

New council battles over administrative protocol

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tion at a public meeting prior to the administration taking action."

The policy, she said, is "to prevent the expenditure of public money for council's requests."

For example, if a group of senior citizens shovelled snow in a neighborhood for two years and a councilmember thinks it would be nice to thank them with a plaque, that idea first must go to the city manager who directs it to the city council.

"Just bring it to the council's attention," Dudley said. "You are the middleman. That's all. That's all I'm asking."

But some councilmembers thought Dudley was asking for too much.

"If we are going to make policy that is inherent in the charter, we are duplicating what is already there," Alkatech said, objecting to a new policy when the charter already prohibits interference with the administration.

But coming to Dudley's aid, Soronen said the policy would be a "reminder and reaffirmation of the charter."

"We tend to get too comfortable in a way and we don't even think if we've

violated that," Soronen said, referring to the charter's rule of dealing directly through the city manager rather than city employees and staff.

Concerned that Dudley's policy was, in effect, rewriting the city charter, Alkatech indicated that if council was unsatisfied with the charter, changes should be taken before the voters.

"MR. ALKATECH, this is not rewriting the charter. The charter specifically states we can make our own rules," Dudley responded. "This way we can prevent any of the public money from being spent."

"What I am doing is the spirit behind the motion (to adopt the policy) and the motion itself," Alkatech said. "We're all big boys. I don't think we need a chain on the neck that says, 'Hey Joe, watch it.'"

While Williams also questioned the spirit of the policy, he questioned whether the abuses suggested by Dudley, really occur.

"What you are suggesting, I don't know if anybody has done that," Williams said, asking Dudley to clarify what she meant.

"I am not talking, Mr. Mayor about the gathering of information," Dudley responded, referring to Williams' question, which city council members should ask for city-related data. But she reminded Williams that when in need of information, a councilmember should be checking with the city manager instead of a department head or employee.

Williams, however, also pointed to possible problems with Dudley's use of the term "non-essentials."

While admitting that "non-essentials" is difficult to define, Dudley said a certificate she received last week when sworn in as a councilmember is the perfect example of an unnecessary expenditure.

"I WAS more concerned when I found out this was not the first time it happened," Dudley said.

In trying to clarify her intentions, Dudley said that non-essentials are "perks," "generalities" and "memen-

tos" that are unnecessary for the council to carry out the jobs to which they were elected.

Certificates of commendation, for example, "are hardly necessary except, for example," Dudley said.

"I think we know what are means," Soronen said, reminding councilmembers that "in our minds we know what is essential or not."

But Williams continued his resistance saying that if the charter already spells out a councilmember's required

behavior, then the council must rely on each member's standards of ethics.

Williams asked City Manager Lawrence Savage if there had been "any material breaches of the public trust or abuses by the council."

"I think it is an unfair question," Soronen interrupted, with Dudley nodding his agreement.

A few minutes later, however, Savage said he had "not been bothered with what I would call interference from the city council."

day, Feb. 15, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Thursday, Feb. 16, 5-7 p.m.; Monday, Feb. 20, 3-5 p.m.; Monday, Feb. 27, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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prospective Mercy students and their parents as well as current students and their parents are invited to attend one of eight Financial Aid Workshops where individual assistance will be provided to help complete financial aid forms.

The sessions will be held on the following dates: Wednesday, Feb. 1, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Friday, Feb. 3, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Monday, Feb. 6, 5-7 p.m.; Wednesday, Feb. 8, 5-7 p.m.; Wednes-

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