

City of Gainesville

City Hall
200 East University Avenue
Gainesville, Florida 32601



Minutes - Final

January 6, 2020

4:00 PM

Gainesville Regional Utilities Multi-Purpose Room

Charter Review Commission

Walter Barry (Member)
Richard Blount (Member)
Susan Bottcher (Member)
Jorge Campos (Member)
Cynthia Chestnut (Member)
Robert Cohen (Member)
Crystal Goodison (Vice-Chair)
Scherwin Henry (Member)
Mary Lou Hildreth (Chair)
Jeremiah Tattersall (Member)
Donna Waller (Member)

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CALL TO ORDER - 4:08 PM

ROLL CALL

Bryan Eastman and Nick Gonzalez (alternates) were present.

Present 9 - Member Henry, Member Bottcher, Member Barry, Member Goodison, Member Chestnut, Member Blount, Member Waller, Member Tattersall, and Member Hildreth

Absent 2 - Member Cohen, and Member Campos

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

A motion was made by Member Bottcher, seconded by Member Barry, that this Matter be Adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 8 - Member Bottcher, Member Barry, Member Goodison, Member Chestnut, Member Blount, Member Waller, Member Tattersall, and Member Hildreth

Absent: 3 - Member Henry, Member Cohen, and Member Campos

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[190760.](#)

Approval of Minutes from December 2, 2019 Meetings (B)

RECOMMENDATION

The Charter Review Commission approve the December 2, 2019 (2) minutes.

A motion was made by Member Barry, seconded by Member Chestnut, that this Matter be Approved as Recommended. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 8 - Member Bottcher, Member Barry, Member Goodison, Member Chestnut, Member Blount, Member Waller, Member Tattersall, and Member Hildreth

Absent: 3 - Member Henry, Member Cohen, and Member Campos

BUSINESS DISCUSSION ITEMS

[190663.](#)

Workplan - Article V (NB)

Chair Hildreth introduced the item, asked about interest in discussing section 5.07 of the City Charter. Member Bottcher responded about the request by Member Campos to wait to discuss section 5.07 to allow for additional member comment. Chair Hildreth asked for additional comments. Member Chestnut asked a question. Member Bottcher responded about waiting for staff analysis. No members indicated a desire to discuss the section. GRU General Manager Ed Bielarski commented that the CRC has not sent

anything (proposed charter amendments) to GRU for analysis. Chair Hildreth responded that this would be discussed later in the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

The Charter Review Commission discuss and take action deemed necessary.

Discussed

190761.

Workplan Article VI (NB)

Chair Hildreth introduced the item. No discussion.

Member Henry arrived at 4:12 PM.

RECOMMENDATION

The Charter Review Commission discuss and take action deemed necessary.

No Action Taken

190792.

Ranked Choice Voting

Jean Chalmers and John Severini, Sarasota County, gave a presentation in support of ranked choice voting, requested that the Charter Review Commission include it in the City Charter.

Member Barry asked a question. Ms. Chalmers and Mr. Severini responded.

Member Barry asked about vote tabulation equipment. Dan Nee, Staff Attorney, responded. Ms. Chalmers and Mr. Severini responded.

Member Chestnut asked a question about the operations of City elections. Asked whether Ms. Chalmers has spoken with the Alachua County Supervisor of Elections. Ms. Chalmers responded that the Supervisor of Elections is aware of the issue; she does not take a position in support of or against RCV.

Alternate-Member Eastman asked whether a change to the City Charter is required, or whether the change can be made by ordinance. Ms. Chalmers responded that they prefer to have the change in the charter.

Vice-Chair Goodison asked for example language from other city charters to follow; and asked if the change can be made in other ways aside from charter amendment.

Mr. Severini responded.

Member Henry asked how Sarasota instituted ranked choice voting.

Asked if Gainesville could implement RCV if the City ran its own elections (without waiting for state approval for the county to implement the change). Mr. Severini responded that Sarasota has made the change to its charter, but it is not yet implemented.

Member Henry asked about bias or benefit to certain candidates with a RCV system, whether state government might be biased toward the system. Member Henry spoke in agreement with the goal of building local support for RCV in order to achieve statewide support for the system.

Member Barry responded, commented about the presentation.

Member Blount commented about bias in spending power in elections.

Member Bottcher commented that CRC is deciding whether staff should bring analysis whether RCV should be included in the City Charter (Article 2.04) regarding how the City operates elections. Supports including the change in the charter despite the obstacles. Motion by Member Bottcher, seconded by Vice-Chair Goodison: 1) obtain from Jon Severini the charter language and submit to staff and City Attorney; and 2) move forward RCV as a proposed charter amendment to consider for the 2020 ballot.

Member Tattersall commented that charter does not preclude changing to RCV by ordinance. Supports having the change, but would prefer making the change by ordinance. Member Chestnut commented that CRC could recommend the change to the City Commission. Member Tattersall commented that the CRC could ask the Commission to support the change by ordinance.

Member Eastman supports RCV. Asked City Attorney what the legal ramifications would be related to the implementation if the change were made to the charter. Would like to hear from the Supervisor of Elections.

Member Chestnut supports an ordinance rather than a change to the charter.

Vice-Chair Goodison asked if the discussion could be continued to invite the SOE to speak about the implementation. Chair Hildreth responded about the timing. Supports the idea, but would need more information to make this change to the charter.

Member Henry agreed that even adding it to the charter would be dormant until the state takes action to approve. The City Commission could implement by ordinance; the CRC could recommend that they draft a resolution in support of a RCV system.

Member Bottcher commented that more municipalities have implemented the change by charter amendment than by ordinance. Would prefer to have the change in the charter when the state eventually approves. Proposes that the CRC hold a special meeting in January to discuss RCV with the Supervisor of Elections.

Member Tattersall asked about how most municipalities have passed this change. Commented regarding the length of the ballot, need to be cautious of number of items included.

Vote: Send to staff for analysis 5 - 4.

Member Goodison commented in support of hearing from the Supervisor of Elections. Member Bottcher agreed.

Member Bottcher moved to schedule a meeting with the Supervisor of Elections to hear about RCV. Chair Hildreth away from Jan 15 - following. Member Bottcher asked Clerk to send Doodle calendar. Chair Hildreth suggested scheduling February 3 meeting.

Alternate Eastman asked if CRC should meet again before February. Chair Hildreth responded about discussing work plan.

Member Blount commented in favor of hearing from SOE. Suggested asking SOE for possible dates. Member Henry suggested making the item time certain. The Clerk will coordinate scheduling with the Supervisor of Elections to attend the February 3 meeting or other available dates.

RECOMMENDATION

The Charter Review Commission hear a presentation by Jean Chalmers.

Approved, as shown above

WORKPLAN REVIEW

190358.

Workplan Review (B)

Chair Hildreth reviewed the updated timeline drafted by City Attorney Nicolle Shalley; and asked Dan Nee when staff analysis would be ready. Mr. Nee responded that the Charter Officers met and discussed approach to responding to items. Most proposed items will have input from various Charters. They recognize the need to return analysis as soon as possible. Commission has asked for fully drafted ordinance language prior to

presentation to the Commission.

Lee Feldman, City Manager, commented that the Charter Officers understand that a report with analysis for the CRC is expected by February 3.

Member Tattersall commented that the County Charter Review Commission heard a presentation regarding the ballot from the County Supervisor of Elections at one of its meetings. The Clerk commented that the deadline for ballot language was moved to June 15 to provide the number of City ballot questions to the Supervisor of Elections. Dan Nee responded that the questions will all be the same length regardless of the length of the ordinance. Chair Hildreth commented that some items will be simpler.

Chair Hildreth commented that CRC will need Feb 3 meeting, and need a significant amount of staff analysis. Will invite Supervisor of Elections or designee to present at 4:00 pm.

Chair Hildreth commented that the Clerk has provided tentative dates for public hearings when City Hall Auditorium is available: April 8, April 15 and April 22.

Chair Hildreth asked whether CRC or Commission conducts the public hearings.

Member Chestnut stated that she is not available on April 8.

Dan Nee responded that the hearings are held by the CRC, 7 days apart.

Chair Hildreth commented that she is available for the proposed date. Member Chestnut commented that April 8 is Passover. Member Barry proposed April 6 during regular meeting.

Member Blount commented that the public can come different days.

The Clerk and Dan Nee clarified that the ordinance pertaining to the charter review does NOT require the meetings to be held in the Auditorium.

The Clerk will inquire about the availability of the GRU Multi-purpose Room for the public hearings. Vice-Chair Goodison suggested varying the days - a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday to offer variety for the public. Chair Hildreth asked how long they have to be - suggested 5 -7 pm or 6 - 8 PM. Member

Chestnut spoke in favor of 6 - 8 PM.

RECOMMENDATION

The Charter Review Commission discuss and take action deemed necessary.

Discussed

MEMBER COMMENT

Member Blount commented about the book that he recommended at a previous meeting - "The Color of Law". He plans to present language on racial equity at the CRC's February meeting for consideration of whether it could be added to the charter under Article 1.04(21): Special Powers.

PUBLIC COMMENT

NEXT MEETING DATE - February 3, 2020

ADJOURNMENT - 5:15 PM

Motion to adjourn by Member Tattersall; seconded by Member Henry. Vote passed 9 - 0.