on a wide range of management issues. Assigned policy areas included: public safety; technology; budget and finance; Seattle City Light; and Seattle Public Utilities.

Senior Economic Analyst

Battelle, Seattle Washington, 1999 - 2000

Battelle provides consulting services to state, local and federal agencies, as well as major private clients. As a Senior Analyst was responsible for all aspects of project design, management, and execution, and was specifically tasked with leading several interdisciplinary project teams. Clients included the U.S. Department of Energy, the Army Corps of Engineers and the State of Washington.

Economic / Public Policy Consultant

Berk & Associates, Seattle Washington, 1997 - 1999

Berk & Associates provides a variety of economic consulting services to both public and private clients. Project experience included work in public finance, policy analysis, market assessment and long-range planning. Involved in all phases of project implementation, including proposal development, planning, execution, report writing, and final client presentations.

Senior Analyst

**Quantum Consulting (Electric Utility Consultants),
Seattle, Washington, 1993 - 1996**

Quantum Consulting specialized in the analysis of electricity demand and the marketing of energy conservation programs for private utilities, municipal corporations and rural cooperatives. Work included survey design, data collection, modeling and analysis.

Education

Ph.D. Economics, University of Washington, 1994

M.A. Economics, University of Washington, 1991

B.A. Economics, University of Michigan, 1989

Academic Honors

- Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award, Department of Economics, 1993
- Dean Worcester Fellow, University of Washington, 1991
- Phi Beta Kappa, University of Michigan, 1989

Personnel Interests and Activities

Parenting, biking, running and hiking

Treasurer, Lake Washington Girls Middle School Board of Directors

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

December 11, 2013

Contact: Jeff Reading, Office of the Mayor-elect
(206) 684-3952, Jeff.Reading@Seattle.gov

Murray announces key 'staffing innovations' and staff hires

SEATTLE – Seattle Mayor-elect Ed Murray today announced key staff roles and hires within the Office of the Mayor, outlined three major 'staffing innovations' and named several new City department head appointments.

"My administration, as with any administration, will be judged on how we serve Seattle residents, and my standard will be one of excellence," said Murray. "To me, excellence means an administration that functions with a high level of inclusiveness, transparency, responsiveness and collaboration – and that brings innovation to solving problems for the people of Seattle."

At a press conference today, Murray was flanked by his selections for his executive leadership team, his newly-created Office of Policy & Innovation, and his proposed appointments for interim and permanent department head positions.

"For my administration to serve with excellence, my surrounding team must be excellent," said Murray. "This is an excellent team, an innovative team, a *winning* team. These are highly capable individuals who are ready to bring their energy, experience and expertise with them on Day One of my administration."

Murray also emphasized his commitment to a Mayor's Office and an Administration that reflects the diversity of the Seattle community, both in today's announcement and in future announcements.

Mayor's executive leadership team

Murray detailed the make-up of his executive leadership team, which begins with an innovative concept for two Deputy Mayors: "one with a focus on what's going on in our communities, and one with a focus on what's going on within city government."

The external-facing Deputy Mayor will function as Murray's 'chief liaison' and will maintain a "systematic engagement with the many diverse communities and groups throughout Seattle and beyond." To the position, Murray named Hyeok Kim, Executive Director of Interim Community Development Association, calling her "an incredibly well-respected voice in our community, and someone known near and far for her integrity."

The internal-facing Deputy Mayor will function as Murray's 'operations lead,' and will assist in managing "how the city delivers on our commitment to serve the residents of Seattle." Murray said the role will focus on breaking down silos and promoting cross-department collaboration. To fulfill the position on an interim basis, Murray coaxed out of retirement Andrea Riniker, who previously served as Bellevue City Manager and director for the Port of Tacoma, the Sea-Tac airport and the state Department of Ecology. Riniker "will help assess the status of departments while helping to provide a clearer picture of how this position can best function," Murray said. "She will also help define the profile of the person who will take this role on permanent basis – and I'm happy to have a former administrator of her stature, with her talent and regional focus to help me craft this critical role."

As a second staffing innovation, Murray announced that he is bringing the Budget Director back into the Mayor's Office "to reflect the nature of the budget and the importance of the Budget Director role." He named Ben Noble, current Director of Seattle City Council Central Services, to the role, describing Noble as someone "widely respected for his competence and professionalism." Murray also said he will bring the Communications Director into his executive leadership team "to help ensure that our communications and policy strategies are aligned," and named Jeff Reading, formerly his Deputy Chief of Staff with the Democratic Caucus in the state Senate, to the role. And, in what he described as 'a real coup,' Murray announced that Robert Feldstein, current Chief of Staff in New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg's Office of Policy and Strategic Planning, will be the Director for the newly-created Office of Policy & Innovation.

Office of Policy & Innovation

As a third major staffing innovation, Murray laid out his plans to create the Office of Policy & Innovation within the Mayor's Office, calling it a 'new model' that will function as an "in-house consultancy to the Mayor." Murray said that his approach to policy aims to break down the silos that tend to form around issue areas, and will instead "place a premium" on analytic and strategic skills, on the ability to identify and scope out a problem, on talent in facilitating and assessing and communicating solutions, on excellence in project management, and an ability to deliver clear and measureable results.

Staff under this model will be interchangeable among policy areas, Murray said, and announced several early hires for the Office. Mike Fong, currently an analyst with the Seattle City Council Central Staff, will be Deputy Director of the Office. Former City Council member and current Community Police Commission member Tina Podlodowski will be the project lead on police reform issues. Jared Smith, head of Northwest Operations for the planning, engineering and construction management firm Parsons Brickerhoff, will be the director for the Waterfront and Seawall project. Steve Lee, former project management consultant to the White House, will be project lead for organizational effectiveness. And Andrew Glass Hastings, current Government Relations Officer for the King County Department of Transportation, will be project lead on transportation and transit issues.

"I'm very excited about this approach to policy," said Murray. "It puts the emphasis on an ability to drive progress – which is a dynamic thing – rather than domain knowledge, which is a static thing. Our emphasis needs to be – and will be – on the clear, compelling and measurable progress we are able to deliver."

Permanent department heads

Murray announced three new City department head appointments, subject to confirmation by the City Council. For the Office of Civil Rights, Murray has selected Patricia Lally, a civil-rights leader in the community who has served an Assistant U.S. Attorney and as a member of the Washington State Minority and Justice Commission. For the Office of Housing, Murray has selected Steve Walker, former division director for the Washington State Housing Finance Commission and advisor for the City of Seattle's Department of Housing and Human Services, the Family Emergency Shelter Coalition in the San Francisco Bay Area, and New York City's Department of Housing, Preservation and Development. And for the Office of Personnel, Murray has selected Susan Coskey, a former US House of Representatives Judiciary Subcommittee and private practice labor and employment lawyer, human resources executive, and organizational and human resources consultant in the private, public and not-for-profit sectors.

Interim department heads

Murray also appointed two interim heads to City departments for which he has said he will conduct a national search to identify his permanent hires. To the Seattle Department of Transportation, Murray has named Goran Sparrman, current deputy director at SDOT and the former director of transportation at the City of Bellevue and at Portland's Bureau of Traffic Management, as Interim Director. To the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, Murray has named Aaliyah Gupta, founding Executive Director of Chaya, a community based nonprofit working on domestic violence issues in the South Asian community, as Interim Director.

"My vision is of a city that gets results in addressing our common challenges in public safety, in transportation, in making sure that ours is a growing city at the same time that it's a fair and affordable city," said Murray. "I have confidence in the ability of the individuals announced today to help me carry out this vision successfully."

Murray also directed people to his transition website, where application from people interested in joining the administration are still being accepted. The website can be found at www.seattle.gov/mayoraltransition.

A complete list of positions announced today and attendant salaries can be found below. Biographies are listed in attachment.

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SECTION

B



City of Seattle
Department of Finance & Administrative Services

January 2, 2014

To: Uriel Ybarra, Mayor's Office
From: Galen Mauden, Human Resources, FAS
Subject: BACKGROUND CHECK – BENJAMIN NOBLE

The Department of Finance & Administrative Services has completed the criminal history and background review for Benjamin Noble. There were no findings that would impact the employment eligibility of Mr. Noble.

cc: FAS Mayor's Transition File



Seattle City Council

March 14, 2014

Ben Noble, Acting Director, City Budget Office
City of Seattle, Washington

Re: City Council Expectations for the City Budget Office Director

Dear Mr. Noble,

Congratulations on your appointment by Mayor Murray to serve as the Director of the City Budget Office (CBO) for a term through December 31, 2017.

This letter has been placed in Clerk File 313605, which contains your appointment file.

The Council expectations, listed below, are intended to enhance the CBO director's accountability to the Legislative Branch. The expectations also provide a basis for Council evaluation of the director if and when he is brought forward for reconfirmation. Council expectations are intended to add to the Mayor's expectations and the director responsibilities established in the City Charter and Seattle Municipal Code.

Timely, complete, and accurate information is critical to the Council's work, in particular during the budget process. The Council appreciates your willingness to explore how to improve communication during the budget process.

City Council General Expectations for the City Budget Office Director

A. Relationship with Council. The director is expected to maintain a constructive working relationship with the Council, as demonstrated by:

1. Prompt and complete responses to Council information inquiries.
2. Pro-active updates on policy development, operational concerns and financial matters of significance, so that the Council is informed of significant changes or controversies before the information reaches the media and/or the Executive submits a request for Council action.
3. Dependable implementation of formal policy direction provided by the Council.
4. Assistance in the research and development of Council policy initiatives.

B. Management Skills. The director is expected to demonstrate strong management skills, with particular focus on:

1. Public Communication: make information available so that the public can track the City's budget and the department's performance in citywide budget and fiscal management.

City Hall, 600 Fourth Avenue, Floor 2, PO Box 34025, Seattle, WA 98124-4025

(206) 684-8888, Fax: (206) 684-8587, TTY: (206) 233-0025,

E-Mail Address: council@seattle.gov Internet Address: <http://www.cityofseattle.net/council>

An EEO employer. Accommodations for people with disabilities provided upon request.

2. Organizational and Personnel Management:

- a. Coordinate with other City departments, and proactively manage expenditures.
- b. Provide and maintain an inclusive work environment that offers equitable opportunities for all.
- c. Offer professional development of existing staff.

City Council Specific Expectations for the City Budget Director from 2014 to 2017

During the 2014-7 term, the director is expected to provide regular progress reports on the following Council expectations:

A. Collaboration with Council. Collaborate with Council on policy or budget projects with cross-departmental or citywide impact; develop, implement and communicate to the Council a clear process for engaging Department Directors and finance staff in the development of the Mayor's Proposed Budget and of major budget proposals.

B. Race and Social Justice. Advance the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative, employ criteria sensitive to race and social justice concerns in developing and administering the City Budget and in guiding departments as they deliver programs and services to the City's residents and businesses.

C. Annual Budget -- Preparation and Delivery. Prepare the Mayor's Proposed Budget and Capital Improvement Program (CIP), giving guidance to City departments, offices, boards, and commissions in the preparation of their proposed budgets; identify clear rationale for budget decisions and recommendations; deliver the Proposed Budget to the Council in a timely and consistent manner. Update the City's budget information system to improve efficiency and the ability to communicate with the Council Budget Information System or its successor.

D. Annual Budget -- Execution and Administration. Supervise the execution and administration of the annual budget, providing guidance and technical assistance to CBO staff and city departments in the implementation of the Mayor's and the Council's priorities.

E. Annual Budget. Improve the annual budget process by:

1. Creating an environment of open and timely communication and transparency during the annual City Council budget review process, allowing for open communication about departmental budget submissions and the Mayor's Proposed Budget among the CBO, the City Council and City departments. Ensure timely, accurate, and complete information is provided to the City Council.
2. Improving the use of the annual budget as a tool for carrying out City policies and priorities. Strengthen CBO's role in working with departments to provide City services more efficiently, in order to expand the resources available to address new priorities, and help promote long-term growth in the local economy.

F. Use of Debt -- Policy Options. In conjunction with the Director of Finance, appropriately manage the City's use and issuance of debt, and provide Council with policy options for the efficient use of short-term and long-term debt.

G. Oversight of City Spending: Improve ongoing CIP reporting to facilitate real-time review of project expenditures, and ongoing spending by City departments.

H. City Financial Information. During the Mayor's budget development process, the City Council's budget review process and throughout the year, provide clear, consistent and accurate information about the City's budgetary and financial outlook, in conjunction with the Director of Finance and/or Department Directors, as appropriate.

I. Long-Term Financial Planning. Design and implement financial planning mechanisms to provide the City with strategic financial analysis related to revenues, debt, long term financial planning by fund, expenditure cost drivers and emerging trends in City demand for resources.

J. Labor Relations. Conduct research and analysis on (i) how City services are delivered, (ii) sustainable growth rates for labor and benefit expenses and (iii) labor and benefit expense cost drivers, and provide advice and guidance on these issues to the City's Labor Relations Division.

K. Budget Reserves. Provide guidance and policy options to the City's elected officials with the goal of enhancing the City's budgetary reserves.

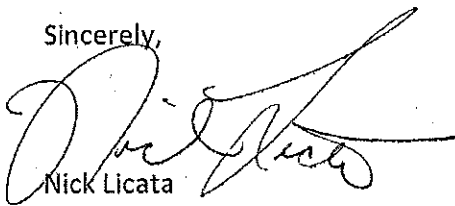
L. Inter-jurisdictional Relationships. Serve as an effective local and regional representative for the City on budget and financial management issues.

M. Budget Structure. Review citywide Budget Control Level (BCL) and Program structure to ensure consistent, logical standards regarding appropriate size, service offering and descriptiveness of the City's BCLs and Programs.

N. Budget Presentation -- Budget Book. Improve the City's budget book and departmental budget presentations to increase clarity, understanding and transparency of the Mayor's Proposed Budget, with clear descriptions of changes proposed, cost drivers, policy impacts and impacts to City programs, services and personnel.

The Seattle City Council looks forward to working cooperatively with the director to ensure that the CBO continues to provide the City with a reliable, sustainable budget.

Sincerely,



Nick Licata

Chair, Finance and Culture Committee



Tim Burgess

Council President

Seattle City Council Confirmation Questions & Answers

Ben Noble , City Budget Office

March 3, 2014

- 1. What is your general philosophy for how to most effectively work with the City Council? How will you be responsive to Council requests, in particular regarding priorities that differ with those of the Executive branch?*

I look forward to building on the relationships established during my work for Council in developing an open, transparent and collaborative relationship with the City Council and its staff. The Mayor clearly stated his commitment to working collaboratively with Council and has empowered his staff to make this a reality. On issues where broad interests align, I will look for opportunities to involve Council staff as early as possible in developing and refining policy options and proposals. The City Budget Office (CBO) will be teaming with Mayor's Office of Policy and Innovation (OPI) on many issues, so our collaborative work with Council Staff will often include individuals from both offices. CBO and OPI's recent work with Central Staff on a potential Parks funding measure offers an example of this collaborative approach, as do ongoing collective efforts in developing policy options for a universal early-education program.

At the same time, I recognize that interests will not always align and that Council may make requests of CBO in support of the Council's own independent policy work. The Council's legislative function is an essential element of City governance and I see it as a fundamental duty of CBO to provide the data and information needed to support this function. In respecting the roles of the different branches of government, I would expect that Council would then rely on its own Central Staff and Legislative Assistants to use this information to develop specific policy options and legislative initiatives.

- 2. How will you ensure that Council members and Legislative staff receive timely information needed from your department for Council to make sound policy and budgetary decisions?*

During my time with Council I was dedicated to ensuring that Councilmembers were provided the information they needed to make educated and informed decisions. Given the basic structure of City government, much of that information resides with Executive staff, particularly CBO. While CBO staff must balance many demands, providing information to Councilmembers and their staff will be a priority under my leadership. As I noted above, Council's access to the information needed to support its role in setting policy is essential for the good governance of the City. In terms of tangible actions, I think we have opportunities to improve information flow during the budget process and intend to work with Central Staff to review our existing protocols. I am also encouraging my staff to reach out to Central Staff and Legislative Assistants to establish the trusting professional relationships that will help facilitate regular exchanges of information.

3. *One of the challenges you have inherited is how to improve performance as it relates to the provision of information to Council by some departments (e.g. SDOT and Parks), who are known for delayed/tardy responses to Council questions—particularly during budget; and b) providing inaccurate or incomplete information, necessitating a lot of checking/re-checking of information provided. Can you give us your thoughts on how you might work to address this?*

Let me say first that I agree that this is an area where we can do better. On the Executive side, I am working to improve relationships between CBO analysts and their counterparts within the departments. Unless information can flow freely through these channels, we will not be in a place to provide timely and accurate information to the Council. By working more closely with Central Staff in advance of the budget, I think we can also do more to anticipate questions from Council and reduce the “scramble” that occurs during the pressure of the budget process. A generally collaborative approach between Executive and Council staff could go a long way to address these issues. In terms of specific changes in process, less rigid structures for communication between Executive and Council staff would allow individuals to clarify requests rather than wasting effort addressing the wrong question, and fewer layers of review for proposed responses could expedite the overall process. I plan to pursue both.

4. *What is your organizational management approach? How will you review internal operations at CBO to determine if they warrant improvement? What is your leadership approach?*

I plan to develop a strong team of analysts that are capable of working with significant autonomy to add real value in support of key budgetary and policy decisions. I see an opportunity to reinvigorate CBO as an institution that -- more than just producing and monitoring the City Budget -- takes a significant role in pushing the City toward more effective and efficient operations. I also see the opportunity for CBO to partner with OPI in taking a more active role in policy development than it has had in recent years.

In my role with Council staff, I learned that building a team capable of such of work involves providing team members the tools they need to succeed, building an environment that encourages a free exchange of ideas, and trusting them to work independently -- while at the same time providing the guidance and coordination needed to keep them working together toward a common goal. That is the approach I intend to take at CBO. I have inherited a strong team and recently made several hires that will help strengthen the Office. My deputy, Tyler Running Deer, has already proven to be a great partner for me, as he has significant previous experience at CBO and King County's budget office.

Over the next year as we move through the annual cycle of the budget process, I plan to closely track how CBO performs, looking both for where we show strength and where there are

opportunities for improvement. Based on that review, I will make further judgments about how the team might be improved through operational and/or structural changes. That said, we will not be stagnant this year and staff suggestions for a number of budget-related process improvements will be implemented over the coming months.

5. Give an example of your strategic planning abilities and describe an experience using strategic planning.

In 2007, as the original eight-year Parks Levy drew towards a close, a clear majority of City Councilmembers expressed interest in pursuing renewal of the Levy. However, then Mayor Greg Nickels did not share this view and made it clear that his administration would not develop a levy proposal. Norm Schwab and I stepped up to this challenge from a staff perspective and worked for several months to help lead a Council-appointed citizens' committee through the process of researching, developing and recommending a new six-year levy plan to the Council. In taking this project from general concept to fulfilled vision we had to develop and implement a strategic approach that anticipated any number of complications. For example, the limited cooperation of Parks Department staff left us at a potentially fatal shortfall of basic data, until we called on the assistance of retired staff who were able to share a wealth of knowledge. When basic logistical tasks started to prove overwhelming, we brought consultant assistance on board to help move the process forward. And when the Citizens' committee appeared on the brink of dividing rather than drawing to consensus, we helped broker a compromise that led the group to a clear recommendation. Council embraced the proposal, and the coalition that we had helped cement as part of the citizens' committee process held together through a successful election campaign. (And now we find ourselves on the brink of another major Parks funding proposal . . .)

6. What experience do you have balancing budget priorities in an environment where budget reductions are necessary?

During my seven years as Central Staff Director, the City faced budget reductions in at least four. Reductions were made as part of the annual budget process, but also implemented mid-year, when quickly shifting economic conditions forced immediate action. These were obviously challenging times, but clarity about priorities – in particular avoiding reductions in critical direct services – made it possible to frame the policy choices and offer specific options. I worked closely with the Council budget chairs as they helped lead the Council to identifying specific programmatic priorities and making allocations that were consistent with the reduced funding that was available. As difficult as these choices were, the pressures of budget cuts did also provide real opportunities to drive efficiencies and to find more cost-effective ways to provide services, both internal and external.

7. *The City of Seattle is currently implementing the Race and Social Justice Initiative to address racial and social inequities. In your position, how will you support and implement the Race and Social Justice Initiative? Can you provide some specific examples?*

At both a personal and professional level I am committed to the goals of the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative. I had a leadership role on the Legislative Department's RSJI team and brought multiple RSJI trainings to Central Staff. The Mayor has already demonstrated a commitment to RSJI, having joined his full cabinet in an RSJI training during his first week in office and I look forward to help building on this initial step. As a member of the Mayor's Executive Team, I will have the opportunity to highlight the importance of this work to his senior staff.

Furthermore, in performing its duty of helping frame policy choices for the Mayor, CBO can play a critical role in advancing these goals. Working with the departments, we can help quantify and/or explain how different budgetary and policy options may help relieve or exacerbate racial and social inequalities. While existing tools and processes, such as CBO's Budget Issue Papers, specifically require an examination of potential RSJ impacts, I am not convinced that that these tools are being implemented as effectively as possible. The analysis of potential RSJI impacts needs to be a sincere assessment, not a simple "checking of the box." To that end, I plan to review and likely enhance the training that is provided to CBO staff and analyze all the existing tools we currently employ. Furthermore, more collaboration with staff from the Office of Civil Rights may highlight additional opportunities to involve CBO staff in the broader RSJI effort.

8. *Describe an experience that you've had with a public relations challenge. What was the outcome?*

Shortly after I joined Central Staff, City Light found itself deeply embroiled in what was then called the "West Coast Energy Crisis." Through what was later demonstrated to be the intentional market manipulations of Enron and other energy traders, west coast prices for a megawatt hour of electricity increased from approximately \$50 to more than \$500. The impact on City Light's finances was swift and dramatic, and the utility was forced to borrow more than \$500 million to help purchase the energy needed to serve Seattle customers. To sustain this level of funding, City Light's rates were increased, in total, more than 50 percent over roughly an 18-month period.

While the overall crisis received a good deal of attention in the media, the City faced a significant challenge in explaining to City Light's customers why rate increases of this magnitude were necessary. While media relations was not a direct responsibility for me as the Central Staff analyst on City Light, I did team closely with others to provide critical background information to local reporters, and I worked with City Light to help provide public briefings to the Council's Energy Committee that were designed to explain how the situation had developed and what options existed to mitigate the impacts to City Light ratepayers. I also supported a

public effort designed to pressure federal regulators to step in and assert the power they had to restore well-functioning energy markets. Those efforts ultimately fell on deaf ears.

While the City succeeded in providing financial security to City Light and setting the foundation for policy shifts that have moved City Light away from a dependence on wholesale energy markets, there were significant political and professional prices to be paid in the wake of the crisis. Through this experience I learned the importance of keeping the public informed about major policy issues, but I also came to understand that information alone does not substitute for the accountability that the public reasonably demands of its public servants and elected officials.

9. Do you believe City departments should identify specific and measurable outcomes? What areas of the City budget do you believe best fit data-driven performance evaluation?

There is no question in my mind that specific and measurable outcomes are important for all City departments. A healthy organization is one that is always looking to improve its performance and effectiveness, and measurable outcomes can help provide a baseline from which to judge such performance. While that is easy to say in theory, the development of appropriate measures can often be a challenge. With respect to the City budget, the most important areas of performance to track are perhaps those that are directly visible to the public as basic municipal services. Public safety, as provided by SPD, SFD and the Municipal Court, is one such example, as are the basic utility services provided by SPU and City Light. In addition, the Mayor has specifically emphasized the need to establish measurable performance metrics for the range of services provided by HSD. I would emphasize these outward-focused types of services because I see the budget as a tool to providing increased transparency and accountability to the public. It is natural for the public to seek account for how public resources are spent and their most direct concerns are for the basic services upon which they rely. With clear, quantified expectations about the performance goals for each of these services, the budget can be a tool to allocate resources to achieve these goals in the most cost-effective manner possible.

That said, internal services departments, such as Finance and Administrative Services and the Department of Information Technology, could and do benefit from performance standards that guide their investment of limited resources. While measures for these types of departments are likely of less interest to the public, they can be used internally to drive performance. CBO and OPI can play an important role in setting expectations around such performance goals, and the Mayor has voiced his commitment to such an approach, but the key to success will be getting each department to buy into the approach and use it internally to frame management decisions.

10. How do you see policy choices being linked to, and reflected in, budget choices?

The annual budget is one of the City's most important policy documents. While many major policy issues do not require direct City funding (land use issues, for example), the budget does provide a very clear account of how the City matches its rhetoric about priorities with the actual allocation of available resources. Although the City's budgetary and policy decisions can have a critical impact on the growth of the local economy and the public resources available in the long run, within any given year the City's budget most closely resembles a "zero-sum" game in terms of trading-off one priority for another. For example, over the four-plus years of the recent "Great Recession," the City's budget reflected a prioritization of safety net programs and public safety over more discretionary services such as Parks and Libraries. These services are all valued, but the funding cuts demanded by revenue shortfalls brought their relative priority into sharp focus. Looking ahead, I see that the City will also soon face important decisions about the value it places on investing in the City's work force and establishing policies around fair and equitable compensation. Gender equity, minimum wage and sustainable retirement offerings are all issues that need to be addressed in some form, and all that could put notable strain on the City's budget resources. At the same, policies that drive for long-term efficiencies in the provision of City services could effectively expand the resources available to address new priorities, as could policy choices that help promote long-term growth in the local economy.

11. Do you support more standardization among City departments in areas such as capital budgeting, definition of "overhead," allocation of overhead costs, etc.? Will you push for more standardization?

Over a period of many years, the City has moved to an ever-more decentralized system of accounting and budgeting. While the independence and autonomy of individual departments may be attractive in terms of promoting innovation and entrepreneurship, it is a distinct disadvantage in terms of financial oversight and accountability. For example, the systems we have in place now make it difficult, if not impossible, to centrally track month-to-month spending by individual departments. This limitation is compounded by the fact that each department uses our existing accounting systems in different ways, coding revenues and expenditures in an inconsistent manner. Furthermore, as noted in the question, the City has adopted inconsistent approaches to how it appropriates and tracks the capital funding provided to different departments.

I do firmly believe that a more standardized, consistent system is needed to help better manage the City's finances, and I am committed to working toward such standardization. I cannot promise that we will make major steps during the first year of this new administration as we must first learn more about the specific limitations of current processes, but I can say that we are moving forward with the critical accounting infrastructure that will be needed to support any standardized system. Under the leadership of the City's Finance Director, Glen Lee, the Finance and Administrative Services Department is continuing its "FINMAP" project. This project involves a re-implementation of our Citywide accounting system and provides a key opportunity to redefine new standardized approaches to financial tracking and management.