

COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION/INFORMATION SYSTEMS

March 18, 2025 at 6:15 PM

Chairman Long called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Long, Levasseur, E. Sapienza, Fajardo

Absent: Alderman Thomas

Messrs.: J. Fortier, Alderman T. Sapienza

1. Presentation by the Information Systems Department on cyber security and updated security policies.

Chairman Long asked did everyone review the information. I am not sure if we need a presentation. The letter you sent was pretty clear. The only question I have is with respect to the employees and HR. Did you get their input also?

Jean Fortier, Information Systems Director, responded yes. This was a cross departmental team that involved folks from Police, Fire, HR, etc.

Alderman Levasseur moved to approve. **Alderman E. Sapienza** duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Fajardo stated I already brought this to your attention but I want to put my question on the record regarding the security breach incident response procedure, Item 4.1. It states that if you suspect a security breach you should immediately unplug the compromised system by unplugging the network cable. I was just wondering if there is any additional protocol that would happen if somebody is on a wireless device.

Mr. Fortier answered essentially it would be the same thing. We would disconnect the machine. It wouldn't be physically with a cable obviously.

Alderman Fajardo asked is there an action that the user should take. In the case of what I just read, if I am at a computer that is connected to the wall and I suspect a breach I would need to unplug it. If I am not connected to the wall, is there an action that you would need me to take?

Mr. Fortier replied we could clarify that and have the user disconnect from the wi-fi network. We can also do that through our software as well.

Alderman Fajardo asked so would you automatically receive a message that there is a possible security breach on a device.

Mr. Fortier answered yes.

Alderman Fajardo asked so then you could take that proactive action.

Mr. Fortier responded yes and as far as the anti-virus goes, that actually automatically disconnects the machine from the network if it detects unusual behavior.

Chairman Long called for a vote. *There being none opposed, the motion carried.*

2. Discussion regarding possible charter changes related to municipal elections.

Chairman Long stated Mr. Blais wanted us to look at having all elected officials go to four year terms. However, I would be comfortable with looking at just mayor and at large aldermen for four year terms.

Alderman Fajardo asked just to clarify, was Mr. Blais initially asking for the whole Board.

Chairman Long answered yes I believe it was the whole Board.

Alderman Fajardo stated that was my understanding as well so I just wanted to make sure.

Alderman T. Sapienza stated I want to be on record as opposing this. Whether you are an at large alderman or regular alderman, your constituents ought to have a chance to replace you. If you are the mayor and you are doing a good job, you shouldn't have any problem getting re-elected. If you are not doing a good job, you won't get re-elected. I think you get accountability every two years. It has been working for a very, very long time. We have been here for a long time. I don't know how long we have had two year terms but I am happy to get re-elected every two years or not. That is up to the voters and I think it is shame to take that away from the citizens of Manchester.

Alderman Levasseur stated I understand why they think four years is good but they are not sitting in these seats. Four years is a long commitment for anybody who is elected. My bet is that you would actually end up with more special elections as people move on because they change jobs or for economic circumstances. Two years is a long enough commitment to be in this seat. I agree that the voters should be able to have accountability for their elected officials. Four years is too long and too much time for tom foolery for some elected officials to cause too many problems. Unless you are going to do a recall provision in there, I don't think it works.

Alderman E. Sapienza stated I want to use an analogy here. In major league baseball, you have a free agent and he signs a four-year deal for multi-million dollars. All of the sudden, he is not as motivated anymore because he has a four-year deal. He doesn't have to bust his backside or try extra hard anymore. There could be a complacency issue here too. If somebody knows they have a four-year term, why bother and try so hard.

Chairman Long stated my perspective is that the at large and mayor are more for financial reasons. It costs a lot more money running for city-wide office than it does running for your ward. I have noticed throughout the time I have been here that votes are different when it is an election year and that is not in the best interest of the city in my opinion. The fact that this year is an election year, I will notice that votes are going

to be different. They would vote differently if it was not an election year. I think that is an issue. There are some municipalities that have four-year terms. Some have just mayor. Keene has all of their aldermen but not the mayor. Nashua has the mayor and six of their at large aldermen. Actually, Matt, did we send this out to everybody?

Matthew Normand, City Clerk, stated what Alderman Long is referencing is the handout that is in front of each of you. It includes city election data and includes what all NH cities are doing. It also includes a charter amendment timeline that the Board would need to follow if they are going to consider any amendments to the charter. Really you have until June 3 to make a decision on any amendments that you want to potentially go to the voters. A whole process of review starts that would include the state and several state agencies and then come back to this Board in September for a final vote to send it to a ballot.

Chairman Long asked so what we are looking at is sending this to the voters, not having us make the decision. It is a charter change so the voters would have to vote on it. We do have the choice to vote yes or no as far as putting the question forward. That is how that would work. Also, there are two bills, one in the House and one in the Senate, that have passed both bodies that change the primary date to June. So one year we would have a primary in September, the city election, and the next year we would have it in June for the state election. I don't know if anyone wants to consider changing that. That is also in the charter; that we have the primary in September. We would need to change that in order to make it consistent with the state.

Alderman Fajardo stated I want to go on record as to your point that every single year the voters in Manchester are at the polls looking at signs all over the street some of which are often left behind...to me I feel like it is a question worth considering from the perspective of just what feels to me sometimes like the relentlessness of the election cycles between the local and state elections. What you just said about it being inconsistent, I hadn't thought of before. I feel like that could potentially add to the overhead for people. I believe that the accountability every two years is important but I am not going to say that we shouldn't let the voters decide. They may decide that they want to keep it two years and that is their prerogative. As a voter, I would probably vote to keep it two years but I don't ever feel comfortable saying that we shouldn't allow the voters to decide if they want to amend their charter.

Chairman Long stated it has been 35 years since the city voted for another mayor after the first term. That was incumbent Emile Bealieu who lost to former Mayor Wieczorek. The mayors are getting a second bite at the apple so it isn't that after a year you can't vote them out. It just hasn't happened in 35 years.

Alderman T. Sapienza stated it sounds like the voters sent a loud and clear message 35 years ago and the following mayors worked a little bit harder to keep their jobs.

Chairman Long responded not quite. I don't believe that. I think the City of Manchester gives the mayor more than one term. You really have a year to work it and the second year you are fundraising.

Alderman Levasseur stated it is interesting that Nashua and Concord have four year terms for the mayor and at large. Did I read that correctly?

Chairman Long replied correct.

Alderman Levasseur asked did they have to get state approval through the Legislature to be able to change their charters.

Chairman Long responded I don't believe it is through the legislature. I think it is the AG, Secretary of State and somebody else. Is that right Matt?

City Clerk Normand responded the DRA also. It could have been that in those communities when they did a charter revision they incorporated that so voters would have voted on a whole slate of changes much like we do every 10 years. I am not sure exactly how that came about in those two communities.

Alderman Levasseur asked when is the next charter commission.

City Clerk Normand answered 2031. If you recall, it is done on the census and our charter says it must be done at least every 10 years. The Board put that question on the ballot in 2020 and the voters rejected empaneling a charter commission.

Alderman E. Sapienza asked when you say every 10 years for a charter commission, that is at a minimum correct. We could theoretically do it every year right or every five years?

City Clerk Normand replied correct but the voters would have to decide that. You would ask the question "shall we have a charter commission". That is what was done in 2020. The voters rejected that.

Alderman E. Sapienza stated so it is 10 years at a minimum.

Alderman Fajardo asked is it every 10 years that we ask the question on whether we should have one.

Alderman E. Sapienza responded no. It is required every 10 years.

City Clerk Normand stated not the actual commission but you have to ask the voters the question. Had that passed, the next item on the ballot would have been those who wanted to run for the charter commission. It did not pass so that was the end of the story for another 10 years unless this Board wants to send the question back to a ballot.

Alderman E. Sapienza asked so there is no default.

City Clerk Normand answered correct.

Alderman E. Sapienza asked so we could go 20 years without ever doing this.

City Clerk Normand replied no. You have to ask the question of the voters every 10 years at minimum.

Alderman Fajardo asked so the charter says you only have to pose the question.

City Clerk Normand responded correct.

Alderman E. Sapienza stated by the way, the charter commission is an all or nothing proposition. If you put something like this on there, it could be the poison pill that kills everything. It is an all or nothing correct?

City Clerk Normand answered that is accurate.

Chairman Long stated some of the municipalities aren't doing primaries because they are non-partisan. We do primaries. You hear the argument that you could have someone winning with 30% of votes but 20% of the voters voted. I don't get that argument. You have 20% of the voters turning out to vote during a municipal primary. That is not in our control.

Alderman Levasseur stated it sounds like a question for a charter commission.

Chairman Long asked does anyone have any further discussion on this.

Alderman Levasseur moved to receive and file. Alderman E. Sapienza duly seconded the motion. Chairman Long called for a vote. Aldermen Long and Fajardo voted nay. The motion tied.

Chairman Long stated we have to ask the full Board. We can send it to the full Board in two weeks with no recommendation.

Alderman Levasseur moved to send it to the full Board with no recommendation. Alderman E. Sapienza duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Fajardo asked will that be written as no recommendation or recorded as two votes in favor and two votes against.

City Clerk Normand stated the votes are recorded but it is going to be without recommendation.

Chairman Long called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

TABLED ITEM

3. Conflict of Interest proposal submitted by Alderman Ross Terrio.
(Note: Tabled at the 6/24 meeting.)

This item remained on the table.

*There being no further business, on motion of **Alderman Levasseur**, duly seconded by **Alderman E. Sapienza**, it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Normand". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Clerk of Committee