

Date: January 29, 2016

Present: Theresa Sanders, City Administrator
Martha Norberg, Seabold Group

Location: City Hall, 5th Floor
Sanders' office

The purpose of the interview was to make introductions and to discuss the PRR process.

Ms. Sanders' becomes involved in Public Records Requests (PRRs) in three ways: if she is included in the request; she receives quarterly reports that reflect the PRRs received during the period; if the Clerk's office requests additional financial assistance to respond to the PRRs. For example, she facilitated getting another FTE in the budget as a result of the increase in PRRs. Part of this, she said, is because the numbers of PRRs is trending up, and they are costly to respond to.

*[Ms. Sanders was confused by our list – see notes and **review file to identify which list**. Reference is made to Rick Romero not wanting her to have the list but KMC saying it was ok. I didn't note which list I showed her.]*

Ms. Sanders said she did not take any notes in the police meetings with officers. She said IT handles all requests for emails. In regard to the Seabold investigation, she said they wanted Eric Finch, Chief Financial and Information Technology Officer, to be the central point of contact. They had discussed this and decided to follow the normal process for responding to PRRs in their handling of the Seabold records requests.

Ms. Sanders described her process for responding to notices of PRRs. She said if it is a request for emails she does nothing because IT handles all of that. If it a request for documents or texts, she said "we look at our own phones and computers." She said "we engage staff in the Mayor's office to conduct the searches." She also said that currently they turn over their phones to IT. Previously they all searched their own phones for responsive texts. She said the City is now looking into ways to "auto-backup" texts.

Ms. Sanders said she is a "text deleter." She said she tells people to use email or come talk to her for any business-related issues, and that her texts are transitory: "meet me in five minutes" kinds of messages.

She said after this experience, she is now getting two phones.

In regards to the PRRs filed in August by Nick Deshais of the Spokesman Review, and other similar requests, Ms. Sanders said she went through her phone to search for responsive texts. She said the Cotton texts to her were unusual in that they were much longer than any texts she normally gets. She said in the beginning, Monique Cotton sent her long texts and Ms. Sanders printed them out. They were three very specific and detailed pages, and Ms. Sanders saw a potential for litigation, which is why she

printed them out. She gave the pages to the City Attorney's office. In response to the PRR, Legal released them.

Ms. Sanders said she had one document that would be of interest to us concerning "bad players," but she was going to give it to Mr. Finch for him to distribute to us.

Ms. Sanders said the Mayor's letter in response to the Council was a collaborative effort, and that several of them from his office helped recreate a timeline. They pulled calendars and other documents to help in that effort. She thought Brian Coddington, the Communications Director, might have earlier drafts of the letter. Ms. Sanders does not have any drafts.

Ms. Sanders said she hoped that this investigative process will result in some good guidance for how to update their policies. She said she hoped they could all still have dialog about hard things (without it becoming a bigger event.) She said she thinks differently now than she did before this whole thing: she is hypersensitive. "If someone even looks like they might be complaining I'll investigate it." She was concerned that people can't go into someone's office and "bitch and vent." She felt that people needed an outlet to vent frustrations before things get huge and blow up.

Ms. Sanders said there needed to be more transparency in Spokane Police Department (SPD), first in response to the PRRs. She said when she first saw the PRRs, especially the Spokesman Review PRRs, it triggered something in her. She wondered what they were digging for, and "what's out there?" She said officers felt like they couldn't come to the Mayor's office (or HR) so they went to the Media. She said it was pretty clear they went to the Media. She said she talked to the Command staff at SPD about what was happening, and Straub said these are just bad players going around the process to the Media.

Ms. Sanders also said she has a heightened sensitivity about executive sessions. She said they were misunderstanding the requirements of the executive session and confidentiality. "Council thinks they can waive privilege and confidentiality, but they can't waive it for all of us." She said she no longer will go into executive session with Council because she doesn't trust them.

She was concerned that this Council hired a policy advisor, Brian M. She said they use the City Attorney for some things, but have an outside lawyer as well.