



CITY OF RICHMOND

INTRACITY CORRESPONDENCE

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPACT STATEMENT

Date: January 27, 2021

Ordinance/Resolution No. No. 2020-R056: Requesting a study of the City's telecommuting workforce to determine if cost savings and other benefits have been derived from the telecommuting policies adopted by the City in response to the COVID-19 pandemic for the purpose of potentially continuing or expanding upon such policies after the pandemic.

Patron: Councilwoman Robertson

Legislative History: Introduced 9/14/2020; Governmental Operations Committee 9/24/2020; City Council 9/28/2020; Governmental Operations Committee 11/18/2020; City Council 12/14/2020; Governmental Operations Committee 12/16/2020; City Council 1/11/2021

Administrative Staff Presenting: John Wack, Director of Finance and Mona Adkins-Easley, Interim Director of Human Resources

Impact Statement Summary: While the potential benefits of teleworking have not been fully realized, given the circumstances and length of time teleworking has been in place, the Administration is committed to further evaluating both the benefits and drawbacks of teleworking. The Administration is committed to working with Council to explore how to maximize the use of teleworking for City employees, what follows is some baseline information to help to inform some initial dialogue.

Staff Position: Further discussion needed

Administrative Impact Statement of draft Ordinance/Resolution No. 2020-R056 :

Human Resources Telework Analysis

On September 14, 2020, Council Vice-President Robertson introduced RES. 2020-R056 to conduct a study of the City's telecommuting workforce to determine if cost savings and other benefits have been derived from teleworking during the COVID-19 pandemic. The intent of the study is to determine whether there is potential for continuing such policies after the pandemic.

In this white paper, the Administration highlights the City of Richmond's shift to telecommuting policies in the wake of a national pandemic. While the potential benefits of teleworking have not been fully realized, given the circumstances and length of time teleworking has been in place, the Administration is committed to further evaluating both the benefits and drawbacks of teleworking. The Administration is committed to working with Council to explore how to maximize the use of teleworking for City employees, what follows is some baseline information to help to inform some initial dialogue.

Cost Savings

In its September 21, 2020 impact statement, the Department of Finance outlined the challenges of data availability and data tracking that prohibit proper analysis to be conducted on the cost savings of teleworking. While the Administration is not able to clearly determine whether teleworking has a cost saving effect, we can report that since mid-March 2020, the Department of Information Technology has spent a total of \$2,762,595 in combined operating and personnel costs to ensure the workforce can telework safely.

Before the pandemic, teleworking was not a common practice for City of Richmond employees. As such, funding was not appropriated for that purpose prior to the pandemic. Once it became apparent that teleworking was part of critical City operations, the Department of Information Technology (IT) expanded the availability of hardware and software to support the changing business of the City and its workers. In future, further analyses of office space needs, parking spaces, furniture and equipment will need to be made to understand potential cost savings.

Updates to Administrative Regulation 2.3 - Telework

Since the introduction of RES. 2020-R056, the Administration made needed updates to the Administrative Regulation 2.3 regarding the City's telework policy to better reflect current and future working conditions. Signed telework agreements and telework training are required for all employees who utilize the telework employee benefit. Human Resources is in the process of pushing the Wavelength Telework training out to the workforce and collecting signed telework agreements. The Administration believes that

tracking the number of telework agreements may be an effective data point to begin tracking the impact of teleworking on operations and employee attrition.

Below are some updates to *Administrative Regulation 2.3 - Telework*:

- Updated DIT security measures
- Clarification of using personal equipment vs. using City issued equipment
- Selection Criteria Worksheet – assesses job for successfully working at a remote site
- Safety Checklist for Teleworkers – assess safety measures at an remote site
- Telework Agreement – updated agreement is more specific regarding responsibilities
- Conditions of the arrangement for working at a remote site
- Determination of work hours, equipment used, computer set-up details, work related accidents, office supplies, liability of damaged equipment, and employee/supervisor expectations
- DIT Director/Designee’s signature is only required if employee is using personal equipment

Employee Attrition

RES. 2020-R056 requests for the Administration to conduct a comparison and analysis of the rate of City employee attrition during the pandemic to years prior.

The attrition rates are as follows:

Fiscal 2017 - 10.6%.

Fiscal 2018 - 11.3%

Fiscal 2019 - 12.1%

Fiscal 2020 - 11.8% *

Fiscal 2021 through 2nd qtr - 10.1%.

* The start of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent teleworking was around mid-March. Fiscal year 2020 had about 3.5 months impacted. Fourth quarter 2020 (April- June) was the lowest turnover recorded at 6.8% which brought the fiscal year to 11.8%.

While it is hard to determine the causality of the low turnover rates during the pandemic, the Administration theorizes this could be due to local and regional hiring freezes and layoffs during the pandemic. Jobs simply became harder to find during this time. The Administration will continue to monitor the City’s attrition rate, relative to teleworking.

The Administration will continue to work with Council to understand what teleworking means for Richmond and how we can maximize its potential.