



Charter Review

Form of Government Subcommittee Minutes

Tacoma Municipal Building North, 733 Market Street, Room 12

www.cityoftacoma.org/charterreview

April 14, 2014 – 5:30 p.m.

Chair Miller called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

Committee Members Present: 7 – Baarsma (arrived at 5:38 p.m.), Brackett, Edmonds, Merritt (arrived at 5:37 p.m.), Messina, Miller, and Van Dyk.

Committee Members Excused Absence: 0

Approval of the March 31, 2014 Minutes

Committee Member Brackett moved that the minutes of March 31, 2014 meeting be approved. Seconded by Committee Member Messina. Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was adopted.

Review Recommendations of the Legislative and Administrative Subcommittees

At approximately 5:34 p.m., Chair Miller inquired who would be responsible for bringing forward the specific article-by-article recommendations to the Charter Review Committee (CRC) relative to a change in the form of government (FOG). Discussion ensued regarding the need to get clarification on responsibilities. Chair Miller then stated he has reviewed the draft Charter language prepared by the Drafting Subcommittee, and provided a list of topics related to a change in FOG he created and asked Subcommittee members to review.

Committee Member Merritt arrived here, at 5:37 p.m.

Discussion continued regarding the topics.

Committee Member Baarsma arrived here, at 5:38 p.m.

Discussion followed regarding the process moving forward, the need for the subcommittees to bring forward their recommendations accompanied by a list of pros and cons, the roles of the FOG Subcommittee, and the roles of the Administrative and Legislative Subcommittees.

Committee Member Van Dyk inquired about transition, who will be discussing transition issues relating to a change in the FOG, and the need for a transition plan. Discussion ensued regarding a transition plan, whether the FOG Subcommittee would draft the language or some other group, and the potential for a multi-year transition plan. Committee Member Baarsma stated, as the Chair of the CRC, he would ask if other Committee Members might be interested in drafting language for a transition plan.

Chief Administrative Office (CAO) Performance Evaluation Discussion

At approximately 5:54 p.m., Committee Member Brackett briefly reviewed the Mayor/Council/CAO FOG and the need to address the potential for too much power. He provided draft language for a new Section 3.3 in the City Charter, which he believes would provide some accountability to the Council. He noted the intent is to show checks and balances between the three branches of government. Discussion followed regarding the rationale behind the proposed section and the removal of the last sentence in Section 3.3. Jeanne Harris, CRC Liaison, reviewed the work plans for the subcommittees and CRC, including the deadline to provide recommendations to the CRC. Chair Miller requested that Committee Member Baarsma have the Administrative and Legislative Subcommittees present all their recommendations on Wednesday. Discussion ensued regarding when final recommendations from the CRC are due to the City Attorney's Office, and when the transition group would be able to meet.

Committee Member Baarsma moved to, without rendering judgement, forward the CAO confirmation recommendation, without the final sentence, to the CRC for discussion. Seconded by Committee Member Brackett. Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was adopted.

Committee Member Baarsma moved to, without rendering judgment, forward the item related to the removal of the mayor by the City Council to the CRC for discussion. Seconded by Committee Member Messina. Committee Member Baarsma briefly reviewed the proposed language, noting it would require at least three Council Members to bring it forward. Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was adopted.

Public Comment

None.

Committee Comments

Chair Miller apologized to the members of the FOG Subcommittee and staff regarding his comments, noting he is committed to be thoughtful and tempered in his comments going forward. Committee Member Baarsma noted he sent a letter to the editor regarding the comments he made. Discussion followed regarding comments received from the public since January, consideration versus endorsement, and the need to review feedback received relating to the FOG to confirm items were considered, editorials in the News Tribune, and the role of the Subcommittees and CRC.

Adjournment

On proper motion, the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.



Ken Miller, Chair



April Larsen, Administrative Assistant