



Charter Review

Public Utilities Subcommittee Minutes

Tacoma Municipal Building North, 733 Market Street, Room 12
www.cityoftacoma.org/charterreview

March 6, 2014 – 5:30 p.m.

Convener Martinez called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Committee Members Present: 5 - Baker, Brackett, Horne, Miller, and Convener Martinez.

Committee Members Excused Absence: 2 – Farrell and Leighton.

Select a Committee Chair

At approximately 5:31 p.m., Committee Member Baker nominated Convener Martinez as the Chair. Committee Member Miller seconded the nomination. Committee Member Horne moved that the nomination be closed and by proclamation Convener Martinez is the Chair. Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was declared adopted.

Set a regular time to meet

At approximately 5:33 p.m., discussion ensued regarding a time and date to meet. The committee decided on Thursdays at 5:30 p.m.

Review List of Recommendations

At approximately 5:34 p.m., Chair Martinez introduced his ideas for recommendations. Committee Member Horne discussed City Council having input and veto consideration on the City's Budget process. Committee Member Baker brought up the idea of a Public Utility District (PUD). Committee Member Brackett mentioned placing all rate payer supported utilities in one jurisdiction. Committee Member Baker asked about employees not benefitting from Energy Conservation programs. Discussion ensued regarding the interpretation of that topic. Mr. Robert Mack, Deputy Director of Public Affairs, was asked about the topic; he referred to a provision in the Tacoma City Charter, Section 6.6, summarized the section then read it. Committee Member Horne brought up congruence between the City Charter and the employment agreement with the Public Utilities Director. Committee Member Baker asked about appointment of the Public Utilities Director and Superintendents or Department heads. Committee Member Miller suggested reviewing the boundaries on shared services and allocations. Committee Member Horne asked Mr. Mack about what appeal process is in place at Tacoma Public Utilities (TPU) for disgruntled employees. Mr. Mack and Mr. Michael P. Slevin III, P.E., Environmental Services Director, answered the question referring to personnel rules and Human Resources policies. Committee Member Horne asked if TPU has specific personnel policies or procedures that are different than General Government (GG). Discussion ensued. Committee Member Miller brought three topics to the table: TPU having a separate and/or specialized legal counsel; the term of Utility Board Members; issues around franchise agreements. Discussion ensued on these topics. Mr. Mack answered questions about his presentation regarding franchise agreements and referred to Section 8.1 of the Tacoma City Charter. Discussion ensued regarding Click! Cable TV, Public Utility Board, and new utilities.



2014 TACOMA CHARTER REVIEW A LOOK AT HOW YOUR CITY WORKS

Mark Martinez (Convener) – Terri Baker – Gary Brackett – Tim Farrell – Charles Horne – Justin Leighton – Ken Miller

Determine a Work Plan

At approximately 5:58 p.m., Chair Martinez posted his flip chart ideas on work plan. Committee Member Baker asked if some of the recommendations could be grouped in to big subject areas. Discussion ensued. Committee Member Miller stated two topics: the TPU management relationship with GG; and citizen over site of the Utility Board. Committee Member Baker brought up outside agencies. Committee Member Horne asked Mr. Mack if the Utility Board members receive any type of compensation for serving on the Utility Board. The subcommittee discussed how to group the recommendations and topic ideas. At approximately 6:07 p.m., Committee Member Miller suggested breaking ideas up in to several aspects (eg., budget, hiring) and see how they affect the whole. Committee Member Miller suggested mapping out the system. Mr. Slevin offered giving assistance with information as needed. Mr. Mack asked for clarification on what information the committee would like. Committee Member Horne suggested putting outcomes on the list. Discussion ensued regarding out of city aspects of the utilities. Committee Member Brackett spoke about different classes of outside customers.

At approximately 6:21 p.m., Committee Member Martinez suggested everyone get up for a break.

At approximately 6:23 p.m., Committee Member Martinez reconvened the meeting. Committee Member Farrell requested staff provide an intern for this committee.

Discuss, Schedule, Prioritize and Assign Committee Criteria

At approximately 6:24 p.m., Committee Member Baker suggested impact on the rate payers and impact on bond ratings as a criteria item. Discussion ensued on impacts. Chair Martinez reviewed his list of criteria. Committee Member Baker reviewed measurable criteria. Committee Member Miller stated service and fair value are criteria he'd like to see. The committee asked how the rate process for the utilities is decided. Discussion ensued on criteria objectives. Committee Member asked to add who, what, where, when, why and how added to the top as a reminder.

Chair Martinez reviewed next steps.

Discussion ensued regarding clarifying committee requests and this committee's goals.

Public Comment

None.

Committee Comments

Committee Members commended Chair Martinez on a job well done.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:57 p.m.



Mark Martinez, Chair



Marisa Tetreault, Administrative Assistant, Public Works