

57. All purchases and contracts for the City shall be made on written contract. The Council may provide by ordinance for rules and regulations regarding the use of competitive bidding for all City purchases and contracts. The City Manager shall be required to advertise for sealed bids for all contracts or purchases in excess of Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500.00), other than contracts for professional services. All contracts or purchases in excess of Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500.00) shall be approved by resolution of the Council.

58. The Mayor, with the approval of the Council may appoint a City Attorney. The City Attorney shall be a member of the bar of the Maryland Court of Appeals. The City Attorney shall be the legal adviser of the City and shall perform such duties in this connection as may be required by the Council or the Mayor. His compensation shall be determined by the Council. The City shall have the power to employ such legal consultants as it deems necessary from time to time.

59. The Council shall have the power to adopt personnel regulations governing the employees of the City which may include the establishment of a merit system. Among other things these rules and regulations may provide for competitive examinations, the use of eligible lists, a classification plan, a compensation plan, a probation period, appeals by employees included within the classified service from dismissal or other disciplinary action, and vacation and sick leave regulations. If such merit system be established, the employees and officers of the City shall be divided into the classified service and the unclassified service.

60. a. The unclassified service shall comprise the following offices and positions, which shall not be included within the merit system:

(1) The Mayor, the Councilmen, and persons appointed to fill vacancies in these positions.

(2) The City Manager and the City Attorney.

(3) The heads of all offices, departments, and agencies and members of City boards and commissions.

(4) Part-time, temporary, and unpaid offices and positions.

b. The classified service shall comprise all positions not specifically included by this Section in the unclassified service. All offices and positions included in the classified service shall be subject to any merit system rules and regulations which may be adopted.

61. a. If a merit system is adopted, no person in the classified service of the City or seeking admission thereto shall be appointed, promoted, demoted, removed, or in any way favored or discriminated against because of his political or religious opinions or affiliations or any other factors not related to ability to perform the work; no person shall willfully or corruptly commit or attempt to commit any fraud preventing the impartial execution of the personnel provisions of this Charter or of the rules and regulations made thereunder; no officer or employee in the classified service of the City shall continue in such position after becoming a candidate for nomination or election to any public office; no person seeking appointment to or promotion in the classified service of the City shall either directly or indirectly give, render, or pay any money, service, or other valuable thing to any person for or on account of or in connection with his appointment, proposed appointment, promotion, or proposed promotion; no person shall orally, by letter or otherwise, solicit or be in any manner concerned in soliciting