

**CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JULY 10, 2017
CITY HALL, MEDIA BRIEFING ROOM
3:00 PM**

Members Present:	Jeff Webster, <i>Chair</i> ; Mike Gallagher, <i>Former Elected Official</i> ; Francisco J. Garza, <i>Municipal Law Expert</i> ; Sharon De La Garza, <i>Human Resources Expert</i> ; Art A. Hall, <i>Former Elected Official</i> ; Patricia Rodriguez Oliver, <i>Community Representative</i> ; Dr. Francine Romero, <i>Community Representative</i> ; Richard Perez, <i>Community Representative</i> ; Juan Garcia, <i>Community Representative</i> ; Deborah Gray Marino, <i>Community Representative</i>
Members Absent:	John Gilbert, <i>Community Representative</i> ; Margaret Anaglia, <i>Former City Employee</i> ; Frank M. Garcia, <i>Community Representative</i>
Others Present:	Edward Guzman, <i>Deputy City Attorney</i> ; Camila Kunau, <i>Assistant City Attorney</i> ; Tina Flores, <i>Compliance Auditor</i> ; Lina Rodriguez, <i>Executive Assistant to the City Clerk</i> ; Roderick Sanchez, <i>Assistant City Manager</i> ; John Peterek, <i>Assistant to the City Manager</i> ; Patrick Steck, <i>Special Projects Manager</i> ; Bobbie-Rae Elizondo, <i>Executive Management Assistant</i> ; Michael Shannon, <i>Director of DSD</i> ; Cecily Hope Pretty, <i>Office of the City Clerk</i> ; Nikki Kuhns, <i>Citizen</i> ; Erin Bley, <i>Citizen</i> ; Rhett Smith, <i>Citizen</i> ; Allen Townsend, <i>Citizen</i> ; Josh Baugh, <i>Citizen</i> ; Diane Lang, <i>Citizen</i> ; John Butchkosky, <i>Citizen</i> ; Jack M. Finger, <i>Citizen</i>

Chair Jeff Webster called the meeting to order and asked those members present to introduce themselves.

1. Approval of Minutes

Ms. Sharon De La Garza moved to approve the Minutes of the Charter Review Commission meeting of June 14, 2017. Mr. Mike Gallagher seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Discussion of Possible Charter Amendments

Chair Webster noted that he had discussed the timeline of the Charter Review Commission's recommendations to the City Council. He stated that both he and the Mayor agreed that the initial goal of August 2017 recommendations was too soon and that the Commission would now work toward a goal of recommendations in early 2018 for a May election. He noted that Palm Heights Neighborhood Association submitted a document with five recommendations for the Commission. He asked the Subcommittee chairs to describe their assigned topics briefly.

Dr. Francine Romero stated that the Governance Subcommittee was examining form of government, term length, election dates, candidate residency, voting methods, campaign finance, the City Council and City Attorney relationship, and the authority of the City to file lawsuits against other government entities. She noted that the Subcommittee had recommendations or opinions on each of these topics.

Chair Webster asked of the Bond Issuance Subcommittee. Assistant City Attorney Camila Kunau replied that they had only discussed affordable housing bonds but not financial transparency. She stated they had met June 29th and were planning three other meetings to address both issues further.

Chair Webster stated that the Development Subcommittee would examine the Planning Commission composition, recall and referendum procedures, historic preservation, and the recognition of indigenous peoples. He added that the Ethics Subcommittee would address the Ethics Review Board composition, a formal sunset process for boards and commissions, and the number of council districts.

Chair Webster stated that after each Subcommittee had met and made their recommendations to the Commission, the final recommendations would be agreed upon by the Commission as a whole before being presented to City Council.

3. Subcommittee Reports

Chair Webster asked the Subcommittees to describe their discussions to date in detail.

Dr. Romero stated the Governance Subcommittee would not be making any recommendations to change the City's form of government. She noted that the Subcommittee felt the current structure was important for the City's current high bond rating. She stated the Subcommittee's recommendation to move to two 4-year terms for Councilmembers and the Mayor but not to stagger the terms. She added that if the 4-year terms were accepted, the amount of time remaining in an elected official's term in the case of a mid-term vacancy should be doubled from the current length. She stated that the Subcommittee recommended lowering the threshold of signatures required to initiate a recall election and asked the Development Subcommittee to examine this. Mr. Frank Garza added that they had reviewed the current Charter language and believed the current threshold to be too high. Chair Webster asked if they had done research into other cities' criteria for recall elections. Mr. John Peterek replied that they had that information and would distribute it to the Commission.

Dr. Romero stated that the Subcommittee did not recommend changing City elections from May to November of either odd-numbered or even-numbered years. She discussed strengthening requirements for candidates to file to run for office but noted that the City Clerk did not have legal authority to enforce this. She recommended a possible change regarding residency to the City Code instead of to the City Charter. She stated that they did not receive enough citizen input to make recommendations regarding voting methods or public campaign finance.

Mr. Garza stated there was no citizen input regarding the relationship between the City Attorney and City Council and therefore they had no recommendation. He noted that attorneys would likely approach filing suits against other government entities differently so the Subcommittee would not make a recommendation for a Charter amendment.

Mr. Art Hall stated that the Ethics Subcommittee had not met because they were waiting for input from the Ethics Review Board following the board's next meeting. He stated that the Subcommittee wished to interview former ERB members.

4. Discussion and possible scheduling of future meetings

Chair Webster noted that the Mayor asked for a potential B Session briefing to City Council on the Commission's process and progress. He asked for input regarding future Commission meetings and public hearings.

Mr. Garza stated his support for a public hearing before taking the Commission's formal recommendations to full City Council. All Commission members indicated their assent.

Chair Webster suggested two additional public hearings, one before the 2017 winter holidays and one in January 2018. Dr. Romero and Ms. Patricia Rodriguez Oliver indicated their support for these dates.

Ms. De La Garza noted that the previous Commission's timeline did not allow public sector groups enough opportunity to promote various amendment proposals and therefore asked there be more time in between Council approval and the election.

Chair Webster suggested canceling the July 24 meeting of the Commission to allow the Subcommittees more time to meet and prepare recommendations. Mr. Garza, Mr. Hall, and Dr. Romero indicated their agreement. The Commission agreed to reschedule their next meeting to August 14. Chair Webster reminded Commission members that they could attend any Subcommittee.

Mr. Gallagher asked for clarification regarding using 2020 census data to examine the issue of increasing the number of Council districts. Mr. Peterek stated that recommendations could be made based on future population projections. He noted that Fort Worth had followed this process to expand their number of Council districts. Mr. Garza discussed current population imbalances between districts and suggested multiple stages of adding districts.

5. Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:40 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jeff Webster, Chair



Lina Rodriguez, Office of the City Clerk