



City of Santa Rosa

City Charter Review Committee Regular Meeting Minutes - Draft

Wednesday, February 16, 2022

5:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Cisco called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

Present 16 - Chair Patti Cisco, Committee Member Adriana Arrizon, Committee Member Annie Barbour, Committee Member Lisa Badenfort, Committee Member Christine Byrne, Committee Member Dan Condron, Committee Member Abigail Cunningham, Committee Member Ana Diaz, Committee Member Jen Klose, Committee Member Chris Mazzia, Committee Member Evette Minor, Committee Member Ernesto Olivares, Committee Member Logan Pitts, Committee Member Jocelyn Villalobos, Committee Member Mark Walsh, and Committee Member Karen Weeks

Absent 5 - Committee Member Scott Bartley, Committee Member Jazmin Gudino, Committee Member Brian Ling, Committee Member Danny Martinez, and Committee Member Ron Miller

Committee Member Ling joined the meeting at 5:07 p.m.

Committee Member Miller joined the meeting at 5:09 p.m.

Committee Member Bartley joined the meeting at 5:12 p.m.

Committee Member Martinez joined the meeting at 5:25 p.m.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA MATTERS

No public comments were made.

2.1 CORRESPONDENCE.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.1 January 19, 2022, Regular Meeting.

Approved as submitted.

3.2 February 2, 2022, Regular Meeting.

Approved as submitted.

4. SCHEDULED ITEMS

4.1 EQUITY PRINCIPLES

The principles of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging remain in the forefront of the Charter review process. This standing agenda item provides the Committee with the opportunity, at the outset of each of its meetings, to refine, reaffirm and recommit to its Statement of Principles. The Statement of Principles regarding diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging provides a procedural and substantive lens through which the Committee undertakes all of its work.

This is a standing item on the agenda and no presentation or discussion was made at this meeting.

No public comments were made.

4.2 RANKED CHOICE VOTING

The City Council has recommended that, among other topics, the Committee research and consider preparing a Charter amendment to move the City to a ranked choice voting system in the election of Council members. Currently, in each Council district, each voter votes for one candidate and the candidate with the most votes wins the Council seat. Under a ranked choice voting system, each voter would rank the candidates in order of preference. If no candidate receives a majority of the “first choice” votes, a process of elimination will be used to select the winning candidate. This agenda item will outline the key elements of the most common ranked choice voting systems, the pros and cons of such systems, and the experiences of jurisdictions utilizing ranked choice voting.

Deva Proto, Sonoma County Clerk, Assessor, Recorder, presented information on Ranked Choice Voting and answered questions from Committee Members.

No public comments were made.

Discussion ensued on concerns of voter fatigue and the possibility of disenfranchising voters, the small size of district candidates not meeting the needs of voters, concerns on the cost to implement, educating the community, opening the field for diverse candidates to run, not needing to address this issue so soon after the transition to

district elections, if the process generates more involvement by the public, the process possibly being perceived as unfair and met with skepticism on the outcome of elections, possible confusion with the ballot for the voters, and the process that would be used for a council appointment when a vacancy occurs.

A straw vote was taken on whether or not to support putting a measure on the ballot for Ranked Choice Voting. Three Committee Members present voted in support, and 17 Committee Members voted to not support. At the conclusion of the straw vote, the Committee did not move forward with a ballot measure on Ranked Choice Voting.

5. COMMITTEE CHAIR'S/CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORTS

No reports were provided.

6. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS - NONE.

7. WRITTEN AND/OR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS - NONE.

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

8.1 PROPOSED SCHEDULE

- Omnibus ballot for Charter clean-up with examples of previous omnibus ballots
- More frequent review of the Charter to not coincide with census
- Align Charter with District Elections
- Review of using the term citizen versus resident
- Align Community Advisory Board with Council Districts
- Make gender references neutral
- Appointment process for Council vacancies
- Campaign finance reform

No public comments were made.

City Attorney Gallagher will provide a revised list of issues for Committee review and prioritization.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Cisco adjourned the meeting at 7:01 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for March 2, 2022, at 5:00 p.m.

Approved on:

Stephanie A. Williams
City Clerk