



King County

Charter Review Commission

May 22, 2019

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance:

Louise Miller (Co-Chair), Tim Ceis, Joe Fain, Elizabeth Ford, David Heller, Michael Herschensohn, Sean Kelly, Clayton Lewis, Marcos Martinez, Toby Nixon, Nikkita Oliver, Rob Saka, Beth Sigall (via telephone), Alejandra Tres, Kinnon Williams

Excused:

Ian Goodhew, Linda Larson, Nat Morales, Brooks Salazar, Ron Sims and Sung Yang

Council and Executive Staff:

Patrick Hamacher, Director of Legislative Analysis, and Mac Nicholson, Director of Government Relations

Also in Attendance:

Mike Sinsky and Mari Isaacson, Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorneys, King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office.

Welcome and Call to Order

Co-Chair Miller called the meeting to order at 5:38 p.m.

Public Comment:

The following person provided public comment: Jeremy Culumber.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Ceis moved approval of the minutes of the April 24, 2019 meeting. The motion was seconded. There being no objections, the minutes were approved.

Review and Approve Early Action Items

The Commission discussed the items in the "Summary of Proposed Actions" table and selected the following as early action items to be forwarded to the County Council for consideration and potential placement on this year's general election ballot:

- Inquests
 - Guarantee the right to counsel (at County expense) to families of the decedent when going through the inquest process
 - Clarify that an inquest should be done in cases where a decedent has died in County custody.
- Affordable housing language – remove the Charter prohibition restricting the sale of publicly owned land for less than full value for affordable housing.
- Subpoena power for the Office of Law Enforcement Oversight.

The commission voted to move the Preamble issue from an early action item so that the subcommittee can continue the discussion. Questions:

- Can we leave in the concept of innovation to reflect the innovation economy?
Commissioner Saka
- Much more goes into quality of life than recreation, arts and culture. Housing, human rights and education are more important to quality of life.
Commissioner Ceis
 - The preamble addresses issues other than recreation, arts and culture, so that's why the subcommittee added these three. Commissioner Nixon
- Is "intro" grammatically correct? Commissioner Heller
- How much government/taxpayer money should be involved in this? Is it really the job of the county council to fund/support these things? Commissioner Heller
- What is the definition of "equity/equitable" that the subcommittee had in mind when drafting this? Commissioner Heller

Regional Coordination Subcommittee

Consolidating Regional Committees: no questions

Poll: no poll taken, but consensus from the group to continue work on this issue

Equity for All Subcommittee

Non-discrimination language: no questions

Poll: no poll taken, but consensus from the group to continue work on this issue

Workers' Bill of Rights: no questions

Poll: three no's, the rest yes, so enough to continue work on this issue

Project Labor Agreements: no questions

Poll: little support for it, but enough to continue work on this issue (especially since it came from public input at a town hall)

Changes in Personnel System questions:

- Superior Court and District Court judges have concerns because the Executive has control over some but not all of their employees. So urge the subcommittee

to get feedback at least from the presiding judges of both courts. Commissioner Heller

Poll: unanimous yes to continue work on this issue

Demographic Equitable Growth in King County (not in terms of growth management): no questions

Poll: unanimous yes to continue work on this issue

Composition of the Commission to Reflect Demographics of King County: no questions

Poll: consensus to continue work on this issue

Access Subcommittee

Public Financing of Campaigns: subcommittee recommended not moving forward.

Ranked Choice Voting: subcommittee was divided between those in favor of moving forward and those not in favor, and thus no consensus was reached.

Questions:

- Let's get information on costs involved if this is implemented. Commissioner Saka

Poll: majority vote to continue work on this issue

Size of the Council: table it until the Regional Coordination Subcommittee determines what to do with the regional committees. If the Regional Coordination Subcommittee decides to reduce or eliminate regional committees, that would help to guide the conversation of the Access Subcommittee.

Transparency and Accountability Subcommittee

Technical Changes to the Initiative and Referendum Process: no questions

Poll: consensus to continue work on this issue

Changes to the Budgeting Process Proposed by the Executive and Council

questions:

- Did Commissioner Sims have a concern with the allowing the Council to initiate capital projects? Has his input been sought on this issue? Commissioner Heller

Poll: consensus to continue work on this issue

Removal Process for Elected Officials (currently there is no process for removal in King County): no questions

Poll: consensus to continue work on this issue

Make the Sheriff an Appointed Position: no questions

Poll: Thumbs up to continue work on this issue

Elected Public Defender: no questions

Poll: Unanimous thumbs down, meaning leave the office as is. Commissioner Saka wants it reflected that he supports an elected public defender.

Increasing the Independence of the Public Defender:

Poll: Unanimous thumbs up to work on this issue

Scheduling and Next Steps

The June 12, 2019, meeting will be cancelled. The next full Commission meeting will be on June 26, 2019, at 6:00 p.m.

Further discussion was held regarding scheduling for the various subcommittees.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:27 p.m.