Charter Review Form of Government Subcommittee Minutes

February 26, 2014

Convener Miller called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Committee Members Present:	7	Baarsma, Brackett, Edmonds, Merritt, Messina, Van Dyk, and Convener Miller.
Committee Members Excused Absence:	0	

Select a Committee Chair

Committee Member Baarsma moved to nominate Convener Miller as Chair of the Form of Government Subcommittee. Seconded by Committee Member Brackett. Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was declared adopted.

Chair Miller asked for nominations or volunteers for Vice-Chair. None were offered at this time.

Determine a Work Plan

At approximately 6:07 p.m., Chair Miller asked Committee Members to talk about what the Committee's work plan should include. Discussion ensued regarding the work plan, including the pros and cons of the current form of government, modifications to the current form of government or a strong mayor form of government, and offering a recommendation and reasons for the recommendation to the full Charter Review Committee.

Committee Members discussed suggestions for criteria. Committee Member Baarsma offered accountable, transparent, diverse, organizationally clear, responsive, and sustainable. Committee Member Brackett offered a fiscally responsible structure. Committee Member Messina offered which form of government prompts public participation better, and which influences executive action on behalf of the public and their advocates. Committee Members Edmonds offered a strategic or visionary capacity. Committee Member Brackett then offered leadership, the recognized speaker for the city, and is it properly resided. Chair Miller asked Committee Member Baarsma for the Criteria Committee to report back distinctions between leadership and management.

Discussion continued regarding criteria. Committee Member Baarsma offered the concept of followship or cohesion. Committee Member Messina added balance of power. Chair Miller stated these are value driven; he then asked for a factual list of criteria, using diversity as an example of what can be factual. Committee Member Baarsma added the term organizational clarity in respect to knowing who does what in the organization Committee Member Brackett offered that the question is what the system produces: subsidized lunches, felonies per thousand, etc.

Chair Miller asked for a brainstorm of criteria. Discussion ensued and included corruption, turnover, poverty, business success rate, tax burden, unemployment rate, median household income, economic growth and development, ability to recall elected officials, the power of the people to get rid of a mayor, tax base, crime (felonies), results of transitioning from council/manager to strong mayor, racial demographics, age, occupation, education and how are cities more likely to be attractive for investment. The chair asked if there was a difference in the characterization of a strong mayor and the council/manager form of government. He asked does the criterion correlate to the form of government.

Committee Members agreed that the product for Form of Government Subcommittee is a clear delineation of two forms of government based on values, concepts, and logical conclusions and facts. The committee wants to bring a recommendation to the City Council which could have two dimensions. Form A may be better than Form B or the city should put the form of government on the ballot based on information gathered.

Set a Regular Time to Meet
At approximately 6:50 p.m. discussion ensued regarding when to meet. The Committee decided to meet once a week until the end of March. Committee Member Baarsma offered getting in touch with University of Puget Sound students to help with research. He suggested the Agenda Committee not meet on Mondays for a while so the Form of Government Subcommittee could meet Mondays from 5:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.

Public Comment
None.

Committee Comments
None.

Adjournment
    There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

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Ken Miller, Chair

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Jeanne Harris, Charter Review Liaison