

Audit and Finance Committee Meeting Transcript – 6/22/2016

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>> Troxclair: Hello, thank for being here today. I'm councilmember troxclair and I'm chairing for mayor pro tem tovo who can't be with us but is probably watching on TV. I'm going to call the audit and finance committee meeting to order. >> Houston: Good morning, I'm councilmember ora Houston and the -- we have a quorum of the health and human services committee here. Councilmember Garza, troxclair and myself. Mayor pro tem tovo is watching us on TV and I'm calling our meeting to order at 9:16, 9:16 on Wednesday morning. >> Troxclair: I don't see anybody signed up for citizens communication, but I do see some people signed up for item number 3 that we'll go ahead and take up. So is Larry tucker here? All right, sorry, we're going to do the approval of the minutes first. So audit and finance committee, have you all had a chance to review the minutes? Any changes or corrections? Is there a motion to approve the minutes? Councilmember Renteria moves. Councilmember pool seconds. All in favor? Minutes are approved. So Mr. Tucker. >> Good morning, councilmembers. I've invited up to the dais vice chair Robert Shaw, vice chair of the animal advisory commission as well as commissioner Craig Naser to join me. I just wanted to provide a

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brief overview from our last meeting on this agenda item which is that when we -- years ago several councils back prior to all of you when we made the amendment to the bylaws for the -- to the animal advisory commission, chapter 823 of the Texas health and safety code was included that -- it was worded in a way that we could advise -- the animal advisory commission could advise both the Austin city council and the Travis county commissioners court. When we made that amendment change to the bylaws, the amendment to the bylaws, we failed to put in verbiage that stated we expanded our scope of work to advise council on any animal welfare issues in Travis county. And at that time while we could -- the amendment failed to mention Travis county commissioners court, it only said that we could advise Austin city council. So there was -- I think that was probably an oversight. So as part of this bylaws change, we are asking that you expand our scope of work to also now advise the Travis county commissioners court, which was likely an oversight. We already advise them on chapter 823 of the Texas health and safety code, but the amendment needs to -- hopefully you will vote to expand us to be able to advise them on any animal welfare issues in Travis county. >> Troxclair: Thank you. Did you have any comments to make? >> Yeah, I wanted to just go over briefly some of the history -- historical information. I'm sorry. This is Robert Shaw. I'm Robert Shaw, vice chair of the animal advisory commission. I wanted to go over the history in response to judge

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Elkhart's letter requesting two additional members. On February 16, animal advisory commission unanimously approved motion to extend scope of the bylaws allowing advising Travis county commissioners court on animal welfare issues. On May 16th the audit and finance committee referred to matter of expanding the animal advisory commission to the Anne. On June 7th, Travis county commissioners court unanimously approved request for two additional members. On June 13 animal advisory commission unanimously approved motion for recommendation to add two additional members recommended by Travis county. So Travis county currently contributes \$1.4 million to the animal services budget. \$11.5 million, which is approximately about 13%. And expanding the aac by two members will give the county approximately 15% representation of a 13-member commission. In addition, adding two members will allow the county and the city to work together more closely, which is very much needed to find some common ground so we can work together. So thank you so much. >> Hello, my name is Craig Naser. Also on the animal advisory commission. The issues between the city and the county on animals are very complicated because although, you know, they have different authorities and abilities to make laws, the -- the shelter is serving the entire county. And so the problems that arise in the shelter are influenced by many areas of the county under many jurisdictions.

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And this is a very complicated issue. We're just starting to look into it as the county grows, as the population grows, these problems come up about what we're doing. So having looked at these and talked to a lot of people about that, I think that the two people for the reasons of the financial input and also just the general knowledge of the county about what's going on, I think that's a good place to start because what we have to do is -- is contact people not only in the little cities but in the nonjurisdictional areas. So it's a complicated issue. I think two people is the right number for us and I think it's a really good idea to proceed this direction because this impacts what goes on right outside the city impacts what happens in the city and in our shelter. >> Troxclair: Thank you for being here and for that information. Members, are there any questions? >> Pool: I'll go ahead and make a motion to approve item number 3 so we can get that specific on the table. >> Troxclair: Okay. Councilmember pool makes a motion to approve it. Is there -- >> Renteria: I'll second that, and we're going to change the article 2-2 -- improve article 2-2 and [inaudible]? >> Yes. >> Renteria: Okay. >> Houston: Councilmember troxclair, can we have a conversation? >> Troxclair: Yeah. >> Houston: Councilmember Garza. >> Garza: I'll make the

[9:24:45 AM]

motion. It's item number 1 on health and human services so I move that we approve item 1. With the same -- >> Houston: With the same language. >> Garza: Yes. >> Houston: Staff recommendation. Thank you so much. I second that. >> Troxclair: I just want to clarify. So the adding the language to advise the city council and the commissioners court, this was a staff recommendation and there weren't any concerns about adding that ability? >> Hi, Dina, commissions coordinator. We're going to go over it in more detail in item number 4. There was -- to add two members, staff agreed with this recommendation as the council audit and finance committee agreed with the recommendation. There was one addition to the board bylaws. Besides adding the language for the commissioners court in article 2-2, which staff also recommended, applying the second part of the recommendation from the animal advisory commission requested the appointees fall under the language in section 2-4-1 that's listed in our city code to state for a board member with 11 or more members, each councilmember shall nominate one

board member to serve is on the board and the mayor shall nominate the other four members. That is the subject of the recommendation that staff does not recommend changing. The recommendations would come from Travis county, but they would be formally approved by the entire council and not just the mayor is what staff is recommending. >> Troxclair: Thank you for that clarification. So are you -- are you -- should we only vote as a joint committee, should we only vote on adding the two members and then this additional language is only for the audit and finance committee? >> Yes, ma'am. >> Troxclair: Okay. >> I believe.

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>> Yes, because city code requires the audit and finance committee sign off on the bylaws changes. >> Troxclair: Should we do that now or -- >> I think either way. And I believe on item 4 you do have one other commission that you are approving bylaws changes for so you may want to take that up separately. >> Houston: So let me go ahead and take the vote on our part of this and then that will close that out and then you all can discuss your part. Okay? >> Troxclair: Okay. >> Houston: I'll call the question. All in favor of councilmember Garza's motion to approve the two additions to the animal advisory commission, please let it known by saying aye. All opposed? It passes unanimously. >> Troxclair: Thanks. Are you adjourning? >> Houston: No, no, I'll wait until you all finish your part. >> Troxclair: Okay. So why don't we -- it sounds like it might be easier for us to just take a vote on the additional two members and then take any additional language separately. So you want to amend your motion? >> Renteria: She went ahead and moved to pass item 3. >> Troxclair: So to add the additional two board members. All in favor? Okay. And that passes unanimously with mayor pro tem off the dais. >> We're done with 3. Thank you. >> Troxclair: All right. >> Houston: Troxclair, health and human services is going to adjourn their meeting at 9:29 on Wednesday morning. Thank you for allowing us to sit in on this. >> Troxclair: Thanks. Okay. We're going to move on to item

[9:28:48 AM]

number 4 which is the proposed changes to the board and commission bylaws. So from what I'm understanding the first two listed here, the change to article 2-2 and article 3a adding the language to allow the commission to advise the commissioners court as well as the board being comprised of 13 members -- is that the one we've already done or do we need to take another vote on that? >> I think you've already done the first two. The third one. >> Troxclair: So the third one. Recommend advisory commission appointees fall under this language with a board of 11 or more members. Each member shall nominate one member to serve on the board and the mayor shall nominate the other board members. Staff does not recommend this change so if there's a motion or lack of a motion. >> Pool: Well either we could make a motion not to approve which would then end the issue or we could simply not take any action which would also do the same but would subject it to be returning. So it may be that we would like to make a motion to deny the change. >> Troxclair: Are you making that motion? >> Renteria: I'll make that motion. Sorry. I'll make that motion to deny the chapter 2-1-4. >> Pool: And I'll second it with the understanding what this does is allow councilmembers to continue to make their appointments and that the -- and the mayor too, and that it will be approved by council as a whole, not simply by the mayor. >> That's correct. And the Travis county nominees that had previously been nominated by Travis county will then be formally approved by the entire council. >> Pool: Great. Thank you for that clarification. >> Troxclair: All those in favor of denying that recommendation raise your hand. It passes unanimously with mayor pro tem off the dais.

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>> And the last board by law I bring before you is not a code change, it's just a change to the ethics review commission bylaws. Article 7e -- well, they created new language to allow the chair to council a regularly scheduled meeting of a commission if it is determined there is insufficient business pending to necessity a meeting. So it would just be actually listed in their bylaws that if there is no sufficient business before the ethics review commission, the chair can cancel the meeting. >> Troxclair: Is there a motion? >> Pool: I'll move to approve the recommended changes. >> Renteria: And I'll second. >> Troxclair: There's a motion and second. All in favor of that change? It passes unanimously with mayor pro tem off the dais. >> Thank you all. >> Troxclair: Thank you. Okay. I think that gets us to item number 5, and we do have some citizens signed up to speak on this item. So we will hear from them first. Is Vincent cobalis here? Hello. You will have three minutes. >> Good morning, councilmembers. My name is Vincent cobalis and I'm the vice chair of the asian-american quality of life commission. And I did need to make a correction on my sign-up seat, I'm in district 5. But anyway, we alaud the work of the city auditor and encourage council to take action on the upcoming budget. I think it does reflect the experience of the asian-american community in Austin, particularly the ones that are not good English speakers. I wanted to let you know that

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the asian-american quality of life commission has forwarded some budget recommendations to the city manager for consideration in the 2017 budget, and a number of those recommendations do address some of the issues that are pointed out in the auditor's report. Including creating a multi-language city of Austin website, increase the budget for translation and interpretation, centralizing that budget, and do a citywide contract translate written documents into Vietnamese, Korean and Chinese with accuracy verified by community members. Other recommendations are focused on language and culturally grounded services to the asian-american populations including health navigators to help them, you know, navigate city systems. I would like to say that a lot of times -- well, advertisement in the community is a lot of words and translated words, but I think that for limited English speakers, you know, pictures help a lot and having their language to be able to see their language helps a lot. Thank you. >> Troxclair: Thank you. The next speaker that we have is Monica Guzman. Is Luce ascoto here? Okay. And Ann tight here? Okay. So you have a total of nine minutes. And before you start, I just wanted to ask the auditor if you were able to send this audit to all the councilmembers. There's been a request for everybody to see the audit. >> It is -- I sent the executive summary and the full draft is posted with audit and

[9:34:50 AM]

finance committee agenda so it's linked. I can certainly send out an email with it as well. >> Troxclair: Thank you so much. >> There we go. Monica Guzman with the restore rundberg revitalization team and co-chair of the combined neighborhood area. First, I support everything Vince said. Second I have -- I was recently employed by the city, the Austin code department, as a community engagement specialist for a pilot project. And I kept getting mixed messages about what services exist, the contracted translators, interpreters, and that's part of the problem. There's not enough communication between cpio and -- sorry, councilmember, I know you don't like acronyms. >> [Inaudible]. >> But communication and public information office. I don't know how much information goes from them to the departments themselves, and then between the departments, within the departments, within the one I was in, I heard oh, just find someone in the office who is certified. There's a star by their name. No, you can't do that. You have to go through cpio to find out who is contracted back and forth. I said I'm bilingual, can't I

do some of it? No, you have to take a test. I'm told I couldn't take the test because I'm not an fte. Why can't people in a temp status do it if they are qualified and pass the test? I was speaking Spanish to the community to help them. I was helping code officers with interpretation because I happened to be on hand. So it's like I didn't see what the big deal was. Like I said, there needs to be a better communication and then for the restore rundberg, I know it's federal money, there's an unfunded federal mandate they must provide interpretation services.

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I know commander baker heard it enough from me early on and it was only recently coming to the end of our third year of the grant that it was realized the services contracted translators and interpreters are available through the city. So that speaks to lack of communication to the various departments. And then regarding the community advancement network dashboard that just came out as well as the executive summary, it shows that the rundberg area, 20% or more lives in poverty and a small corner is 40% or month, and that same area on executive summary is 26% or higher limited English proficiency. While some may not realize the connection, those that are economically disadvantaged, they may not know know where to go to have someone translate or interpret for them. They may not have access digitally or even if they do that doesn't mean they know how to use it. There's a whole lot of things that layer in. I totally support the idea of a task force, looking up what we have, shoring it up and making sure it hits those five standards list understand the executive summary. We have a lot of resources in the city that can help with training, bringing in more interpreters to be on contract with the city as well. I think that will do it. Thank you. >> Troxclair: Thank you. Ashley Gordon. >> Good morning. My name is Ashley Gordon. I am a candidate for county commissioner, precinct 1, and I'm also a Spanish interpreter for the Austin language justice coalition -- excuse me, collective. And I would like to come and present the what happens when there's no accountability of the services provided by the city when it comes to language

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services. And so I serve as an interpreter for one of my Spanish speaking mothers, and she called me one Sunday in February, it was 11:00 P.M., to come and help her. She had called Austin police department to report violence that was happening next door to her and they sent out an officer that did not speak Spanish. And her daughter, who does speak English, requested that a Spanish speaking officer be present. The officer came to our house and this is all recorded. The officer came to our house and refused to take her report and he said, and I quote, I know that you speak English and if you do not speak English to me I will not take your report. She tried to get the officer's name. They shone the light in her face so she couldn't see his badge number. And it wasn't until I came that night which was hours later after she made the initial report and I called and I demanded that a bilingual officer come and take her report that someone came. The a same young lady had a situation with the housing authority and concerning her housing situation. Her manager was very aware, everyone in her case is aware of her limited language when it comes to English, and they would purposely send her information that was only in English. And I know this for a fact because the day they sent the letter about the termination of her contract with hca, the letter was in English. I was there, I opened the letter for her via her permission and I read it and I had to interpret the letter for her. And her manager speaks Spanish. Her manager knows she only received span -- speaks Spanish yet she only received the notification in English. She only has a few days, if I wasn't there or her daughter didn't understand that level of English because her daughter is 17 and she didn't understand that official document, what would she have done? Would she still have been

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accountable for the actions in the document. So what I'm calling for is an assessment of those who provide the services to make sure they are providing the services properly and without discrimination. Thank you. >> Troxclair: Thank you. Jose Guion. >> Like most folks you forgot the U. >> Troxclair: I'm sorry, I'm messing up all the pro nuns I agencies. You have three minutes. >> My name is Jose Guion. I was last year working as an interpreter and got hired by the city and by Texas rural legal aid and we interacted with the city a lot, and one of the things that I noticed all the time was that when Spanish speakers were called to testify, there was interpretation provided. And in a lot of cases it was just so that the city council could understand what was being said. And the impacted person is sitting in the audience and not understanding anything else that's going on. And so the -- the wanting to ask for more -- for more, more of everything, right? I think the city has made great strides in starting to do this and there's still so much more that we can do. I have been hired as an interpreter to plenty of meetings where no Spanish speakers show up and there is this belief that if you provide interpreters they will come and that is not true.

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I think that mono language speakers in this city don't feel welcome in these situations and historically have not felt welcome and primarily because there's never been any interpretation and I think that most city events still do outreach the way they've always done outreach which is primarily reaching English speakers, and so nonenglish speakers don't actually know that things are happening. I think the other issue is around competence. And I think that -- I actually was at a meeting where there was just one interpreter working and it was a two-hour meeting and it was actually done properly where everything was interpreted back and forth, but it was just one person. And the U.N. Data really clearly shows that one person after 20 minutes of interpretation, the quality of the work drops dramatically and so the recommendation is that you have two people working together that switch off and on. Now of course that increases the budget and the cost, and that is the level that is needed if you do want to actually have things interpreted well over a long period of time. So I think that that's the other one. When -- and even in those cases some mechanism for being able to certify, evaluate the quality of the interpretation. [Buzzer sounding] Thank you very much. >> Troxclair: Thank you. Is Raul Alvarez here?

[9:44:59 AM]

Good morning. And thank you for the opportunity to speak and for the work you do for our community. My name is Raul Alvarez, I'm the executive director of the community advancement network and just want to, you know, thank -- again, you all for considering this issue and the audit and finance staff for working on this important issue. Last year C.A.N. Had language access work group and the sheet I passed out is going to have a summary of the findings of that work group that led to our continued work this year in addressing the language needs of our community. And you'll see some statistics there that say about one-third of Travis county residents speak a language other than English at home. And 13% speak English less than very well, and that's according to the American community survey and this may not be as up to date as maybe the information from audit and finance, it's from last year, but we did try to survey our partner organizations and other community organizations through our distribution list of nonprofits and government agencies, school district, advocacy groups about language access needs and found that about 77% of the respondents provide in-house nonspecialized language services, and that 28% report relying on family and friends of clients and customers to serve that need, which is not an

ideal situation for either the entity or the families involved. And 70% believe they meet the needs of Spanish speakers, but 65% of those entities feel they don't meet the needs of people who speak less common languages. So it's not just a single language issue for our community. And 93% of them said they were interested in collaborating to see how we could collectively address this community

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challenge. And so the -- you know, the back part of that handout really is the charge of the committee and so we're looking at coming up with standards for regular assessment language needs, training and testing requirements for translators and interpreters, planning for language inclusive events and services, identifying resources for connecting trained and qualified interpreters and translators, and resources for utilizing bilingual volunteers. And all this is ideally something we can do in a across-departmental, cross-agency standards for contracting for these services. And I think the last thing I'll mention is I also serve on the immigrant services network, civic engagement committee, and we came up with some suggestions on engagement, community engagement. And each one of our recommendations had a language access bullet on it because we can have all these creative ways of reaching people, but if they don't understand either the advertising or the information -- [buzzer sounding] -- Presented then they may not -- may not be able to serve them as best as we could. Thanks for this opportunity and have a great day. >> Troxclair: Thank you. Is Esther Diaz here? >> Hello. I'm Esther dei can't say. I'm a volunteer with the multicultural refugee coalition and also a professional translator and interpreter and trainer. And I have been on the community advancement network with Raul Alvarez, the previous speaker, and am very proud of the work that's being done to try to provide language access for the

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citizens of Austin who speak languages other than English. Particularly I want to speak up about the refugees. Austin is -- Texas is the largest refugee resettlement state and Austin is a very large resettlement community. In the rundberg area, for example, we have a large population of people from Nepal, from Iraq, from Afghanistan, from the Congo and Cuba, and so their languages are other than Spanish and those languages need to be addressed in order to provide vital services to the people of the community. And the multi-cultural refugee coalition stands ready to help with that effort to help with the training, to try to provide services to that community. I'm also involved in a number of other work groups so it seems that Austin is finally waking up to the need for appropriate language services and this audit on language services is certainly a wonderful starting point. I fear that it did not reach some of the people that it needed to reach, the ones who don't speak English, but the results that are available do finally provide evidence of what we have known for years, that many people in our community are not getting the services that they need and that they deserve. And it's time to do something about it. So mrc, multi-cultural refugee coalition, wants very much to be part of that effort. Thank you. >> Troxclair: Thank you. And our last speaker that I show signed up is Esther martin. [Speaking in foreign language] I just talked to you in Korean for three seconds.

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Imagine if I did the whole thing in Korean you wouldn't understand what I'm saying. That's the frustration people feel in our community when they attend these city events or try to get city services or look at a flyer that's geared toward them but they don't know what the heck it's for. So I'm the executive director of the asian-american resource center, nonprofit. I started my job last year and a

month into it I got a call from the city asking me to help translate a flier for the spirit of east Austin. And help them translate this into Vietnamese by tomorrow. And I said, well, thanks for calling me, I'm not Vietnamese so I'm going to have to find somebody for you. I'm happy to do that, but they cannot do it overnight for free, you know, for you, you know, and not have it vetted through other communities and other people who live in Austin. And they were like no, no, we need it by tomorrow. I got it done, but there were errors because it's volunteers doing it late at night. That's one example of the kind of engagement or offer, request that we're getting at the asian-american center. We also get people walking in, city departments say, oh, can you come with us, we need an interpreter in China town, we're doing a booth there. No, we have jobs to do. So the constant, you know, requests just means that we have demand, but the issue is that to address them you are asking people to do it for free or do it, you know, very quickly without much notice. I think that's definitely something that needs to be addressed and I'm glad to see this audit that's mentioning that there's a need for it. The other thing is people say, well, you know, send it out to the communities and they will just show up. Well, what happens is they see a flyer but they don't really understand what it's for, the language that it's used is very bureaucratic sounding and not really explaining what it is, such as the spirit of east Austin. The flier was in Vietnamese

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and they asked me to route it to all the Vietnamese community. I attended but no Vietnamese and American communities showed up not because they don't care but they don't know what it is. So things like that I think that the city could improve on and they really need to tap into the resources that are already here. The last thing I want to say people need to be compensated for their time. If you are providing you professional services, it needs to be compensated fairly not can you just do it because we don't have the knowledge about ethics commission for it. Every city department needs to have some kind of line item that specifies it's for translation or interpretation services. It's very much needed. We're over 7% here in Austin asian-american community. Please help the community have better access to city services. Thank you. >> Troxclair: Thank you. Okay. Let me see if I can refresh my legs. -- List. Okay. I have one more speaker signed up. Chelsea brass. >> Hi. >> Troxclair: Thanks for being here. >> Thank you. My name is Chelsea brass. I work to the Latino health care forum on the rundberg community innovation zone which is a city of Austin health and human services funded project. We've been working in the rundberg area since 2014 and we have seen wide variety of foreign languages in the rundberg area. It's beautiful and vibrant and diverse. Over 30 languages, probably 50 dialects. We have been working on language access since 2014 and we're really excited that the city is looking at this as a priority. We in rundberg, it is actually a majority of people, probably

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are foreign language speakers and so a lot of the communities that we serve there, if there isn't adequate language access provided, you are not essentially giving full services to these communities. And it's big Numbers. And Spanish is huge. In the clinical visit data that we saw, it was eight Spanish speaking visits to 11 English, so a high proportion of Spanish speaking visits, and then arabic has recently emerged as a high need in addition to the Vietnamese and burmese and the Numbers that you see. A not on language access, you know, as we -- Esther Diaz and a couple of us look at the civil rights information, language is a protected class under civil rights so if a city department receives federal funding, providing adequate language access is part of providing equal rights under those -- it's a mandate. And so the city departments really need to look at that just to protect themselves from civil rights issues. And so we -- we get behind that and we are happy to see this audit. We saw that there was

\$2 million of spending to look at in the city and if any of that can be looked at, for example the automatic deductions from paychecks for bilingual pay, if you can pay employees based on when they use these skills, some of those -- some of that funding that might be able to be in cost savings could be applied to investments and language access. And for a couple hundred thousand dollars, we've seen that we can actually invest in a model that will allow our refugee and immigrant populations to be compensated for these assets of being bilingual. And so the city would be able to invest in these -- in these refugees and these immigrants that are able to provide these services. And so we hope that you will look at that and invest in a

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model, and this model that we're speaking of from a catholic charities Fort Worth model, once you invest in it, it will sustain itself because it's a public-private partnership and a lot of the proceeds of that -- those translation services go to the communities in need. So we hope that you will consider investing in them. [Buzzer sounding] >> Troxclair: Thank you. I think that's all the speakers. Did I miss anybody? Okay. Do you want to -- is there a staff presentation on the audit? >> Yes, there is. >> Troxclair: Okay. >> Patrick Johnson was the manager of this audit and Caroline was the auditor in charge. Patrick there be presenting this morning. >> Patrick Johnson, office of city auditor. Pleasure to be here, councilmembers. And so, you know, just to start out and I think we heard this, just an acknowledgement we start out with a simple question can you read this. And I think what we've heard is a lot of people can't. And what we found was 14% of Austin residents reported speaking English less than very well. And we tried to break that out and geographically display that. So you see in the reds and Oranges over 20% of the folks in those districts reported speaking English less than very well. And we also have a chart that shows the top three languages other than English spoken by district. And we heard arabic in district 4 and there it is at third most. And so what's the city do.

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The city has a translation and interpretation policy to promote fair and equitable access to city services for residents. The departments offer various translation and interpretation services using contractors and city employees. And there are bilingual pay programs that offer stipends to city employees who offer bilingual proficiency. Interpretation is the oral or visual restating of spoken or signed words. And so what we tried to do was determine how the city manages language assistance services, whether the services align with community needs or how these services compare with similar cities and we looked at policies, plans and procedures currently in place. And so our first finding is city practices may not meet the language needs of all residents. Again while Austin has policies and resources addressing language assistant services, current practices aren't fully aligned with the efforts identified in effective programs. We saw those programs follow a five-step framework as shown here. The next several slides I'll go through each one of those steps and also have comments from some of the peer cities that we surveyed and you can see the -- you can't really see those on the slides here, but they are on the slides. And so the first step is to identify populations. And so the framework suggests collecting regularly collecting data utilizing a variety of sources such as data from the departments or community groups, and identifying demographic trend data to understand where future needs -- what future needs a city may need to address. And so in Austin we saw Austin used 2012 census survey data, but we didn't see a plan to utilize other sources of data or to update the collection of that data. At the departmental level, 85% of city departments record not collecting data on the residents they serve. Again, which indicates the city may not be able to

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identify all populations or accurately understand their needs. And again, that data the city does have really isn't detailed to identify those trends. In the peer cities we saw most used census data like Austin. Three of the six cities we looked at reported requirements to update their data at least every two years. And the second step again builds off the needs assessment from step one. Really this is an assessment of how the current services that a city has is meeting the needs and that should identify gaps and identify areas that need to be filled in. And this -- the framework also suggests community outreach is a main focus of this step. And in Austin we did not see a requirement for such an assessment but noted some form of assessment in about half the departments. Also about half the departments reported some form of outreach, but most indicated they rely on residents to request services. And the city's public information office indicated they have one staff member who has been working on engagement with the asian-american community. But again without more complete information about resident needs, the city is really unable to effectively assess whether current efforts are sufficient. We saw four of six reported requirements for their departments to collect data at that departmental level to understand again the services they provided so they can make an accurate assessment. Five of six reported residents of the services they provide. And the third step really is to then take that information and craft a plan, policies that meet the particular needs of your community. Part of this is, again, leveraging community resources and assuring service providers have the appropriate expertise. And the framework suggests that a coordinator be

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designated to oversee these efforts. In Austin we saw multiple efforts underway, but again those efforts weren't coordinate centrally and most departments reported not having a coordinator within the department. Four of six of our peer cities reported having -- peer cities reported central a coordinator and four of six reported requiring certain departments and departments that interface with public on more regular basis to have a language access plan in place. Our fourth step is to deliver the services and suggest three characteristics of effective delivery is make services accessible to all. Offer services in a timely manner. And this is especially important and related to 911 calls or where other critical communications are happening, and to use qualified service providers so that accurate and effective translation, interpretation is provided. The framework notes training can help achieve effective outcomes in these areas. Austin does deliver services but they are mostly reactive or based on request. We saw not all planned efforts are actually in place. And we also saw inconsistent oversight of the level and quality of the services provided. Again, due to these issues, I think the city then is unable to assure the language assistance services it provides are fully accessible and delivered to those that need them. In the peer cities we saw more proactive outreach efforts and two of six reported using I speak cards and there's an example in the report, but they help ensure appropriate services are identified and provided. I will say we saw two city departments that reported using those cards. And the fifth step then is to monitor and adapt the services. Really this is utilizing data to regularly evaluate program effectiveness to identify opportunities to adjust and approve services based on

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need. And we saw in the city, the city doesn't have robust monitoring or data collection structures in place and again it can't ensure language services are effectively providing community needs. We noted stakeholders were generally not aware of the existing feedback processes. And then the peer cities four of six reported performance measures and a complaint process that specific to language services and

two cities reported monitoring performance using mystery shoppers. Kind of like a secret shopper, if you are familiar with that. And so as we noted earlier, most departments utilize current staff to provide language assistance services. We looked at these programs and found inconsistent oversight limits a city's ability to know how often and how well services are being provided and whether they are effectively meeting the community's needs. Also we noted that bilingual pay programs are common in most of our peer cities but the structure varied and we weren't really able to make real meaningful comparisons and so you won't see that in this finding. And again, in looking at the city's bilingual pay programs, we noted 30 city departments participate and spend approximately \$2 million a year on employee stipends. And we noted the policy requires departments to identify bilingual needs, provide stipends only where there's an operational need and then monitor employee performance. And we found that department management is not consistently monitoring and therefore lacks the information needed to know two things. One, how often employees use their bilingual skills and two, how well those services are provided. According to department survey we conducted, 85% reported not collecting information on the

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bilingual services. We also surveyed a sample of the bilingual employees and the majority noted that essentially the same thing, that management really didn't monitor the services they provided and those bilingual skills weren't included as part of their performance reviews. Related to quality, we noted all programs require proficiency testing, but only the ems program requires periodic retesting. We also noticed documentation issue related to the test results across the programs. And while records were available for the ap program, we noted that about half the officers receiving a stipend had tested more than ten years ago. Also most departments reported not providing language assistance training for their staff. And so we made two recommendations. That the city manager or designee should establish a stakeholder team to get all those folks together to design a program that addresses the points you see here. And it really addresses the need, but balancing an effective, efficient sources. And we feel like this recommendation really addresses steps 1 through 3 of the framework. To address steps 4 and 5 of the framework, we recommend the city manager should designate a person or persons with authority to then take the program that's designed, timely implement -- implement that in a timely manner and then monitor and periodically update the program. Management has concurred with our findings and we're happy to answer any questions. >> Troxclair: Thank you for that presentation. Any questions? >> Renteria: Yeah. How much -- I've got a couple questions, but how much are we spending right now on the interpreters, did you say it was \$2 million?

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>> The bilingual program is approximately \$2 million and certainly that doesn't include the contracts that the city also has for interpretation services and actually I don't have that figure. >> Renteria: It sounds like, you know, the department, the city is going to wait until the equity officer gets hired on and then they are going to create -- seemed like the timetable was they are waiting for that hiring and then they are going to start the task force or that person going to be in charge of the task force? >> I'll defer to bray. >> Ray bray, chief of staff. In response to your question, we're not going to wait for the officer to be hired. We intend over the next couple of weeks to start forming I guess the basis for the first recommendation that was made by the auditor to create the stakeholder group. We believe that the equity office eventually will have a role. We want to be very careful especially with the equity office and chief equity officer because as soon as they come on board, there is going to be a lot of things they need to do but we think they are central to this conversation. So that work will already start. We believe

we're going to be on board with a chief equity officer later in the summer, but the work will start before then. >> Renteria: So you are going to start in a couple weeks? >> Renteria: As soon as we can. Absolutely. This is going to be a priority, absolutely. >> Renteria: Thank you. >> Troxclair: Do you want to -- I think you just spoke to the first finding. Do you want to expand on any of the other responses from management? As far as the findings? >> So one of the things I would probably mention is that -- is that we agree that if you take a look at how departments handle language access, it's typically been

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they know their constituents best and we leave it to determine how to best determine what those language service needs are. It's been inconsistent, I'll agree, and we can do a lot better and I know the city manager wants us to do better. We want to move forward with those recommendations. We believe that with the first one, creating the stakeholder group and creating not only internal city departments but also stakeholders, some of them I didn't realize have been working on language access that have been here today and appeared before you. We certainly want to include them in that conversation as well. The other thing what we've looked at as we look at peer city research, they use the same framework, the five steps. We agree with that. What we hope to have eventually is have a centralized coordinator. We need to collect better data that goes beyond the survey. We need to update that more frequently. We need to look at other resources even going into nonspanish speaking or nonenglish speaking communities as well. So with the findings and recommendations we do agree. >> Troxclair: So from -- to follow up on councilmember Renteria's question about the financial aspects, so \$2 million currently being spent, that doesn't include other contracts, but it doesn't sound like this is a -- that more -- basically money could be spent more efficiently and effectively, not necessarily that it's going to take an additional appropriation to address some of these concerns. >> So I will tell you I know there is other money -- when I think about the public information office, various community events they provide interpretation equipment and

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also with translators as well. I know that when I think about the \$2 million, that to me is the bilingual pay program that is paid to city employees. But there are other services and other expenses, for example when we do have community engagement meetings where people have requested interpretation services, we try to do our best to provide those services. As long as we've been given adequate time. Sometimes when we hear about it at the last moment, we even still try to provide somebody who can provide interpretation. We want everybody in our community to be able to participate in our local government. >> Troxclair: What is the time line? I see the proposed implementation dates, okay, so items 1 and 2 completed by the end of August, 2016. Item 3, 2017, and then -- spring of 2017 as well. So within -- so work is starting immediately and you would expect changes to have been fully implemented by spring of next year? >> Absolutely. Absolutely. That's our target date, absolutely. We're making it high priority, yes. >> Troxclair: Okay. Okay, I think that's all of our questions. Thank you so much. So motion to adopt the audit, but -- >> Without a quorum, I think we can table that for now and I'll make sure we do it before the end of the meeting. >> Troxclair: Okay. >> On the next audit we have is our audit of inventory management at the Austin water central stores or central warehouses.

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I'll wait just a second. For the crowd to clear out. So this audit of inventory management was conducted

by [inaudible]. As both the manager and the in charge. So you have everybody here. >> Thank you. Good morning, councilmembers. Austin water -- Austin water operates central stores at two location. Each store 2,000 stock items in 2015. The stock items comprises of pipes, hydrants, safety equipment, tools and other items. Central stores provide stock items to Austin water for crews repair and maintenance of water and wastewater infrastructure. Other city departments also purchase stock items from central stores. The object of this audit was to determine if Austin weather is managing inventory in central stores effectively and efficiently. Our first finding is for physical count of inventory. It is physical counting of stock items for reconciling financial records and actual quantity. We found there is a a be sense of comprehensive guidelines and inadequate supervision for the inventory process. It is [indiscernible] For reporting inventory in financial statements and to meet the needs of customers. Our second finding is about maintaining a list of authorized signatures for all city departments.

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Authorized signatures are those city employees who have been authorized to purchase items from central stores. We found that a list of authorized signatures was last updated in fiscal year 2011, and in 21 of -- about 70% the authorizers were not in 2011 list. Not maintaining a list of authorized signatures increases the risk of unauthorized purchases. Second part of this finding is about restocking. We found that the staff had no access to daily stock report for identifying items which -- with zero quantity or have a low quantity and during the cost of an audit management indicated the staff [indiscernible]. We also noted that the past usage of items is not always considered in stock of items. Based on estimates of consumption. Ordering items in appropriate quantity is essential to maintain adequate inventory for customers and avoid overstocking. Our last finding is about idle and obsolete items. Idle items are those items which have not been used at least for one year. Obsolete items are those items which become outdated due to change in technology, for instance, the lead which was used before is now replaced with pvp pipes. So what we found was there was about in [indiscernible] Stock items valued at \$338,000 in the central stores and we noted that these items also include items for which is last issue date was in fiscal

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year 2008, and the number of idle stock items which are obsolete is unknown. The staff identified some items as obsolete in fiscal year 2010 and these items are still in the central stores and occupying the space there. Having idle or obsolete stock not utilizing city resources effectively. We issued three recommendations for improving policies and procedures and defined the mechanism for accountability. This will help to improve inventory management at Austin water for central stores and management has [indiscernible] Recommendations and this concludes my presentation and I'm happy to answer any questions. >> Troxclair: Thank you. Members, do we have any questions? Is there staff here for a response to this? >> Yes. >> Good morning, David Andrews with Austin water. We do concur with these recommendations and have already started a process of getting a project team looking at this. We're going to look at our process and procedures and strengthen those. I would also mention that we have organized this function into a separate division along with other areas that we call a supply chain division and we're currently in the process of hiring a manager for that. And it will bring some focus to this particular area and be able to implement these recommendations and concur with some of the best practices that are recommended. >> Troxclair: Councilmember Renteria. >> Renteria: And this manager, was that a budget item from last year's budget? >> It was already a -- a

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position that we had that we went ahead and decided to pull into the supply chain management area. Purchasing as well as our central stores and then our fleet operations. So we're able to bring those together and get a manager to focus more on those specific critical functions. >> Renteria: And what do you all do with these obsolete items? I mean from 2010. Do you all look at it and do you all -- how do you dispose of this? >> Once we've identified any of the obsolete items, we would look at, one, recycling any of the items as if they could be recycled. If they have any salvage value as far as like if they are brass fittings and things like that, then we have scrap contracts to where we would be able to turn those in as well. And then if not, we'll just try to dispose of them properly. >> Renteria: Thank you. >> Troxclair: Any questions? Okay. Thank you. Is there a motion to accept this audit? Councilmember Renteria moves and councilmember pool seconds. All in favor? Audit is anticipated unanimously with mayor pro tem off the dais. -- Accepted. Is there a motion to accept the language access audit? Item number 5? >> Pool: I apologize for being away when this came up. I did have a couple questions. Can I ask them? >> I believe management is no longer here, but to the extent we can answer them. >> Pool: I'll just go ahead and ask them. I just wanted to be clear on the process for bilingual certification and whether we might be able to extend it to temporaries. I know there are liabilities

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involved with translations and they have to be done at a certain level so there aren't -- so we can rely on the translation and there are standards involved in that. So I would just like to know, I think Ms. Guzman was the one who mentioned that while she was bilingual she was a temp so wasn't able to add a skill set to a job that sounded like could have benefited from it so I was curious what it would take, if staff could advise. And then the point about -- I think it was -- there were two speakers who talked about the inability to -- our lack of translation for Asian languages specifically as well as others. Do we have access to the type of software, the head phone interpretation that is used in some of the more multi-cultural type organizations? I think of the united nations, that's the classic where people put on headphones, dial up the channel and it's a simultaneous translation. And then I just wondered if anybody could provide or I can talk to my staff about doing a cross-walk of comparisons between the findings in the audit and what the community advancement network worker came up with. I thought -- >> Renteria: I think the manager just showed up. >> Pool: Those were the three questions that I had. >> And I think in order, the first question is probably our human resources director, Mike could provide some information on that and we can certainly get that question to her. I assume that will take them a little time to look at. Certainly as currently -- as it's currently structured there are four bilingual pay programs, the citywide and three in each of the public safety departments and the public safety are typically --

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they are specified in the contracts for each of those in terms of who is eligible and how that testing and retesting would work. And then for the citywide program obviously it's currently available -- it's a stipend available for full-time employees but we'll pass that on to human resources. And the comparison is something we can definitely do and walking through what we found and what they had in their task force, we can even sit down with them and talk through, you know, what additional work needs to be done. I would assume and it sounded like and certain ray bray is probably the better person to speak to that, those are some of the stakeholders included in implementing the stakeholder task force. >> We did talk to C.A.N. As part of the audit. We attended one of their meetings and had discussions with them. >> I think the last -- I'm going out of order. I went 1, 3, 2. But I believe the second question on the headsets, I believe we have some of those available. The public information office has

some of those available. I think you have to know they exist, know you can check them out. I think there's a little more communication needed there. I they [inaudible], but we do have that resource. >> Pool: Thank you. I will -- I appreciate the answers and I would go ahead and move approval of the audit. >> Troxclair: Expect moves approval and -- councilmember pool moves approval and councilmember Renteria seconds. All in favor? And that will bring us to item number 7, the bridge safety audit. > >> Nikki will make the presentation. >> Good morning, councilmembers.

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As she mentioned, this audit look for the bridges in the city and we talk about bridges that are within the city jurisdiction which are also owned by the city. As a bit of background, the responsibility for managing bridges in the city lies in the department of public works. And this includes vehicular bridges and pedestrian bridges. As we show you the bridges in the city are separated into two categories of large and small of the size, whether it's higher than 20 feet. And this is based on the number of axles that fit on the bridge. The first finding in the city maintenance program is vastly focused on the structural safety of large bridges. These are basically on the lane set by federal law and they have to be inspected every two years. The city inspection assign a safety rating for each bridge as an indicator of the safety service. And we look at the available information that was from txdot from 2014 and concluded overall that bridges are structurally sound and safe for vehicular traffic. When the department of public works receives txdot sufficiency rating, they classify this information according to the categories that's shown in the slide, and then these categories are used to prioritize the maintenance and repairs needed for the bridges. And this chart shows the vast majority of bridges are in good condition or better. And regarding this data, we also observe some discrepancy between the number of bridges reported by public works and the number of inspection reports that

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we were able to obtain. Our second finding is regarding all the findings that fit in this category. It is approximately 8,000 most structures and based on this work it has some incompleteness and some inaccuracies. Also for this, these structures is not a gross schedule inspection program and public works does not have condition assessments for each of these bridges. Maintenance repair is more active mode and is based typically on 311 calls, citizen complaints and also on information that is gathered by the public works crew when they're out performing their job. With inaccurate information, public works is limited in its ability on maintenance of the repairs. We have site visits and notice some issues not as much are related to structural integrity, but related to the safety of pedestrians. And we have one example here to the left is a bridge that is close to an elementary school and that repair was performed after several months that citizen complained, but when the repair was performed it and not to be done up to standards as in the rating that we got that my allow a kid to fall through. And we have a picture where there is a more safe railing. We have an additional

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observation that regards bridges being structural [indiscernible] And the accounting standards need to be value and reported in the city's financial statement. However the lack of information from public works may have impacted us to have full and complete information to value the bridges. We have issued a recommendation to the department that is to make sure the city create and maintain afternoon inventory of all bridge structures and this is validated and shared with the other departments, other departments in the city. Acknowledged the second is to develop and implement a risk-based approach

that provides maintenance to all bridge structures. Its department has agreed with our recommendations and I'm happy to take any questions that we have. >> Any questions? Councilmember pool? >> Pool: The piece that is concerning and I'm glad you identified it was the number of bridges that may be out there that we don't know about. And it's really hard to maintain a bridge when you don't know that it's out there. Specifically they're the pedestrian and -- they're pedestrian and overpipelines, but the no condition assessment was a good catch and I really appreciate that. And I know that the public works staff is really dedicated to doing a great job and this probably is helpful, I would think, this audit, and kind of focusing where there are some gaps so that staff will fill them. I don't know if you had anything to respond. >> Good morning,

[10:33:30 AM]

councilmembers. [Inaudible]. And this gap is -- >> Pool: You might say your name again. >> Robert Hinojosa, interim director for the public works department. We recognize this gap and this is one of the areas where we'll have to work with watershed because anything below 20 feet we need to see if it's in their inventory. It's not in their inventory. But regardless it's something we need to step up and look at condition assessment. We are reactive. We do have people during storms that are out there putting -- placing barricades and removing the barricades. And if they do notice in some of these areas that are normally low water crossings, then we mark it and repair it. We're currently repairing two bridges from the last water event or -- actually, there are two of these 20-foot or less bridges that we're actually repairing. You're absolutely right. We do concur with what was found and I think we can start planning forward. One of the things that was also mentioned in the audit that we're probably going to take a little longer to do and that's the bridge maintenance information system that we're planning to budget in a couple of years. Right now we just keep it -- that portion of the information from the highway department pretty much on a spreadsheet. Every two years when it comes in our staff does go out and validate the assessments. So we do have a group that works constantly looking at some of the bridges, but we appreciate the gap that was pointed out and we need to work better at it. >> Pool: I would guess that the pedestrian bridges and smaller bridges would be more vulnerable when they're over smaller streams that flood with the violence of some of the floods we have here. And they happen at the drop of a hat. One of the -- I'll just mention this. One of our council meetings or maybe it was our Austin energy oversight committee meeting, it was mentioned that when electric goes out in the furthest reaches of Austin energy's service

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provision network that it's helpful when residents call up 311 and say we're out and we're in this location. And it jump starts the Austin energy's ability to identify where the system out stages continue, they can catch the ones that are closer in that affect larger numbers of people. But the ones who use a tree image and the leaf on the furthest Brackenridge from the trunk were the ones that were really helpful if constituents and residents would call and identify. Do you feel like you have a good the distant early warning or volunteer or cadre out there where folks know to call and let you know if something -- >> We do. And especially on the urban trail part of the bridges we're depending on the people that use that to call 311 when they notice something. We are aware of some of the conditions on the pedestrian bridges and we're looking at the plan to see how we can correct them. Somewhere we have a complete inventory, but we don't have a complete assessment on these and we're certainly working to try to rectify them and provide a status report as we go forward. >> Pool: One of the things about the Austin community is I know they're willing to help. And I appreciate that and I know staff does too. Thank you. >> Renteria: You mentioned also that there were certain heights and another

department, the watershed, is responsible for some of the bridges also. >> Well, the gap that we're talking about is those structures are less than 20 feet and we look at those as culverts. The 22 -- 20-foot definition is kind of a standard. Anything broader than that is considered a bridge. N smaller is a culvert crossing. All we have to do is go with them and see if we can consolidate this information and go forward and plan how do we inspect these on a

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particular basis. It's just a matter of us working with them. >> So they could be classified as a bridge, but they're less than 20 feet. >> Correct. >> Renteria: Do you know how many bridges actually got damaged in the recent floods that we experienced? >> Well, there's been a lot of floods in the last three years and we've been really busy. I think the last rains we had at least three that were damaged that were still working. I think one we may have already repaired. And we do have -- we do have a contract in place to take care of the bigger jobs and then we have forces that actually take care of some of the smaller repairs. >> And I notice that some of these bridges that got damaged were you waiting for FEMA to come in and I guess -- >> Some of those have occurred in the previous floods and we have had some reimbursements for some of those. The onion creek bridge is certainly one of them. That was a big structure that was damaged and it took awhile for us to repair. We had to hire a contractor. I believe we did get reimbursed. We are working with sctac on a regular basis to see if it's allowable to get reimbursed or not. So we do follow that process. >> Renteria: I know there was one in my district, Guerrero park that part of it got washed away or buckled. Do you know anything about that one? >> I want to think the vista park bridge and I don't know the status of that. >> So the park take care of their own? >> Yes. That's one of the questions here. If there's a bridge that goes through a park that is part of the trail system that's our responsibility and that is what we talked about early early. >> Renteria: If there's a bicycle trail that goes through a park, is it the park's responsibility -- >> If it connect our street through the park to another street, yes. >> Renteria: Then it's yours? >> We maintain those. >> Renteria: Okay. Thank you.

[10:39:37 AM]

>> Tovo: If there's no other questions is there a motion to accept the audit? Councilmember pool makes that motion. Councilmember Renteria seconds. All those in favor? And that is accepted unanimously with mayor pro tem off the dais. The last thing on our agenda is discussion of future agenda items. Does anybody have anything that they want to bring to the committee's attention at this time? Okay. If not, we will adjourn this meeting of the audit and finance at 10:39. Thank you all for your time.