



**Charter Review Commission
Minutes
WebEx Board Meeting
March 2, 2021 7:00 PM**

Members Present: Chair Fred Evans, and members John Becker, Harold Hodges, Jack Kelly, Robert Kurnick, Anita Powell, Judy Rudolph, Izola Shaw, Marissa Valeri and Robert Wright. David Gottesman was absent.

Staff Present: Acting City Attorney Cynthia Walters, City Clerk Sara Ferrell, and City Manager Management Assistant Melissa Wiak.

I. Welcome

City Clerk Sara Ferrell opened the meeting via WebEx at 7:10 p.m. Chair Evans welcomed all those present.

II. Approval of Minutes

Motion: to approve the minutes from the February 16, 2021 Charter Review Commission meeting, as amended.

Moved by Commissioner Becker, seconded by Commissioner Wright, and approved unanimously.

III. Report on Team Assignments

Mayor and Council Working Group:

Commissioner Wright reported that each subgroup is continuing to research and report on the subtopics. Chair Evans indicated he will provide the Commission with an update regarding the draft memorandum to the Mayor and Council.

Election Process/Franchise Expansion Working Group:

Commissioner Shaw reported that the group divided each topic into subtopics:

- Commissioner Gottesman was assigned to research and report on the “translation of election information in various languages and alternative methods of advertising the election”

- Commissioner Hodges was assigned to research and report on the “provisions in the election code for internal consistency with the Charter and vice versa”
- Commissioner Shaw was assigned to research and report on the “provisions that may increase voter turnout and alternative voting systems”

The working group will provide an update to the Commission at the March 16, 2021 meeting.

Board of Supervisors of Elections (BSE) Working Group:

Commissioner Kelly reported that he is continuing to research and analyze how the BSE’s responsibilities have changed since the City’s code was created. He stated that he is beginning to draft issue papers regarding the consequences of different appointment terms, staggered terms, and the length of terms regarding the amount of expertise that might be available to the BSE in preparation for an election.

Commissioner Becker reported that he is continuing to research and analyze other jurisdictions’ Boards of Supervisors of Elections, including the number of appointees, length of terms, the appointment process, and reporting requirements for BSE members.

IV. Draft Outline – Work Topics

A draft outline regarding work topics was distributed to Commission members to assist them with providing recommendations regarding their subtopics.

V. Old/New Business

Commissioners Wright and Kelly suggested that the subgroups start developing a timeline as to when they will report and share their findings to the Commission.

Commissioners Valeri and Rudolph expressed concern about the need for the Commission to begin to define and plan for its process of community engagement. Commissioner Rudolph suggested that the Commission form a fourth subgroup to assist with community outreach and engagement. Chair Evans agreed that the Commission should start thinking about how to reach out to the community.

Commissioner Shaw volunteered to draft a plan regarding communication outreach to community members for the Commission’s consideration and approval.

Commissioner Becker suggested that the Commission send a survey to the community, like the one the Boards and Commissions Task Force sent, to elicit feedback and suggestions before hosting virtual community town halls. Commissioner Valeri stated that the Commission should consider different outreach methods, besides online surveys, as not all community members are English language proficient or have access to computers. The format of these different outreach methods should take into consideration the diverse demographics of Rockville.

City Clerk Ferrell stated that she will share with the Commission communication guidelines regarding elections that the Commission could use as a template when drafting a community survey.

Commissioner Becker asked for an update regarding the vacant seat on the Commission. City Clerk Ferrell stated that the Mayor and Council hopes to appoint someone to the vacant position this month.

Commissioner Valeri stated that she would like to see representative districts created by an independent commission outside of Mayor and Council.

City Clerk Ferrell stated that the City Attorney's Office will research the legality of the Commission's recommendations as either being binding or advisory to the Mayor and Council.

VI. Next Steps

Chair Evans suggested that the Commission meet on March 16, March 30, and April 13, 2021.

VII. Future Meetings

Tuesday, March 16, 2021 –7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, March 30, 2021—7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, April 13, 2021—7:00 p.m.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Motion: to adjourn.

Moved by Commissioner Becker, seconded by Commissioner Kelly and approved unanimously.