



# City of Tacoma

## Charter Review Committee Minutes

March 4, 2024

5:30 p.m.

747 Market Street, Tacoma WA 98402, Conference Room 220A

Dial: 253-215-8782 Meeting ID: 915 2560 1849

Webinar Link: <https://www.zoom.us/j/91525601849>

### Call to Order

Chair Wamback called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

### Roll Call

**Present: 9** - Nicholas Carr, Silong Chhun, Patrick Fischer, Jason Gauthier, Andre Jimenez, Melissa Malott, Latasha Palmer, Stephen Wamback, and Lok Yin Wu

**Absent: 6** – Katie Baird, Maricres Castro, Bryan Flint (excused), Andrea Reay (excused), Rebecca Stith, and Diamatris Winston

Committee Member Stith arrived at 5:35 p.m., Committee Member Winston arrived at 5:40 p.m., Committee Member Baird arrived at 5:48 p.m., and Committee Member Castro arrived at 6:00 p.m.

All Committee Members participated virtually.

### Welcome

Committee Member Stith arrived here, at 5:35 p.m.

At approximately 5:36 p.m., Chair Wamback began the Committee meeting by revisiting the topic of drafting Charter language and proposed to add this to agenda as item 4 and proposed to add engagement with Neighborhood Councils as item 7 to the agenda. No objection from the Committee on the proposed added topics to the agenda. The agenda was amended.

### Public Comment

There was no Public Comment.

Committee Member Winston arrived here, at 5:40 p.m.

## **CRC Discussion: Form of Government**

At approximately 5:41 p.m., Chair Wamback opened the conversation on drafting Charter language. Committee Members discussed supporting the flexibility of being able to draft language for the Charter.

**MOTION:** Carr moved to allow the Committee and Subcommittees the flexibility to draft Charter language.

**SECONDED BY:** Malott

**ACTION:** Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was declared adopted by unanimous consent.

Committee Member Baird arrived here, at 5:48 p.m.

Chair Wamback restated his requests for the Committee and Subcommittees to funnel staff requests through him, and specific Committee requests such as forming a citizen committee on climate reporting, police accountability research, climate budget and carbon reporting, and a ten-year review of the Charter are topics for discussion brought up by members to be clarified or given specific directions on.

Chair Wamback then opened the floor for discussion on form of government. Discussion ensued on the idea of sending changes to the form of government to the voters, their thoughts, and insights on their current thinking about Tacoma's current form of government, and that most of the public comments received by the Committee thus far favor a change in form of government.

Committee Member Castro arrived here, at 6:00 p.m.

Committee discussion continued as members shared their thoughts on the current form of government, viewpoints evolving as the members continue to research, hear from subject matter experts, and hear from the public on the issue. The general conversation is to bring the issue of changing the current form of government to the voters and letting them decide.

The Chair highlighted a couple topics that came out of the discussion on form of government. One is the issue of transition logistics if the Committee chooses to move forward with recommending a change to the current form of government. Second, are conflicting Charter amendments on the ballot, understanding what happens if multiple contradictory amendments pass.

Discussion ensued on transition planning and contradictory amendments, and the Committee agreed to move forward with exploring the possibility of changing the form of government as a committee recommendation. The Committee formed a new subcommittee tasked to explore this topic.

**MOTION:** Baird moved to continue working on form of government with the idea of proposing something to the City Council.

**SECONDED BY:** Palmer

**ACTION:** Thumb vote was taken and carried. The motion was declared adopted by unanimous consent.

**MOTION:** Stith moved to form a new subcommittee tasked to carry out the work on the form on government issue.

**SECONDED BY:** Malott

**ACTION:** Thumb vote was taken and carried. The motion was declared adopted by unanimous consent.

Chair asked for volunteers to fill the membership of the newly formed subcommittee.

**MOTION:** Carr moved to confirm the membership of the Form of Government Subcommittee.

**SECONDED BY:** Baird

**ACTION:** Thumb vote was taken and carried. The motion was declared adopted by unanimous consent.

The Form of Government Subcommittee members are Malott, Wu, Castro, Stith, and Baird.

## **Break**

The meeting recessed at 7:15 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 7:27 p.m.

## **CRC Discussion: Subcommittees and Drafting**

At approximately 7:27 p.m., Chair Wambach acknowledged Baird as he opened the conversation on subcommittees and drafting. Baird brought up the topic of public comments received by the Committee, and how the Committee plans on addressing those issues.

Chair then called on the Miscellaneous Subcommittee for a quick briefing on topics the group is working on. Gauthier reported for the group and some of the topics that were brought up are plain language consideration in the Charter and changing “shall” to “will”, citizenship and employment in Section 6.3 of the Charter, recommendation to include “caste” as a classification, discriminatory language section, disposition of City-owned properties, and the preamble and landing acknowledgment portion of the Charter.

Carr then volunteered to report on topics the Administrative Subcommittee is tackling. These included possible formation of a climate-based commission, Planning Commission membership, “purpose of inquiry” language, language regarding an official newspaper, and language on the administrative portion of Council and City Manager issues. The Administrative Subcommittee is prepared to bring forward topics of Tacoma’s official newspaper and the Planning Commission and Landmarks Preservation Commission to the Committee as a Whole at next week’s meeting.

Members Malott, Palmer, and Fischer reported on status of work for the Police Accountability Subcommittee including ongoing projects and future meetings.

Baird reported on topics for the Public Utilities Subcommittee including Section 4.1 adding internet as part of the utilities; Section 4.8 including a board member outside Tacoma limits, but within the utility service area; Section 4.15 expanding the purpose of an external performance review; clarifying the “purpose of inquiry” language; and board member compensation.

Palmer then reported on topics from the Power of the People Subcommittee. Some of the topics the subcommittee is working on are, campaign financing and contributions, ranked choice voting, empowering Neighborhood Councils, and the initiative and referendum process.

## **Other Business and Homework**

At approximately 8:02 p.m., Castro advocated and encouraged Committee Members to attend and participate in their own Neighborhood Council meetings. The Committee is interested in strengthening the connection with all the local Neighborhood Councils and are exploring avenues on how to create and make those connections.

Chair Wamback passed on the Mayor’s suggestion for Committee Members to meet with the City Manager. If Committee Members are interested, Sonja Hallum, Charter Liaison, can help facilitate logistics with scheduling.

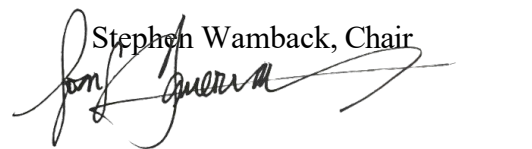
## **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.



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Stephen Wamback, Chair



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Joan Taverna, City Clerk’s Office