

**From:** Brian DeVree

**Sent:** Tuesday, December 17, 2024 12:27 AM

**To:** City Clerk <[cityclerk@grand-rapids.mi.us](mailto:cityclerk@grand-rapids.mi.us)>

**Subject:** Opposition to changes to the Comptroller office

Dear Grand Rapids City Commission,

I am writing to vehemently **object** to the changes proposed to the City Comptroller department detailed under City Commission agenda item titled "Ordinance amending Section 1 of the Budget Ordinance 2024-23 for Fiscal Year 2025 (Amendment No. 5)" which is listed as item number XI.2, Attachment M. These changes are in clear contradiction to the City's Charter and would reduce the office to such a small size that it would hinder its ability to carry out its Charter mandated responsibilities.

The City Charter sets out very clearly in Title VI, section 4, items b-e, that the Comptroller is responsible for the "Account of Moneys Due.", "Account of Moneys Received.", "Account of Funds and Disbursements.", and that they "Prescribe [a] Uniform System." for the keeping of accounts. This is the practice of Accounting, and it is to be done NOT by the Treasury Department, City Manager, or any other city department, but by the Comptroller's office. The staff that Attachment M is proposing to reassign are exactly the staff that are currently carrying out this responsibility in the office of the Comptroller, **where they belong**.

I also would like to address the statement made in Attachment M that one of "The primary functions of the Comptroller [is] to sign all checks on authorized amounts," and then claims that even with the changes, the Comptroller can still legally perform the whole of their duties. **This claim is disingenuous**, as even though the Comptroller would have the LEGAL right to do so, after these changes, they would no longer have the PRACTICAL means to do it. The City Charter has anticipated this, and requires that the Comptroller "shall not issue or sign any draft, check or warrant until he has verified the correctness of the account for which the same is issued," in Title VI, section 4, item f. The standard that the City Charter demands is NOT that the Comptroller blindly rubber-stamps every check set before them, but rather to know with certainty that the check is correctly authorized and written to the correct amount from the correct account.

These changes are being made in a hasty and non-transparent way, with only an extremely small window of time for evaluation both the Comptroller's office themselves and the public in general. **This is not appropriate and I urge the commissioners to reject the changes** and ask the City Manager to present their findings on the issues and proposed solutions in a manner more

accessible to the public and with full detail on why they view that the current organization presents, in their words, "additional risk to the City."

Thank you for your consideration,

Brian DeVree

Ward 2 Resident