



King County

Charter Review Commission

January 16, 2019

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance:

Louise Miller (Co-Chair), Tim Ceis, Elizabeth Ford, David Heller, Michael Herschensohn, Sean Kelly, Clayton Lewis, Marcos Martinez, Jeff Natter, Toby Nixon, Nikkita Oliver (via telephone), Rob Saka, Beth Sigall (via telephone), Alejandra Tres, Kinnon Williams and Sung Yang.

Excused:

Joe Fain, Ian Goodhew, Linda Larson, Nat Morales, Brooks Salazar and Ron Sims.

Council and Executive Staff:

Kelli Carroll, Director of Special Projects, Patrick Hamacher, Director of Legislative Analysis, and Mac Nicholson, Director of Government Relations.

Also in Attendance:

Mike Sinsky, Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office.

1. Welcome and Call to Order

Co-Chair Miller called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. and asked those on the telephone to introduce themselves.

2. Public Comment:

There was no one present to provide public comment.

3. Councilmember Comment

King County Councilmember Jeanne Kohl-Welles provided comment regarding her recommended changes to the Charter which include:

- Combine the three regional committees into one and perhaps have them meet twice per month. Alternatively, have the existing three committees meet less frequently for greater efficiency.
- Have the Executive give the budget message at a Council meeting with the Council and the media present.
- Eliminate the prohibition on the Council from originating an appropriations ordinance except in emergencies. Discussion ensued regarding how the process currently works.
- Include language in the Charter that would prohibit procurement with any business entity that has been convicted of a labor trafficking-related offense.
- Strengthen the language around independent investigations and access to information to include subpoena power for the Office of Law Enforcement Oversight. Clarify the Charter language in regard to the responsibilities of the Community Advisory Committee.

4. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Ford moved approval of the minutes of the December 19, 2018 meeting. The motion was seconded. There being no objections, the minutes were approved.

5. Staff Update

- The number of people visiting the Charter Review website has increased. A summary of the input submitted will be provided to Commissioners.
- The need to look further at more targeted outreach should be considered.

6. Review & Discussion

Next Steps/Timeline

- The proposed timeline and public meeting schedule were reviewed.
- Council members have started advertising public forums.
- It was suggested that a project manager be hired as an additional resource to facilitate this process and assist with some of the analytics. Alternatively it was suggested that more subcommittees be created.

Motion: Commissioner Williams moved that staff be directed to move forward with hiring a facilitator/project manager to assist the Commission as we move forward in preparing our final study. The motion was seconded. The motion was adopted.

Motion: Commissioner Ceis moved that the Commission also procure the services of another firm that can provide support to the project director/facilitator in terms of documentation and/or analytic support. The motion was seconded. The motion was adopted. Commission Sigall voted no.

Staff will bring a plan next week to address how this procurement will occur and potentially provide a list of firms that could do the work. The co-chairs will be consulted to get their input.

Discussion ensued regarding the meeting schedule, three public forums and how the public will be notified.

It was suggested that a communication expert be used to help provide outreach to translate the importance of the Charter in a way that feels tangible to communities that are difficult to turn out. Staff will touch base with The Office of Equity and Social Justice regarding this and provide feedback next week. Further discussion involved the possibility of having someone present at each public forum who can help the presenter relay the information to those present in an understandable manner.

Updated Charter Issues/Tracker

- Additional columns were added to the proposed amendments spreadsheet to reflect whether an item would be moving forward or not and whether additional analysis is needed.
- The possibility of doing a Charter Review every five years was suggested – this will be added to the list of proposed amendments.

Motion: Commissioner Ford moved that items 2 and 3 under section 800 be removed from the list. The motion was seconded. The motion was withdrawn by both the maker and the seconder.

Another item will be added under section 800 to expand on geographic diversity to include race, gender, ethnicity, etc.

A characterization of the initiative process in King County and what is possible to change within the Charter, including a description of the difference between initiative and referendum, was provided. A memo will be provided regarding an outline of the current process, the changes that are being proposed and comparables in the State and City of Seattle.

The subcommittee will provide a report regarding their recommendations for the items on pages 10, 11, 12 and 13.

Page 14, New Section 620 – It was suggested that this include authority for Council or the Executive to investigate and take action. Legal input will be provided regarding this option along with feedback regarding how the City of Seattle has worded it in regard to removal of the mayor.

The Commission will need to determine whether they will create the processes for added provisions or leave that to the County.

Historical information regarding the pros and cons of having an elected sheriff will be provided

Page 16, Article 2 – New Section regarding economic development will be moved to Regional Committee discussion topics.

Other business

Commissioner Heller provided copies of a newspaper article related to ranked-choice voting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:41 p.m.