

CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE
MONDAY, MARCH 11, 2019, 5 P.M.
MAYOR'S CEREMONIAL ROOM

MINUTES

PRESENT: Members Chani Beeman, David T. Bristow, David E. Barnhart, Eileen M. Teichert, Matthew Irving, Matthew E. Webb, Jack B. Clarke, Jr., Art Angel, Thomas F. Miller, Tom P. Evans, Kristina Zaragoza, Kimberly M. MacKinney, Randolph Ben Clymer, Jr., Marcia McQuern, and Maria Riemer and Alternates Malissa H. McKeith and Monrow A. Mabon

ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Colleen Nicol, Susan Wilson, Elliott Min, and Dana Roa

Chair Clarke convened the meeting at 5 p.m.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Riverside League of Women Voters President Joan Donahue advised that the League is working on an amendment to Article 4, Section 404, regarding vacancies on the City Council.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Following discussion, it was moved by Member Angel and seconded by Member Clymer to approve the minutes of February 11, 2019, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

INTERVIEW WITH COUNCILMEMBER CONDER

Councilmember Conder supports the Mayor having more involvement in City Council discussions and voter-approved Mayor and City Council salaries.

The Committee's inquiries and discussion with Councilmember Conder included the salary of the Mayor and Councilmembers and its ability to support a family, the time required to perform the duties of Councilmember, communication with the City Manager and Department staff, full voting authority for the Mayor, and Ward 4 neighborhood groups.

Councilmember Conder expressed support for term limits, requiring a vote of the people to sell or enter into long-term leases of City water, and convening of a Homelessness Summit with nearby cities.

The Committee's further inquiries and discussion with Councilmember Conder included a Housing Commission, transfer of utility revenue to the General Fund and other Budget transfers, pension underfunding, pay increases for City employees, and separation of powers.

INTERVIEW WITH COUNCILMEMBER MELENDREZ

The interview with Councilmember Melendrez was not held.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION ON POTENTIAL CHARTER AMENDMENTS

Member Beeman shared possible Charter amendments for consideration including (1) adding a reference to transparency in the Preamble; (2) reference to “community member” rather than “citizen community member” in Section 411; (3) publication of ordinances in a local newspaper, online, and social media platforms; (4) changing “crime or moral turpitude” to “crime” in Section 805 regarding service on City boards and commissions; (5) creation of a Housing Commission, Civil Rights Commission, and Neighborhood Councils; and (6) new Charter sections on anti-corruption and conflict of interest related to political donors and City business and contracts.

Others suggested discussion of the Mayor’s ability to veto Charter Officer contracts, designation of Councilmembers as part-time or full-time, total cost for salary and benefits of elected officials, and automatic pay increases for employees.

Various members requested information on (1) the number of elected officials in other cities; (2) total cost of Mayor and Councilmember salary and benefits; (3) if automatic pay increases for City employees, e.g., Partnership Compensation Model, were proposed in the past and with any limits; (4) Neighborhood Council Task Force Report to the City Council; and (5) average income of Riverside residents, if full- or part-time employment, and median income.

Topics for discussion from public comments included instant runoff voting, consistency in definitions, pulling of agenda items from the Consent Calendar, length of contracts, enforcement of the Charter, penalties for violation of the Charter, an elected auditor position, penalties for exceeding staff spending authority, mandatory reporting of crime witnessed by elected officials, disqualification from voting of a Councilmember having a personal relationship with the contractor, and City Council raises and tie to median income.

Committee member suggestions for future discussion included an elected City Auditor who hires the annual auditor, a cap on contracts, separation of powers, the Council/Manager form of government, and Charter amendments placed on the ballot outside of the Charter Review Committee process.

Chair Clarke requested further discussion of additional community meetings and a request of the City Council to commit to placement of all Charter Review Committee recommended measures on the ballot at the next meeting.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

The City Clerk report on provided versions of the City Charter, Model City Charter, Charter measures outcomes and voter turnout materials, and the revised meeting schedule/work plan. No formal action was required or taken.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Kevin Dawson spoke regarding interviews conducted for appointments to the Charter Review Committee. Harry Sonke spoke regarding commissions and committees, full-time vs part-time Councilmembers, and the City Manager vs strong Mayor forms of government.

ITEMS FOR FUTURE COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION AS REQUESTED BY CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

There were no additional items requested at this time.

The meeting adjourned at 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

COLLEEN J. NICOL
City Clerk