

**FY 2012-13 Council Budget Work Sessions
City Attorney's Office
Focus Areas**

March 27, 2012

I. BUREAU SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

A. Ensure Adequate Space and Legal Staffing

1. The City Attorney's office continues to operate under significant space constraints. OMF is working on providing additional office space, but the need remains urgent.
2. The office continues to experience a high volume of work relating to the Portland Police Bureau, including labor and employment issues. A least one additional attorney is necessary to ensure comprehensive and timely legal advice.
3. When staffing is inadequate, the City faces having to hire outside counsel at rates higher than in-house counsel, and at a direct cost to impacted Bureaus.

B. Technology Services

1. The City Attorney's office supports BTS's request for an additional employee that will be housed in the City Attorney's office. The position will be paid by the City Attorney's office through a reorganization of administrative staff and the transfer of funds budgeted for external technology services. BTS has asked for this position in its Requested Budget.
2. If technology services lag, the office lacks the ability to maintain a level playing field in the courtroom. In addition, up-to-date and functional technological systems are essential to the office's ability to provide timely, efficient, and effective legal services for the City.
3. Public records requests, legal holds and electronic discovery issues are increasing.

C. Funding Structure

Financial Planning identified the funding structure for the City Attorney's office as a key issue because the office uses General Fund overhead as well as Interagency funding. The City Attorney's office agrees that the current structure makes it difficult to retain necessary legal staff and agrees that the best approach to fund the bureau should be reviewed this year.

II. EQUITY DISCUSSION

A. Support of Citywide diversity Efforts

The City Attorney's office provides legal advice on the following subjects:

- Equity in Contracting in light of the Disparity Study (Procurement Services);
- Equity in Employment (BHR and individual bureaus);
- Equity and metrics analyses;
- Equity through Citywide Title VI plan (OMF); and
- Equity through anticipated programs by the Office of Equity and Human Relations.

B. Bureau Specific Efforts

- All attorneys in the office are members of the Oregon State Bar Diversity Section;
- All attorneys participate in at least one diversity event each year;
- The City Attorney's Office Diversity Committee plans and sponsors events such as an annual Diversity Day for all staff and a diversity-based book group. One of our employees serves as a representative on DEEP's Executive Committee, supporting the City's diversity affinity groups;
- Attorneys worked with the Mock Trial program at Roosevelt High School. While that program has been discontinued, we are looking for additional ways to work with youth in our community; and
- Concentrated efforts to hire minority law clerks by working with the State Bar and Oregon law schools.

C. Individual Efforts

In addition to officially sponsored actions, individual attorneys and staff participate in equity events in our community, including:

- Maxwell Heritage Foundation (supporting history of black loggers in Wallowa County)
- Lewis & Clark Law School tax clinic (low income individuals)

- High School Mock trial judges (other than Roosevelt)
- OMLA (Oregon Minority Lawyers Association)
- Lewis & Clark mentor program
- Volunteer rape victim advocate
- Citizen Review panel, DHS
- OWLS (Oregon Women Lawyers Foundation)
- OGALLA (Oregon Gay & Lesbian Law Association)
- Folk Time (mental illness nonprofit)
- Various religious organizations
- We The People (high school legal advocacy competition)