

# City spending report will be revisited

## Manager, auditor could face questions

BY KIM GUTTORMSON, CALGARY HERALD JUNE 16, 2010



About 40 people sit and watch inside Calgary City Hall council chambers.

Photograph by: Dean Bicknell, Calgary Herald

CALGARY - A report that called into question parts of a damning audit into the city's purchasing will be discussed by its audit committee Thursday.

And that could open the door for committee members who have questions for auditor Tracy McTaggart or city manager Owen Tobert.

"I think it's worthwhile to discuss the report at audit committee," said Greg Draper, one of two citizen members on the committee.

"For me, there are some questions that came out of the report. I don't know that they need to be answered directly by Owen Tobert or Tracy McTaggart."

Last week, city council was given a report from Tobert that called into question some of the conclusions drawn in McTaggart's procurement audit.

That audit found too many contracts were awarded without competition and that too often the values were increased without proper documentation.

McTaggart also said, in response to a question, that she could "pretty much guarantee" there was fraud and that whistleblower allegations were being investigated.

Tobert said while the general issues raised by the audit had merit, the scope of any problem was much smaller than the audit indicated.

And he said no current whistleblower tips involved procurement fraud, nor did his review find any evidence of it.

Ald. Brian Pincott, chairman of the audit committee, said Tobert's report is on the agenda for Thursday.

Council has authorized an external audit to address any outstanding concerns arising from Tobert's review and the conflicting internal audit. Pincott said the audit committee has to approve a request for proposals in order to start that process.

"Council directed further work and that means bringing back the report to the audit committee," Pincott said. "Why would I wait?"

Last week, Ald. Diane Colley-Urquhart said the report should be on the agenda so that McTaggart, who wasn't asked to speak to council, could respond to the report.

On Tuesday, Ald. Ric McIver said the item wasn't on the agenda the committee had already received, but said he's glad it will be discussed.

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