LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Henry J. Mroz Administration Office
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Mayor and Chairperson

Jackie Doherty
Vice-Chairperson

Susie Chhoun
Eileen Delrossi
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Human Resources & Labor Relations Subcommittee Meeting

Wednesday, March 29, 2023
City Hall – Council Chambers
6:00 p.m.

Subcommittee Members Present:	Chairperson Martin, Ms. Delrossi and Mr. Lay
School Committee Members Present:	Mayor Chau, Ms. Chhoun, Ms. Doherty and Ms. Thompson
School Department Personnel Present:	Dr. Hall, Chief Operating Officer

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Chairperson Martin called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m. The following agenda items were discussed:

1. Discussion of Scope of Services with Brody, Hardoon, Perkins & Kesten LLP (BHPK) in regard to Previously Approved Internal Complaints Investigation

Chairperson Martin asked the attorneys from BHPK to introduce themselves to the Subcommittee, Committee members and the public.

Attorney Kesten stated that he is present tonight with Attorney Stefanilo. He stated that BHPK is a fifteen (15) member law firm that is located in Back Bay, Boston. Attorney Kesten stated that he is a former teacher in a Boston middle school as well as worked in a prison. He stated that he started doing investigations in 1983. Attorney Stefanilo added that they mostly handle municipal and employment investigations.

Ms. Martin asked them how they would like to structure their investigation and what resources do they need.

Attorney Kesten stated that they need to find out what is exactly known by the city and to what degree and what has been done about it. He stated that they will look at the hiring practices to see if there actually are any problems. He stated that they also need to talk with each complainant and then they will come back to the Committee and see how far you want the firm to go.

Attorney Stefanilo stated that they have not seen much of the material. He stated they received some written materials from the law department around 2:00 p.m. and they have viewed the public complaint, but really have not been able to review it thoroughly. He stated that he has obtained some documents from Dr. Hall and stated that Dr. Hall has been cooperative with them. He stated that the next steps are to obtain all the relevant documentation that came to the former City Solicitor and then they will schedule and speak with the complainants and try to understand the scope of this investigation. He stated that he understands some complainants want to be anonymous, but often people who remain anonymous will not have their complaint carry the same weight as someone who goes on the record. He stated that all complaints might not be about hiring practices and he will share that information with the Committee as well, but not investigate those complaints unless the Committee tell them to.

Chairperson Martin stated that they have gone to great lengths to secure the anonymity and she believes that there are people who want to reach out to speak with them. She asked how those people can reach out to the law firm directly.

Attorney Stefanilo stated that they will provide contact information to the Committee. He stated that they need a contact person to help coordinate space and provide needed documents or policies. He stated that they need a place where they can conduct interviews, because he's assuming most people won't want to drive into Boston. He stated that they can do it by zoom, but most people prefer meeting face to face, but he stated they will take it person by person.

Chairperson Martin stated that the Human Relations & Labor Relations subcommittee can be the contact and that information can be shared with the three (3) members. She stated that any information shared with them will be shared with the entire Committee. She stated that her expectation is that the subcommittee will receive a rough timeline that can be shared publicly as well as contact information for people to contact them by next week.

Ms. Delrossi made a motion to recess at 7:11 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Lay. 3 yeas APPROVED

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Hall, Chief Operations Officer for Dr. Joel Boyd, Superintendent and Secretary, Lowell School Committee

JPH/mes