



**City of Racine, Wisconsin
COMMON COUNCIL**

AGENDA BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

COMMITTEE: Finance and Personnel Committee LEGISLATION ITEM #: 0676-26

AGENDA DATE: July 27, 2026

DEPARTMENT: City Attorney's Office

Prepared By: City Attorney Scott R. Letteney

Reviewed By: N/A

SUBJECT: Proceeding before the Finance and Personnel Committee to settle an employment action dispute regarding Jonathan Griffin, pursuant to Racine Ordinances section 2-432(1).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Where certain employment actions may be taken as to an employee, such actions are proposed by an administrative manager and authorized by the human resources director. If the human resources manager and the administrative manager cannot agree as to the action to be taken, per Racine Ordinances section 2-432(1) the dispute is resolved by the Finance and Personnel Committee.

BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS: In the structure of Racine's government, administrative managers are responsible for the overall management, administration, and operation of their department. The administrative manager directs departmental operations and exercises supervisory authority over department personnel, including decisions regarding assignments, performance, discipline, and other employment matters, subject to applicable law, City policy, and collective bargaining agreements, if applicable.

Under Racine Ordinances section 2-432(1), the human resources director has the designated responsibility to approve or disapprove certain employment actions proposed to be taken by administrative managers. These are "the selection, employment, termination,

promotion, demotion, layoff and suspension of all personnel,” except for employees in those positions for which there is some specific ordinance or statutory provision.

In practice, if the human resources director disapproves of an action proposed by an administrative manager as to an employee, the human resources director and the administrative manager discuss the matter in an attempt to come to a mutually-agreeable resolution. If they cannot agree, section 2-432(1) terms this a “dispute” between the human resources director and the administrative manager on the issue. If, after further discussion, the human resources director and the administrative manager are unable “to resolve or compromise the dispute,” “such dispute shall be referred to the finance and personnel committee for final resolution.”

Such circumstances have arisen regarding an employee in the Department of Public Works. Human Resources Director La’Neka Horton and Commissioner John Rooney have been unable to resolve their disagreement as to an employment action. This will be presented to the Finance and Personnel Committee to consider and resolve.

Under Wisconsin Statutes section 19.85(1)(b), a governmental body may convene in closed session when “[c]onsidering dismissal ... or discipline of any public employee, ... and the taking of formal action on any such matter.” Further, under Wisconsin Statutes section 19.85(1)(c), a governmental body may convene in closed session when “[c]onsidering employment ... or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility.” Again under section 19.85(1)(b), the employee has the right to demand that the meeting be held in open session.

No further information will be provided regarding the circumstances giving rise to this agenda item prior to the meeting.

BUDGETARY IMPACT: N/A

OPTIONS/ALTERNATIVES: N/A

RECOMMENDED ACTION: That the Finance and Personnel Committee consider the dispute between the human resources director and the commissioner of public works and resolve the matter.

ATTACHMENT(S): None