

Seattle City Council Confirmation Questions & Answers Glen Lee, Director of Finance

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1. *What is your general philosophy for how to most effectively work with the City Council? Has your thinking on this matter evolved since the time of your first appointment?*

I believe that our team, the City Finance Division (CFD), must gain and maintain the trust of the City Council to be the definitive authority for the City's financial affairs. We do this by responding to Council requests quickly, and by explaining financial information clearly and accurately.

How we work with the City Council changes over time as Councilmembers' policy priorities and work styles change. In general, I have observed that we best help Councilmembers by supporting the development of their policy initiatives.

2. *How will you ensure that Council members and legislative staff receive timely information needed from your department for Council to make sound policy and financial decisions? How has this improved since the time of your first appointment?*

As the City is organized now, financial reporting to Council is the responsibility of the City Budget Office (CBO). We support CBO by managing the City's accounting system (and the system's underlying policies and procedures) which provides the financial data CBO uses for its reports.

The capacity of the City to monitor and manage its fiscal affairs is improving dramatically as our team implements the City's new accounting system, PeopleSoft 9.2. The City standardized literally dozens of financial practices with the implementation of this new system. Standard practices will lead to improved and more timely financial reporting, which the Council can use to establish City policies through the Budget and other ordinances.

3. *One of the indicated benefits of the reimplementation of the City's Summit financial management system is improved accuracy and availability of information about departments' spending. Currently, the Council receives three revenue forecast each year from the City Budget Office but receives a more limited picture of actual expenditures compared to the budget. What are your thoughts on the new financial system's ability to support an expenditure update component into future revenue forecasts?*

By fiscal year 2019, the City will be able to produce formal financial reports on no less than a quarterly basis. These reports will be in the form of comparisons between expenditures and budget, as well as more traditional balance sheet statements. Intra-year reporting on spending should also improve the City's ability to report on and manage cash flows.

4. *In your position, how have you supported the implementation of the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative? Can you provide some specific examples?*

CFD, which administers City-levied taxes, provides important taxpayer information in several languages. Our team also uses interpreter services with tax and fee payers who would not otherwise understand our tax and payment procedures. In addition, CFD supports accounting procedures that enable City staff to meet WMBE procurement goals established by FAS' Procurement Division.

In my next term, I want to establish an internship program which introduces students from local high schools, colleges, and universities to public finance. This program will have two objectives. The first is to establish a sustaining cadre of individuals who can successfully compete for City finance-related jobs. The second is create a mechanism that ensures our CFD staff reflect the diversity of our community.