

Lack of proper public notice forces City Council to delay organizational meeting

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TROY — Things are off a rocky start as the city Council's new president has postponed the organizational meeting until Jan. 12 because proper notice for the meeting was not given.

"It has come to our attention that proper notice announcing the organizational agenda for tonight's session was not provided," said Council President Lynn Kopka. "It's unfortunate that this important session will be slightly delayed, but it is more important that we adhere to the spirit of the law and be diligent in conducting the city's business in the most transparent manner possible. I apologize for any inconvenience this may cause."

Kopka said a proper notice was created and was supposedly sent by fax to The Record but there was some confusion as to the number of the paper's classified department. She said she wanted to be upfront in informing the public that a mistake was made.

"Now we are all good and future notices will be sent properly," Kopka said.

The organizational meeting is basically what the name says. It is meant to confirm many of the appointments made, set the schedule for the year as well as setting the salary for some positions. All of this could have been for naught, according to Councilman Mark McGrath, R-District 2, because notice was not filed for the public 72-hours in advance.

This could have meant anything voted on during the meeting — such as the confirmation of appointments or the council approving the settlement of a lawsuit by members of the police department over overtime — would have been seen as illegal and could be challenged in court.

Mike Fraser, spokesman for Mayor Lou Rosamilia, said it is unfortunate the meeting didn't taking place as everyone was excited to kick off the year, but it is more important to have everything organized beforehand.

"It may be disappointing," Fraser said, "but it's important to have things done properly and make sure that transparency is considered and all requirements are met to have the meeting."

The council, with four new faces including Kopka's, may have had a rough start, but McGrath, who is beginning his fourth term, said he is not alarmed and hopes for smooth sailing in the future.

“I’m cautiously optimistic,” McGrath said. “We spoke and went out one night and everything seemed to be pretty good.”