



# City of Tacoma

## Charter Review Committee Minutes

February 15, 2024

5:30 p.m.

747 Market Street, Tacoma WA 98402, Conference Room 243

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

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

### Call to Order

Acting Chair Reay called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

### Roll Call

**Present: 13** - Katie Baird, Nicholas Carr, Maricres Castro, Silong Chhun, Patrick Fischer, Bryan Flint, Jason Gauthier, Andre Jimenez, Melissa Malott, Latasha Palmer, Andrea Reay, Rebecca Stith, and Lok Yin Wu

**Absent: 2** – Stephen Wamback (excused), and Diamtris Winston

Committee Member Winston arrived at 5:38 p.m.

Committee Members Chhun, Jimenez, and Winston participated virtually.

### Welcome

At approximately 5:31 p.m., Acting Chair Reay revisited the updates made to the outreach flyer that were discussed during the February 12, 2024, meeting. Discussion ensued on adding Cambodian/Khmer language as an interpretation option for the day of the extended public comment meeting and to the flyer, and possible delays in the production and distribution of the flyer. The Committee agreed to move forward with the current flyer. Committee Member Castro will work on outreach to the Cambodian community inviting them to the public comment event.

Committee Member Winston arrived here, at 5:38 p.m.

### Public Comment

There was no Public Comment.

## **Approval of CRC Meeting Minutes**

At approximately 5:38 p.m., the Committee reviewed the minutes from the January 18, 2024, January 22, 2024, January 25, 2024, and January 29, 2024, Charter Review Committee meetings.

**MOTION:** Carr moved to approve the meeting minutes from the January 18, 2024, January 22, 2024, January 25, 2024, and January 29, 2024, Charter Review Committee meetings.

**SECONDED BY:** Gauthier

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

## **Citizen Commission on Elected Salaries Presentation**

### **Overview**

At approximately 5:40 p.m., Acting Chair Reay introduced Kari Louie, Assistant Director, Human Resources. Louie presented on the Citizen Commission on Elected Salaries (CCES), the commission who determines the compensation and salary of the Mayor and City Council Members. She touched on historical background of CCES, role of the CCES, structure, where to find more information on the CCES, and current compensation and benefit package for the Mayor and City Council.

### **RCW Conflict**

At approximately 6:16 p.m., Martha Lantz, Deputy City Attorney, presented a possible conflict between RCW 35.21.015(3) and Charter Sections 2.3 and 2.4, noting the RCW states any change in salary shall become effective without further action of the Council.

Discussion ensued regarding the CCES selection process, CCES member terms, information on the most current salary and compensation study, and factors to consider when evaluating salaries and benefits and Council benefits.

The Committee requested assistance from Lantz in forming language in anticipation of some technical changes the Committee could possibly make to the Charter.

## **CRC Discussion – Council/Mayor Issues**

At approximately 6:23 p.m., Acting Chair Reay opened the floor for the Committee's continued conversation on Council and Mayor issues. The Committee revisited term limits and voter representation.

### **Full-time vs. Part-time Council**

At approximately 6:30 p.m., Acting Chair Reay brought the conversation back to full-time versus part-time Council issues. Discussion ensued on impacts on salary, duties, responsiveness,

expectations, and responsibilities. Committee members also discussed clearly defining the role of a full-time Council since this issue is not mentioned in the Charter, the desire for a strong legislative branch of government, and whether the Charter is the correct vehicle.

## **Break**

The meeting recessed at 7:07 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 7:17 p.m.

## **CRC Discussion – Council/Mayor Issues**

### **Council Salaries**

At approximately 7:17 p.m., the Committee explored the idea of how to empower the CCES to ensure a fair and equitable compensation to Tacoma's elected officials.

### **Council Staff**

At approximately 7:27 p.m., Flint started the conversation on Council staff. Discussion ensued on possible changes in the staffing structure, where to embed the checks and balances to ensure robust discussion on City issues, how to empower Council through the Charter to allow them to hire their own staff, and possible separate legal counsel for Council was also explored.

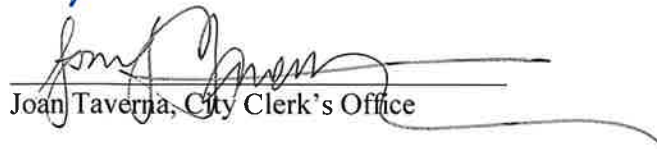
## **Other Business and Homework**

At approximately 7:55 p.m., Lantz briefly reminded Committee Members on what the Public Records Act covers and the responsibility to search and produce those public records if requested.

## **Adjournment**

On proper motion, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

  
Stephen Wamback, Chair

  
Joan Taverna, City Clerk's Office

