



# City of Tacoma

## Charter Review Committee Minutes

March 11, 2024

5:30 p.m.

747 Market Street, Tacoma WA 98402, Conference Room 138

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 5:30 p.m.

### Roll Call

**Present: 12** – Katie Baird, Nicholas Carr, Maricres Castro, Patrick Fischer, Bryan Flint, Andre Jimenez, Melissa Malott, Latasha Palmer, Andrea Reay, Rebecca Stith, Stephen Wamback, and Lok Yin Wu

**Absent: 3** – Silong Chhun (excused), Jason Gauthier (excused), and Diamatris Winston

Committee Member Winston arrived at 6:12 p.m.

All Committee Members participated virtually.

### Welcome

At approximately 5:32 p.m., Chair Wamback began the meeting by outlining the agenda for tonight's meeting.

### Approval of Minutes

There were no comments or corrections from Committee Members on the minutes from the February 22, 2024, meeting. The minutes were approved.

### Public Comment

Public Comment began at 5:35 p.m.

Speaking before the Committee:

1. Ty Moore, spoke on the importance of making the initiative process easier and removing confusing language on alternatives.
2. Ann Dorn, spoke on police accountability and citizen oversight, ballot initiatives, and

- misleading language on alternative.
3. Zev, spoke on police accountability, strong initiative process, lack of accountability of City Manager, and unfair competing initiative.
  4. Beverly Allen, spoke on citizen oversight of police, empowering CPAC, and competing ballot initiative.

Public Comment ended at 5:50 p.m.

## **Tacoma Public Utilities (TPU) Subcommittee Report**

### **Internet as a Public Utility**

At approximately 5:51 p.m., Chair opened the floor for Tacoma Public Utilities (TPU) Subcommittee to report on the progress of their work thus far. Carr led the discussion on four recommendations the Subcommittee would like to put forth to the Committee as a Whole for advancement as amendments to the Charter.

Carr started out with Section 4.1 of the Charter which deals with the issue of adding internet as part of public utilities. The Subcommittee’s recommendation is adding the word “internet” which will allow TPU and the City power to provide internet as a public benefit.

Discussion ensued on private providers and market competition, internet access and availability, prior history on timing, and why the Charter is best avenue for this change.

**MOTION:** Carr moved to add internet as an allowable service to Tacoma Public Utilities, pending legal review.

**SECONDED BY:** Baird

**ACTION:** Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was declared adopted by majority consent with Fischer voting against.

Committee Member Winston arrived here, at 6:12 p.m.

### **TPU Board Membership**

At approximately 6:13 p.m., Flint led the presentation on TPU Board membership which is in Sections 4.8 and 4.9. The Subcommittee recommends allowing one out of five utility Board members to reside outside City limits but remain in TPU service area. The rationale behind this recommendation is to expand representation to those receiving service from TPU but don’t reside within Tacoma City limits.

Discussion ensued on sharing utility risk of residents with non-residents, availability of utility options for residents outside Tacoma, background on Board member selection, voting history, and equity and access issues.

**MOTION:** Flint moved to advance this recommendation to staff for legal review and drafting.

**SECONDED BY:** Baird

**ACTION:** Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was declared adopted by majority consent with Malott voting against.

**Review and Audit**

At approximately 6:34 p.m., Flint continued with the Subcommittee’s next topic which is TPU’s shared services review and audit. Flint shared a brief background and the Subcommittee’s proposal to add language on an audit of the shared services as described in Section 4.17. This survey and audit shall be done in Section 4.15 of the Charter. The proposed audit is in addition to TPU’s management review which is performed every 10 years.

Discussion ensued on a minor language change adding “qualified independent auditor”, cost burden or shared cost of the audit, and the intent of the proposed amendment.

**MOTION:** Flint moved to advance the recommendation to add qualified independent auditor language to staff for legal review and drafting.

**SECONDED BY:** Baird

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

**Break**

The meeting recessed at 6:55 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 7:05 p.m.

**Clarify Language Related to “Purposes of Inquiry”**

At approximately 7:05 p.m., Carr presented the topic of “purpose of inquiry” language in Section 4.19. The Subcommittee’s proposal is to strike out current language and replace it with the proposed language from the Subcommittee to clarify intent and purpose.

Discussion ensued on clarifying where the new language came from and where the Subcommittee deemed it appropriate to be reused, enforcement mechanism, response timeframe, governance versus operations, and clarity behind the intent.

**MOTION:** Carr moved to advance the recommendation to staff for legal review and drafting.

**SECONDED BY:** Baird

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

## **Administrative Subcommittee Report**

### **Clarify Language Related to “Purposes of Inquiry”**

At approximately 7:28 p.m., Carr gave the presentation for the Administrative Subcommittee on the topic of “purposes of inquiry” language in Section 3.2. The Subcommittee’s proposed amendment is to eliminate portions and add language to clarify the intent and purpose of the paragraph.

Discussion ensued on the reference to timeframe in getting responses back, and inconsistent language with State law.

**MOTION:** Carr moved to advance the recommendation to staff for legal review and drafting.

**SECONDED BY:** Castro

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

## **Other Subcommittee Reports and Discussion**

At approximately 7:38 p.m., Chair request a brief update from the rest of the Subcommittees with particular emphasis on items ready to be presented for the next meeting.

Stith provided the update for the Miscellaneous Subcommittee’s topics which were the preamble, Puyallup Tribe acknowledgement, and Charter Section 6.7 replacing the word handicap with disability.

Flint gave the update for the TPU Subcommittee which is left with a topic that requires consultation and clarification before finalization.

Stith gave the update from Administrative Subcommittee which is still working on Council hiring staff and outside counsel. The Administrative Subcommittee also has forwarded four items to staff for legal review and awaits its return to see if further discussion is required.

Reay provided the update from the Power of the People Subcommittee. The group is currently still gathering information on their topics such as rank choice voting and the initiative process.

Jimenez gave the update from the Police Accountability Subcommittee, and they will be ready to present on inspector general and oversight commission concept at the next meeting.

Malott gave the update from the Form of Government Subcommittee. The group discussed going over the 2014 Charter change of government proposal, transition, and cost issues. They also

requested if staff could provide examples of various versions of Mayor/Council form of government from other cities if possible.

Palmer gave an update on the work the Public Outreach Subcommittee is focusing on including increased efforts in reaching out and presenting to local Neighborhood Councils, intent of the increased effort, and increased public awareness and engagement.

## **Staff Update**

No update from staff.

## **Other Business and Homework**

No other business and homework.

## **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.



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Stephen Wamback, Chair



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Joan Taverna, City Clerk's Office