

Minutes
CUYAHOGA COUNTY
AUDIT COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
Thursday, July 1, 2021, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

1. Call to Order – meeting of July 1, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m.

2. Roll Call

Attending:

Audit Committee Chairman, Michael Abouserhal
Keith Libman
Trevor McAleer (alternate for Pernell Jones, Jr.)
Yvette Ittu
Salvatore Talarico
County Fiscal Officer Michael Chambers
County Executive Armond Budish

Absent:

None

3. Public Comment - Related to Items on the Agenda

There was no public comment related to items on the agenda.

4. Executive Session (As Necessary)

- a. To consider the employment and/or discipline of a public employee (ORC Section 121.22(G)(1))

- b. Performance evaluation of the Director

Salvatore Talarico motioned that the Committee go into Executive Session Per ORC 121.22(G)(1) to consider the employment and/or discipline of a public employee; Trevor McAleer seconded. A roll call was taken and the motion was unanimously approved: Michael Abouserhal, yea; Yvette Ittu, yea; Keith Libman, yea; Trevor McAleer, yea; Salvatore Talarico, yea.

The Executive Session was called to order at 9:20 am and was adjourned without objection at 10:50 a.m.

5. Other Business:

a. Approval of 2021 Peer Review Engagement Letter

Michael Abouserhal opened the discussion with questions related to the timing of the 2021 peer review. Mike posed the question to the Audit Committee members if it would be better to follow the current timeline for a December 31, 2021 due date, or push the peer review out to 2022 so DIA can allocate more time in 2021 completing audit engagements.

Monica Houston noted the timeline for the engagement was prepared based on a December 31, 2021 due date, so fieldwork would need to take place in September to meet the deadline. Monica discussed the other work priorities for the 3rd quarter which would place a significant demand on her time during the same period in which preparation for the Peer Review was being required as per the Engagement Letter: 2 audit engagements finishing, 1 audit engagement starting, annual risk assessment starting, and preparations for the 3rd quarter Audit Committee meeting. Monica provided a copy of the Audit Plan Schedule to the Audit Committee members for review. She noted the specific projects of concern were highlighted in red text. If the Peer Review team starts their fieldwork toward the end of September as planned, prework would need to start early August and would require DIA's attention. Monica noted she was requesting the ability, as needed, to charge exchange time to stay on track with the December 31, 2021 due date particularly since the period contained 2 holidays. Work performed on holidays may only be charged to exchange time. Monica reminded the Committee that most of her review work is at the beginning and end of an audit, so she will spend a lot of time on wrapping up the 2 audit engagements for release in 3rd quarter and ramping up the 1 audit engagement that is commencing while trying to properly provide support to the Audit Committee 3rd Quarter meeting.

Keith Libman made inquiry relative to the frequency of the peer review as per the Audit Committee charter. Monica explained that although DIA follows the Institute of Internal Auditors "Red Book" standards, which require a peer review every 5 years, DIA defers to the Audit Committee charter's requirement of every 3 years and as such a review is due by the end of 2021. Keith expressed his preference to push the peer review out to 2022 if such interfered with DIA's completing audits as getting audits done was of more concern to him.

Monica informed the Committee that DIA was on track as per the audit plan schedule and that the only exceptions were the Child Support Enforcement Agency and Medical Examiner engagements which were behind due to potential scope limitations. She indicated that the issue with CSEA had been resolved and that Catherine Tkachyk was currently engaged in the resolution of the issue with the Medical Examiner to get the audit back on track. Monica reiterated that provision of the approval to work exchange hours would aid in the ability to complete the peer review as well as the other audits scheduled

by December 31, 2021. She made note that, as detailed on the schedule, the Cuyahoga Emergency Communications System engagement had a January 2022 completion date due to auditee request for a start date of October 2021.

Yvette Ittu requested clarity as to whether the goal of Monica's request for 35 hours of exchange time was to complete both the scheduled items on the audit plan and the peer review by December 31, 2021. Monica indicated that such was correct.

Mike Abouserhal made inquiry as to whether being able to push the peer review out a few months would help get current audits out faster. Monica indicated that she was open to whatever is feasible and tolerable to the Audit Committee including deciding to defer the peer review. She reaffirmed her belief that completion of the full plan as scheduled was possible and that pushing out the peer review would not necessarily help to get current audits out any faster as past delays usually exceeded the control of DIA.

Salvatore Talarico encouraged the Audit Committee to consider the benefits that would be derived from the peer review, which included the receipt of feedback related to improving DIA's processes which may help address the Committee's concern relative to getting audits out faster. He noted that receiving this feedback sooner rather than later would be beneficial.

Trevor McAleer requested clarification relative to the period of use for the 35 hours of exchange time being requested. Monica indicated such was for use in the immediate period and that if additional time was needed, she would inform the Committee of such at the next meeting.

The Committee turned their attention to review of the Engagement Letter for approval. Mark Musson noted the expenditure may require Board of Control approval and that such would be needed quickly since the start date of prework is August 9th. Trevor and Michael Chambers reassured the Committee that such approval was possible as the Board of Control meets weekly. They suggested that Monica work with Catherine Tkachyk, who also serves as the purchasing director, to expedite the Board of Control approval and procurement process. Monica noted that availability of the funds had already been confirmed and discussed with the Budget Analyst and that all that was needed were the appropriate approvals.

Salvatore Talarico motioned to approve the 2021 Peer Review Engagement Letter, as written; Yvette Ittu seconded. The 2021 Peer Review Engagement Letter was unanimously approved.

b. Approval of Director of Audit Exchange Time Request

Trevor McAleer motioned to approve the DIA Director's request for 35 hours exchange time to be earned in 3rd quarter 2021, as written; Yvette Ittu seconded. The DIA Director's request for 35 hours exchange time to be earned in the 3rd quarter 2021 was unanimously approved.

6. Public Comment – Unrelated to Agenda

There was no public comment unrelated to items on the agenda.

7. Next Meeting – Thursday, September 2, 2021 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

8. Adjournment

Trevor McAleer motioned to adjourn the meeting; Salvatore Talarico seconded. The motion to adjourn the meeting was unanimously approved at 10:52 a.m.

(signature on file)

Michael Abouserhal, Chair

MA/mh