

Approved Minutes
Biennial Audits Oversight Commission
Wednesday, September 10, 2025
5:30 PM – 6:58 PM

Commission Members in Attendance

- Zeke Cohen, City Council President/Chairman
- Erika McClammy, Deputy Comptroller (representing Comptroller Bill Henry)
- Richard Mitchell, Assistant Inspector General for Operations (representing Isabel Cumming, Inspector General)
- Ryan Dorsey, Councilmember
- Michael Mocksten, Finance Director

Other Attendees/Presenters

- Jermain Jones, Councilmember
- Zac Blanchard, Councilmember
- Josh Pasch, City Auditor
- Thandee Maung, Deputy City Auditor
- Shamiah Kerney, DCA
- Tonya Brinkley, Interim Director, DHR
- Conrad Samuels, Chief of Recruitment, DHR
- Ajeenah Green, Chief of Human Resources, BCRP
- Reginald Moore, Director, BCRP
- Jacia Smith, BCRP
- Karen Tyler, Director of Human Resources, BPD
- Patrick Fleming, Chief of Staff, DOT
- Veronica McBeth, Director, DOT

Approximately 35 people

1. Council President/Chair Zeke Cohen (Chair) welcomed the members of the BAOC and the City Auditor. He also welcomed Councilmembers joining the meeting, including Councilman Jermain Jones (Chair of the Labor and Workforce Committee) and Councilman Zac Blanchard. The Chair opened the meeting by referring to the BAOC's responsibilities to take an active role in reviewing findings of prior audits and the importance of conducting oversight to ensure that audit reports spur corrective actions that strengthen City operations and services.
2. The Chair provided background information from a prior Committee of the Whole hearing that examined how the City has budgeted for vacant positions (some over 18 months old) while incurring millions in overtime expenses. The Chair outlined the importance of having an effective hiring process and explained that the purpose of this BAOC meeting was to examine the findings of the Department of Human Resources' Audit on the City's hiring processes and to hear from the following agencies named in the Audit:

- Department of Human Resources (DHR)
- Baltimore City Recreation and Parks (BCRP)
- Department of Transportation (DOT)
- Department of Finance (DOF)
- Baltimore Police Department (BPD)

3. The Chair introduced the minutes from the last meeting of the BAOC, which was held on March 5, 2025. The Chair reviewed the minutes and recommended them for adoption.

- Councilman Dorsey asked a clarifying question about the minutes noting that the audit objective for the Baltimore City Fire Department (BCFD) had been left open at the conclusion of the prior BAOC meeting.
- City Auditor confirmed that there was a discussion at the prior BAOC meeting regarding two different possible audits for BCFD. After the BAOC meeting, the City Auditor reached out to the Commission via email and based on responses received, the Auditor selected take-home vehicles as the objective for the BCFD Audit Plan.
- The Commission members voted to adopt the BAOC minutes from March 5, 2025, with no objections. Motion passed – five (5) Yeas. *A copy of the minutes is available online.*

4. The Chair introduced Josh Pasch, City Auditor, to begin the meeting. *A copy of the PowerPoint is on file and posted online.*

- The presentation provided a brief overview of the audit entitled *Department of Human Resources Efficiency and Effectiveness of the Hiring Process*
 - Scope of the Audit included DHR, DOT, DGS, BPD (civilian positions only), BCRP, and DOF. The audit examined hiring processes for permanent civil service positions from job requisition to final offer letter for Fiscal Years 2023 and 2022.
 - Findings determined that Workday capabilities were not being fully utilized to track and monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of the City's hiring process.
 - The Audit noted that DHR did have policies and procedures that provide timelines for key tasks; however, there were no policies or procedures to monitor the completion of these tasks.
 - Except for DGS, the other five agencies did not have any formal policies in place to track and monitor the hiring process.
 - Causes for findings included: decentralization, lack of training, and lack of Workday Reports.
 - Recommendations to DHR included: identify policies to track and monitor the recruitment process; define standards for Workday fields; provide training; and modify or, as needed, develop reports.
 - Recommendations to agencies included: implement policies and procedures, set timelines for key hiring tasks, establish Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), monitor efficiency, and evaluate and eliminate bottlenecks.

5. The Chair thanked the Audit Department and asked each of the agencies to offer a brief overview of the actions they have taken to implement the Auditor's recommendations. Prior to agency presentations, Shamiah Kerney, Deputy City Administrator, made opening remarks noting:
 - The importance of accountability, and of processes to help identify challenges and determine solutions;
 - That the Audit evaluated complex, multifaceted challenges;
 - Most vacancies and overtime are generated by public safety agencies; and
 - Administration has had extensive conversations about hiring and salary setting.
6. Conrad Samuels, Chief of Recruitment for the Department of Human Resources (DHR), provided a brief presentation outlining corrective action updates to address findings from the biennial audit for FY 2022 and 2023. *A copy of the PowerPoint is on file and posted online.* Specifically, he indicated that DHR:
 - Developed and utilized an updated job requisition report to track and monitor key steps in the recruitment and hiring process for filled vacancies;
 - Expected to launch an enterprise-wide recruiting dashboard to monitor key performance indicators in October 2025;
 - Mapped key recruitment process steps and task ownership for DHR and Agency HR;
 - Trained agencies on the definition of each step in the recruitment process (training is ongoing); and
 - Updated recruitment job aids, centralizing resources in SharePoint, and instituted monthly training sessions (last held August 27, 2025).
 - Mr. Samuels also noted that this audit reinforced the importance of and need for partnership between DHR and agencies.
7. Patrick Fleming, Chief of Staff for Department of Transportation (DOT), provided a brief presentation outlining corrective action updates to address findings from the biennial audit for FY 2022 and 2023. *A copy of the PowerPoint is on file and posted online.* Specifically, he explained that DOT had:
 - Hired Chief of Organizational Excellence;
 - Created Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) (implemented in July 2025); and
 - Would evaluate the new SOP in mid-October and on an ongoing basis to evaluate and refine efficiency.
8. Karen Tyler, Human Resource Director of the Baltimore City Police Department (BPD), provided a brief presentation outlining corrective action updates to address findings from the biennial audit for FY 2022 and 2023. *A copy of the PowerPoint is on file and posted online.* Specifically, she explained that BPD had:
 - Hired a full-time recruiter and implemented weekly recruitment meetings;
 - Developed Standard Operating Procedures, checklists, and workflow process map (enabled HR to develop training materials);

- Continued with business process improvements, including assessing data from the hiring tracker to address bottlenecks; and
- Continued to monitor open vacancies (including freezing or abolishing pins).

9. Ajeenah Green, Chief of Human Resources, Baltimore Recreation & Parks (BCRP), provided a brief presentation outlining corrective action updates to address findings from the biennial audit for FY 2022 and 2023. *A copy of the PowerPoint is on file and posted online.* Specifically, she explained that BCRP had:

- Developed a recruitment tracker to include additional fields; and
- Was developing Standard Operating Procedures with defined timelines (anticipated completion September 30, 2025).

10. Michael Mocksten, Finance Director provided a brief presentation outlining the corrective action updates to address the findings from the biennial audit for FY 2022 and 2023. [Noted that he stepped away from his BAOC responsibilities to present on behalf of the Department of Finance (DOF)]. *A copy of the PowerPoint is on file and posted online.* Specifically, he explained that DOF had:

- Established Key Performance Indicators that align with agencies' operational goals;
- Established key hiring criteria; and
- Developed a recruitment tracker to monitor hiring process for bottlenecks.

11. Chair thanked the agencies and presenters and noted key takeaways: 1) New data trackers are being implemented, and 2) Agencies have developed and are implementing new formal policies and procedures to manage hiring. Following agency presentations, the Commission members asked questions and offered comments, as summarized below:

- Chair asked DHR about the progress and timeline for next steps, including potential centralization of the hiring function.
 - Mr. Samuels stated that he believes agencies are moving forward to having an effective and efficient hiring process, but it's still a work in progress. He noted that there are thousands of candidates who apply for employment with the City and approximately 14 steps (and some sub-steps) in the hiring process. He indicated the Administration continues to seek opportunities to update and further transform the hiring process.
- Chair asked DHR to provide an update on the timeline as a follow-up request.
 - Deputy City Administrator stated that the Administration is interested in moving to centralize HR, but many steps are necessary to reach this goal—and it will take time.
- Chair noted that the HR process is complex and challenging, but that Council is interested in ensuring that City can recruit and hire the right talent to fill vacancies. Chair asked the Administration for a commitment regarding a timeline.
 - Deputy City Administrator and DHR committed to convening with agencies (within 3 weeks) on leveraging Workday modules to ensure agencies are responsive to applicants on various stages in the hiring

process that includes a report out of the identified timeframes for each phase in the process.

- Deputy City Administrator noted that it was not possible to provide a timeline regarding centralization of the hiring function at this stage.
- Chair recognized and commended the noticeable improvements thus far.
- Councilman Jones asked DHR about Key Performance Indicators and what role DHR had in formulating them and how they will use these indicators to improve the hiring process.
 - Mr. Samuels stated that DHR has a collaborative relationship with departments, which allows them to provide feedback.
- Councilman Jones emphasized the importance of the hiring process and noted the Labor & Workforce Committee is looking forward to examining this further. Chair Jones also asked DHR if there were other broader areas of improvement needed to recruit the best talent.
 - Mr. Samuels noted reaching applicants that want to be part of the City is something that compels and attracts new talent.
- Deputy Comptroller Erika McClammy asked the Administration how the City will work with agencies that were not part of this audit, including whether they will participate in new tracking dashboards.
 - Deputy City Administrator stated that the Administration will be looking at other City agencies to understand their HR processes and working with the Office of Performance Innovation to identify key metrics that will be used across the enterprise to track hiring processes.
- Deputy Comptroller Erika McClammy asked DHR how the City obtains feedback from hiring managers and applicants.
 - Mr. Samuels stated that process has not been operationalized yet; however, the City will leverage technology to achieve this goal.
- Councilman Dorsey noted some high-level concerns that some of the recommendations within the Audit are not definitive.
 - City Auditor noted that for the Auditors to remain independent, they cannot prescribe operational measures. Additionally, Auditors are not subject matter experts and so recommendations should be broad and point to objectives rather than specify specific operational plans.
- Councilman Dorsey asked DHR about the common phases of the hiring processes across agencies and how DHR provides standards regarding these processes. The Councilman also stated concerns about the lack of standardization and the need for DHR to play a central role in guiding how agencies measure success.
 - Mr. Samuels noted that the first few steps of the process are standard for civil service positions. However, after these initial steps, the agencies manage the processes.
 - Deputy City Administrator agreed that work needs to be done to move towards standardization and improve oversight.
- The Chair agreed with Councilman Dorsey's comments and asked if the City is moving towards this level of standardization.

- Deputy City Administrator talked about the challenges with this type of standardization based on the make-up of agencies, number of applicants, and criteria of positions.
- The Chair asked about the use of AI in the hiring process.
 - Deputy City Administrator stated the City has been looking at how they can leverage AI.
- Councilman Blanchard asked BPD about whether they had completed all the steps in their corrective action plan.
 - Ms. Tyler stated BPD has completed all the steps that have been identified to date and is in the process of refining the SOPs.
- Councilman Blanchard followed up by asking if BPD has sped up the hiring process and if they can share the preliminary data as a follow up request.
 - Ms. Tyler stated that they have a dedicated recruiter with additional staff support, and they have seen their numbers go up. BPD committed to providing preliminary tracking data that includes the average time the Department has needed to complete each of the identified steps within BPD's hiring process (for the period of April 2025 to the current date).
- Councilman Blanchard asked if there were other Citywide HR issues that also needed to be addressed to ensure the City can hire and retain the workforce needed (such as reforming performance management processes).
 - Director Brinkley noted that they are collecting this information through employee surveys that look at performance, why people transition, stay, and retire.
 - She noted that three phases of the Employee Voice survey are complete – and initial Phase One data is available (Councilman Blanchard is interested in seeing this data when it is complete.)
- Assistant Inspector General for Operations Richard Mitchell asked if the Commission could see a sample of centralized KPIs and if the City has ensured that the necessary Workday capabilities are available. Additionally, he emphasized the importance of establishing timelines and goal deadlines.
 - Deputy City Administrator indicated that the City is planning on working with a 3rd party entity to examine possible centralization of the hiring process and that time is needed to determine all the steps this would entail.

12. Chair Cohen gave closing remarks and thanked the Audits Department, the City Agencies and Administration, and DHR for the overall improvements. The Chair adjourned the meeting.