



# Charter Review Committee Minutes

March 10, 2014

Chair Baarsma called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

Committee Members Present: 11 Baker, Brackett, Edmonds, Hahn, Martinez, Merritt, Miller, Talton, Ushka, Van Dyk and Chair Baarsma.

Committee Members Absent: 4 Horne (excused), Messina (excused), Leighton (excused), Tim Farrell (arrived at 8:02 p.m.)

## Approval of the March 5, 2014 Minutes

Committee Member Hahn moved that the minutes of March 5, 2014 be approved, seconded by Committee Member Ushka. Voice vote was taken and carried. The minutes were approved.

Committee Member Hahn moved to change the order of the day to move other business to the beginning of the agenda, Seconded by Committee Member Ushka. A voice vote was taken and carried. The change to the order of the day was approved.

## Other Business/Unfinished Business

At approximately 7:14 p.m., Chair Baarsma asked to be replaced by Committee Member Merritt on the Article 2 Legislation Subcommittee.

Committee Member Ushka moved to replace Chair Baarsma with Committee Member Merritt on the Article 2 Legislative Subcommittee, seconded by Committee Member Brackett. A voice vote was taken and carried. The motion to replace Chair Baarsma with Committee Member Merritt on the Article 2 Legislative Subcommittee was approved.

## Testimony from John Powers, Former Mayor City of Spokane, Washington

At approximately 7:15 p.m., John Powers, former Mayor of the City of Spokane, Washington addressed the committee with comments regarding the change in form of government from council/manager to mayor/council and his experience as the first strong Mayor elected in Spokane. He talked about the difference in leadership and management and said that a full time mayor can bring strength and visibility to Tacoma, to be Tacoma's voice is a benefit from a full-time mayor and can create trust and empowerment if it is the right person. Mr. Powers stated that any form of government works if you have the right people and if Tacoma were to change form of government now is a good time because the area doesn't appear to be in distress. He continued to review the new mayor system, including more city council staff and council districts were added as well as a Council President who is also the mayor pro tem and the mayor also hired a city attorney and city administrator. He reiterated that having the right people in the right positions at the right time is critical to the success of any form of government.

## Testimony from the City of Tacoma Civil Service Board

At approximately 8:00 p.m., Chair Baarsma introduced Dan Sexton, Civil Service Board Member, and Beckie Summers, Chair of the Civil Service Board. Both shared background information on the reason for creating the Civil Service Board and the reason as to its design.

At approximately 8:16 p.m., Amy Heller, Civil Service Board Member joined the speakers to talk more about the responsibilities and role of the Civil Service Board. Discussion ensued regarding the nature of residency requirements relative to the Civil Service Board.

At approximately 8:20 p.m., Jennifer Taylor, Deputy City Attorney for the Civil Service Board, addressed the committee regarding state statute, the Tacoma Municipal Code, and case law relating to residency.

At approximately 8:25 p.m., Eric Hanson, Civil Service Board Member, joined the speakers regarding the necessity for input from all stakeholders before the Charter Review Committee makes any decisions regarding the Civil Service Board. Committee Member Miller asked how other cities deal with residency and Ms. Summers reviewed a list of other cities that have residency requirements. Committee Member Baker requested staff provide information relating to the percentage of city employees that go through the Civil Service Board and what percentage of city employees do not use the Civil Service Board for grievances. Committee Member Brackett requested staff provide information on the Civil Service Board relating to caseload and process length. At approximately 8:44 p.m., Lihuang Wung, Planning and Development Services, spoke on behalf of the Planning Commission and reported no issues have been identified by the Planning Commission.

At approximately 8:55 p.m., Gary Knutson, President of the Historic Tacoma Board of Directors testified recommending the Landmarks Preservation Commission be elevated to charter status because of the direct impact on city code and future relevance regarding clean energy applied to preserved historic structures. Committee Member Merritt asked that Section 6.6 of the City Charter, relating to prohibition of contracts with the city while sitting on a commission or board be reconsidered.

#### **Communications**

None.

#### **Reports by the Subcommittees**

At approximately 9:15 p.m., -Committee Member Ushka passed out the Charter Review Subcommittee Draft Process and Report Structure to be reviewed by the subcommittees this week as they meet and discussed at the Monday, March 17, 2014 meeting. Chair Baarsma asked for a motion to cancel the Wednesday, March 12, 2014 Charter Review Committee meeting.

Committee Member Brackett moved that the Wednesday, March 12, 2014 Charter Review Committee meeting be canceled, seconded by Committee Member Hahn. Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion to cancel the Wednesday, March 12, 2014 meeting of the Charter Review Committee was approved. The next meeting of the Charter Review Committee will be Monday, March 17, 2014.

#### **Public Comments**

None.

#### **Committee Comments**

None.

#### **Adjournment**

Committee Member Ushka made a motion to adjourn the meeting; it was seconded by Committee Member Brackett. On proper motion, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

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Bill Baarsma, Chair

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Jeanne Harris, Charter Review Liaison