

## City Manager Paul Boggs-Muething Annual Review Input Summary (Mayor and 8 Council Members Responding)

The updated City Manager (CM) performance review process that I developed in 2019 called for the CM to complete a self-assessment containing accomplishments, areas requiring more effort, leadership strengths, and leadership opportunities for improvement. The City Manager presented her assessment to the Mayor and Council Members in face-to-face discussions. These leaders were then asked to complete a written performance assessment for the City Manager (See Exhibit I for template) and return it to me for compilation of the findings and presentation of them to the Major Projects & Smart Government Committee. The Chair of this Committee and the Mayor are then to finalize a written review summary for sharing with City Council and discussion with the CM (see Exhibit II for that template).

### GENERAL ASSESSMENT -- What important results did Paula deliver in FY 2021? How effective was she in delivering them?

1. City Manager Paula Boggs-Muething continues to exceed expectations as the City works to recover from the economic and social impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. She tackles each challenge with innovative thinking and resolve, and works hard to ensure a better Cincinnati for all. Some of the major accomplishments are:
  - Fiscal Responsibility - Produced a balanced budget and utilized ARP dollars to replace lost revenue and stabilize city operations. Increased the city's financial reserves and prepared the city for possible municipal income tax refunds.
  - Economic Development - Continued focus on growth and economic opportunities for all.
  - Pandemic Response - Ongoing efforts to prioritize COVID-19 testing, contact tracing and mass vaccination.
  - Public Safety - Funding for two traditional recruit classes for both Police and Fire included in the FY22 budget. Executed an updated Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City and the FOP, making Cincinnati the first major city to change its arbitration process amid demands for police reform. Reducing violent crime by supporting efforts such as the Gun Crime Task Force & Gun Crime Intelligence Center.
  - Solar - City broke ground on the largest municipally led solar array in the country.
  - Affordable Housing Initiative – Committed \$35.5 million for affordable housing through a public-private partnership with Cincinnati Development Fund. Created a Housing Advisory Board to assist with use of funds and housing affordability priorities.

Big picture, I know that City Manager Boggs-Muething will do what is right for the City 100% of the time and I don't have to agree in advance. Her instincts and her drive will always scall on city workers to do the best they can to serve the public.
2. I endorse her self-assessment, no need to reiterate the points that she has made. I will add to her assessment as follows:
  - Stepped into the job as the pandemic started and got to work ... impressed with her leadership, accessibility to councilmembers at all times – day, night, and weekends, and willingness to talk through areas of disagreement and work together on solutions.
  - Created an Officer for Constituent Affairs with a portal that tracks concerns and makes sure that they are addressed ... While there are still issues to be worked out (such as the ability of councilmembers' staff to get needed info from administrative staff to address constituents' concerns), we are moving in the right direction.
  - An ongoing issue has been that residents feel left out of decisions concerning their community. Not only do they want more input, but more information. Many residents express surprise when developments occur in their neighborhood and they had no prior knowledge. I greatly appreciate her willingness to create avenues via processes for community engagement across the board.
3. The Manager and her team excelled in our COVID-19 response (testing & vaccine distribution efforts), managing fiscal stability in turbulent times, new measures to restore public trust, major public safety reforms, big steps toward expanding affordable housing, and managing the very complicated day-to-day of city government. She helped protect the impact of city government in Cincinnati despite a global pandemic and multiple City Hall scandals in 2020.
4. The City Manager (CM) led – and continues to lead - the city through a global pandemic, corruption, turnover, limited staff in multiple departments (most notably public safety departments), a spike in youth violence, rising unemployment, aftermath of extreme storms, and other monumental challenges. Despite this, the CM continued to stay on track on more proactive leadership initiatives like department realignment, new efficiencies within the administration, and bold initiatives which have garnered national recognition. The CM has also kept city employees motivated & focused on the mission. She has stayed laser focused on the five main areas that drive decisions (safety, growing economic opportunities, thriving neighborhoods, excellent service delivery, & fiscal sustainability), helping to keep the administration moving forward despite significant challenges.
5. Provided a very effective response to COVID pandemic, particularly in keeping the city's fiscal security sound for the foreseen future.
6. Her Covid-19 response was excellent. Her active communication with our 6,000 employees and her commitment to get those back to work who were furloughed was nothing short of spectacular. The City Manager has done an excellent job in restructuring the department and putting excellent staff in positions of authority that are highly qualified.
7. Paula took over on very short notice and immediately established that her intellect and experience qualified her to lead the city with professionalism. She earned the respect of her department directors, made appropriate personnel decisions and developed a cohesive competent team. Paula's summary of her work over the last year reminds me of just how immense and varied is the work challenging the city manager. To do well, as Paula has done in my view, requires a manager who is nimble and understands that prior solutions may not suffice for a totally new set of problems.
8. I have known Paula for many years and hold her in the highest personal regard. It is also impossible for me to separate any discussion of Paula's work as city manager from the considerable personal struggles she has experienced during the past two years. I cannot understate my respect for the grit, determination and grace she has evinced during what surely must have been one of the difficult periods of her life. She always put the City first, and for that I and our citizens will be always grateful.

- I agree with many of her positive accomplishments. This has been an incredibly hard year with COVID, and she deserves a lot of credit for getting us through successfully. However, I do have specific criticism that I feel a responsibility to share: First, she has no experience running a City, other than being the best friend of the current Mayor. To my knowledge, she has never worked to obtain certification by International Conference of City Managers in any way.

**COMPLETION OF IMPORTANT CITY PRIORITIES** - After reviewing Paula's List of Accomplishments, please call out those notable areas where you believe things are **Working Well** as a result of the Administration's efforts. In the other section, please identify where you believe there is **Opportunity For Improvement** in what or how the work was accomplished.

**Areas Working Well:**

- Bold leadership and holding people accountable for better work; Communication and relations with the Mayor and City Council; Relationship with police is excellent and we are one of the only cities where crime is down; Prioritization of key issues and responding to matters in a timely manner; Customer service and improved service delivery; Community relations and partnerships.
- I endorse her self-assessment and so I will not repeat her accomplishments here. Following are a few additional comments.
  - The MAG is up and running and I understand that there are ongoing meetings to address the gun violence and other matters in our community.
- COVID response and public health; Fiscal stability and protecting core services; Efforts to restore public trust; Investments in affordable housing; Responsiveness to staff, elected officials
- The CM has a strong focus on finding new efficiencies within the administration. By realigning departments, moving core capabilities, and creating the Office of Constituent Affairs, the City Manager has streamlined work of the administration while creating more data to track, measure, and improve upon. The city's ability to continue responding to the current crisis and the future implications will rely upon a strong foundation. The focus on implementing these changes and driving new efficiencies will set us up for success in the future as we navigate the side effects of this pandemic.
- The Budget & Finance Department is managing the fiscal uncertainties of the COVID pandemic very well by setting aside the needed reserves for the future.
- She has handled improving our police and fire department by supporting the collaborative agreement. The City Manager has advanced affordable housing with public-private partnerships. The creation of the board to manage affordable housing is a specific example of her brilliance.
- One of my areas of considerable interest is the city's anti-corruption efforts. Paula did not wait for the Reform Panel to complete its work for the administration to respond. The report produced by the administration offering thoughts for implementing the recommendations of the Reform Panel was a superb piece in substance and quality of writing. As Chair of Budget and Finance I have been very pleased with the quality and accuracy of financial planning presented by the administration, something which was very important in the midst of the pandemic. I appreciate Paula's support of council initiatives to improve community engagement. Initiatives to address shortages of affordable housing are important. Examples include the Housing Advisory Board and the \$34 million HUD Section 108 loan.
- Paula has done an excellent job steering the City through the pandemic and the early stages of its recovery. Her handling of our finances have been exceedingly prudent — as was evidenced by last week's bond rating announcement. Her work on our collective bargaining negotiations have also been exemplary.
- No additional ones noted.

**Areas Where There is Opportunity for Improvement:**

- Helping City Council better understand its role under the Charter
- I endorse her self-assessment and so I will not repeat her accomplishments here. Following are a few additional comments.
  - The Citizens Complaint Authority still needs to be fully staffed so that the backlog of cases can be addressed. This is not necessarily an "area for improvement" as I understand that this is in process, and my hope is that we get the necessary staff in place as soon as possible.
  - There is an opportunity for more communication with councilmembers. This could be in the form of a standing weekly 10-15 minute phone meeting with each individual councilmember to provide updates and answer questions.
- Public communications and engagement; Establishing and reporting out on performance measures at ECC and as they relate to core services and public safety
- The biggest area for opportunity is the response rate for constituents requesting help. This is to be expected as the Office of Constituent Affairs and the portal are new. However, sometimes constituents don't receive a response for months and it is only when a Councilmember submits a request for an update in the portal. Once the challenges of change and new processes continue to be addressed, response rates and other customer service opportunities will improve. Local government's #1 job is basic services – responding to the basic needs of our constituents. Our ability to respond to these requests in a timely manner is a priority.
- We need a stronger response from CPD to the rising crime rates to take criminals off the streets so that citizens have more safe and secure neighborhoods. Additionally, the city needs to make the process of opening a business or developing property more streamlined from start to finish in order to reduce the time cost of money. We should give those paying the bills, a.k.a. taxpayers, a higher priority.
- None noted.
- Three opportunity areas were noted:



- Maybe it is just me, but it seems to have taken a bit of time for me to learn about some of Paula's organizational changes. For example, I was slow to understand that Billy Weber had become Chief of Staff and then a new assistant city manager. Nor do I recall an announcement that city planning had become the Department of City Planning and Engagement. Similarly, I do not recall an express announcement about establishment of an Office of Constituent Affairs or who was appointed to head it. It would be helpful to provide an organizational chart occasionally with names, titles and areas of responsibility. Some days, I wonder just how large the office of the city manager should become and how much money it should spend. This point has nothing to do with the identity of the city manager but rather whether there is a "creep" toward moving ever more activities directly under the city manager. This is just a question that has occurred to me along the way.
  - Paula and I have talked quite a bit recently about the new rules about contacts by council and council staff with city staff. I support absolutely the need to keep elected officials out of the details of negotiations with developers or others with interests with the city. A separate area is purely factual inquiry by a member of council or his/her staff with the administration or to address what we call case work or constituent services. The new area is a bit too restrictive, I think.
  - A related area is the freedom of a city employee to express concerns with a member of council. The member of council has a professional obligation to be responsible in examining such a concern and how appropriately to address it. But I have a real problem with the current prohibition on any direct communication between a member of council and a city employee.
8. In terms of "opportunities," I would highlight the performance and responsiveness of the Department of Transportation and Engineering. While there are many dedicated professionals in that department, its response to recent citizen concerns has been, in my view, needlessly bureaucratic and so process-driven that it confuses many citizens. I also urge her to continue pushing for more transparency in our economic development processes, particularly on in regards to the intake of new requests. I would also appreciate more advance knowledge regarding proposed incentives packages for new real estate developments — oftentimes these come to council with only a few weeks' notice, if that.
9. Several areas of concern noted:
- She sent out a memo several weeks ago saying the Clifton bike lane was going to be removed. Within hours, it was very clear that Mayor Cranley didn't like that decision and it was completely reversed. The Mayor has been a long opponent of bike infrastructure, but seems to have changed his tune after announcing he was running for Governor.
  - This past winter, a City employee in the Retirement Department reached out to me, explaining that she was experiencing a hostile work environment after her spouse came out as transgender. She documented specific instances of anti-LGBTQ+ treatment. I did not know this employee personally, but believe she reached out to me because I am openly LGBTQ+. I immediately went to the City Manager and was treated more rudely than I have ever been treated by a City employee. She told me (one of her 10 Bosses) that it was "none of my business" and that I was "only trying to help a friend." I was incredibly shocked and angered. I followed up with an email to document the claims I was trying to make her aware of, but heard nothing more.

**LEADERSHIP PROFILE AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT** – All leaders, no matter how experienced or effective, have a "profile" of certain skills and behaviors which are clear strengths for them but also areas where they could be even more effective if they sharpen skills or adjust behaviors. After reviewing Paula's self-assessment, please note what you believe are her inherent **Strengths** and in what areas does she have **Opportunities for Improvement**.

**Leadership Strengths:**

1. Competent and effective; Integrity/high ethical standards; Collaborative; Innovative and solutions-oriented; Perceptive/foresight to anticipate potential issues; Passionate and compassionate.
2. She is a strong, informative, and calm presence for the City.. I have confidence in her judgment. I am thankful that she makes herself accessible not only by being available 24/7, but by being open to discussing issues on which we agree and disagree. When there is disagreement, she listens to others' viewpoints and proposes viable solutions. I appreciate her collaborative spirit and her respect for diverse viewpoints.
3. Incredibly hard working; Very strategic; Honest; Bold and determined; Independent
4. Empowerment – the CM has built a talented team around her and has empowered them to make decisions and drive key initiatives forward. Communication – the CM responds to Council requests and motions for reports with clear guidance. Confidence – the CM has led the administration through the arguably the darkest time in its history. Having a leader who is confident in their ability to lead through crisis is key. Empathy – the CM has the ability to connect with anyone on a human level. This is an important trait that builds a strong culture within an organization and helps keep employees motivated and moving forward together in turbulent times. Purpose-driven – the CM keeps a laser focus on the five key strategic priorities (safety, growing economic opportunities, thriving neighborhoods, excellent service delivery, and fiscal sustainability) and lets those guiding principles be the main driver in decisions.
5. Shows composure and strength in decision making and leadership, particularly around crisis management.
6. Our City Manager continues to show that she can manage 10 bosses at the same time and still get the job done with excellence. She did these tasks while fighting breast cancer and the loss of her father. I rate her as one of the best city managers I have ever served with at City Hall. Specifically, her interpersonal communication skills are the best I have ever served with.
7. Very smart with energy and interest to do the job. We are lucky to have her.
8. Paula's extraordinary demeanor must be singled out for special praise. She has assembled an incredible team and has managed them with great efficiency and calm. The professionalism of her immediate staff and the solicitor's office has been remarkable, especially when the latter has been publicly questioned in the most unfair manner imaginable.

9. None noted.

**Leadership Opportunities for Improvement:**

1. The City would benefit from additional years of City Manager Boggs-Muething's service.
2. Bogg-Muething's memos are informative and I appreciate the information that keeps us updated on a plethora of important issues and concerns. As stated earlier, I would like to see an additional provision on the schedule for an ongoing, weekly "touch base" phone call or in-person meeting.
3. Communications and engagement with media, public (public should see more of manager and team)
4. There is an opportunity to find more synergies between the administration's strategic priorities and Council's legislative goals. For example – the Affordable Housing Subcommittee and recommendations and the partnership moving forward between administration and Council. Taking the time to seek out overlap and create more collaboration will result in better legislation and more efficient use of resources. Not all goals between the administration and Council will be aligned and it is important to have a balance of power. However, finding some areas of common goals will result in better outcomes and help the administration adjust its plan and budget accordingly.
5. None noted.
6. None noted.
7. She and we need to round out her experience and perspective. Since her work has been only in Cincinnati, we need to think about the kinds of experiences and/or knowledge and/or perspectives she may not have experienced.  
What should she know that she does not know and that she and we could find ways to make sure she comes to know.
8. Above all, I would urge Paula to foster a sense of independence from the Mayor's office. The public expects three branches of government under the Charter — council, the mayoralty and the city manager. As we rebuild public trust after a season of corruption and unseriousness, each branch must daily bring to bear its unique perspective.
9. Several areas of concern noted:
  - Probably the most frustrating action taken by the City Manager (which I believe to be a violation of the City Charter) is telling every City employee and director that they can no longer talk to members of Council or our staff. If someone calls my office and says "my trash was not picked up," I can't just call Public Services and get it fixed. I have to literally go through the City Manager on every single piece of communication. The Charter gives members of Council unqualified access of inquiry to every City employee and director, with the exception of the hiring and firing process. It makes our daily job almost impossible. I have brought this up many times on the floor of Council, asking for a clarifying memo. Nothing has happened.
  - In the Fall of 2020, I introduced legislation to create an animal abuse registry, only to be used by local rescues, in order to have access to past criminal convictions on potential adopters. The legislation passed unanimously. In January 2021, I hadn't heard anything on the status of the legislation. I reached out to the person responsible for implementation and heard nothing. I was just looking for a status update. I was told by the City Manager that this person was directed not to talk to me. Weeks later, the Manager issued a memo essentially saying my legislation was not important and they had no plans to implement it.
  - I worked for months with the community, the City Manager's office and national organizations on reforms to no-knock warrants. It ended in legislation with many of my suggested reforms. When the Manager announced that she had adopted many of my recommendations, she thanked every single person and group I had convened, leaving out my involvement altogether. Further, it is usual practice that the Manager would give the author of the legislation a heads up when a memo was coming out in order to hold a press conference. She regularly does this for the Mayor and other members of Council. I heard nothing until the memo came out.
  - There was a mass shooting in Cincinnati. I still have not heard a single word from the City Manager. I have worked with many Managers and would have received several personal phone calls in the hours after the shooting, keeping me up to date. She never called. And when my colleagues were quoted in the media, it was clear she had talked to them.
  - Finally, it is my sincere belief that when the City Manager came into office, she knew my time on Council was limited and believed I just wasn't worth the effort of working with. As a critic of the Mayor, I just wasn't worth it.

Respectfully submitted,

Harry Kangis

Key: 1 -Cranley, 2-Kearney, 3-Landsman, 4-Keating, 5-Sunderman, 6-Smitherman, 7-Mann, 8-Goodin, 9-Seelbach



## EXHIBIT I - CINCINNATI CITY MANAGER - ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW FEEDBACK REQUEST

### PERSON PROVIDING FEEDBACK:

This requests your input to Paula Boggs-Muething's annual performance review. Prior to meeting with Paula, you will receive her self-assessment document for review, covering accomplishments, areas where the work is not yet complete, and what she views as her leadership profile.

**GENERAL ASSESSMENT** -- What important results did Paula deliver in FY 2021? How effective was she in delivering them?

**Completion of Important City Priorities** - After reviewing Paula's List of Accomplishments, please call out those notable areas where you believe things are **Working Well** as a result of the Administration's efforts. In the other section, please identify where you believe there is **Opportunity For Improvement** in what or how the work was accomplished.

**Areas Working Well:**

**Areas Where There is Opportunity for Improvement:**

**Leadership Profile and Further Development** – All leaders, no matter how experienced or effective, have a “profile” of certain skills and behaviors which are clear strengths for them but also areas where they could be even more effective if they sharpen skills or adjust behaviors. After reviewing Paula's self-assessment, please note what you believe are her inherent **Strengths** and in what areas does she have **Opportunities for Improvement**.

**Leadership Strengths:**

**Leadership Opportunities for Improvement:**



**EXHIBIT II - CITY MANAGER FY 2021 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

**NAME: Paul Boggs-Muething**

**DATE:**

**EVALUATOR/TITLE: Mayor John Cranley & CM Greg Landsman**

**OVERALL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT**

**KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS DURING FY 2021**

**ANY KEY GOALS NOT MET OR ONLY PARTIALLY COMPLETE DURING FY 2021**



**PERSONAL STRENGTHS CITED FROM MAYOR, COUNCIL AND STAFF FEEDBACK**

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT CITED FROM MAYOR, COUNCIL AND STAFF FEEDBACK**

**PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

SIGNATURES:

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(NAME), City Manager

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John Cranley, Mayor

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Greg Landsman, SP&GG Chair