

2015 Charter Review Task Force



Summary Minutes

Thursday, May 7, 2015

5:00PM

Council Committee Room
9th Floor, Suite 9081
Albuquerque/Bernalillo
County Government Center

Members Present

Robert White
Laura Mason
Bruce Thompson
Steven Gallegos
Robert Stetson
Doug Antoon
Steven Allen
Myra Segel
David Buchholtz
Jerry Evans

Council/ Administration Staff Present

Lindsay Burkhard, Council
Jessica Hernandez, City Attorney
Chris Melendrez, Council

The meeting was called to order at 5:11 PM.

1. Roll Call

Mr. White, Task Force Chair starts the meeting and calls roll. Mr. White stated that the Mayor's appointees may have been made and offers to again reach out to the CAO. Mr. White offers to work with those appointees to bring them up to speed before the next meeting.

2. Discussion of the Task

Chris Melendrez goes over the resolution (R-15-168) that was adopted by Council. Mr. Melendrez gives a brief history of the Charter Review Task Force. Mr. Melendrez also states that this resolution has outlined five proposed amendments that the Council would like the Task Force to consider. The Task Force is also at liberty to identify other issues deemed important by the Task Force to make recommendations on.

a. Review of the five proposed amendments

Mr. Melendrez identifies the 5 proposed amendments identified in the resolution:

1. Potential Council remedies in the event a timely Mayoral appointment is not presented for positions which require the advice and consent of the Council.
Example: City Clerk Position- the city has been working with an interim City Clerk for over a year.
2. Potential Council remedies in the event timely appointments are not made to the “Intragovernmental Conference Committee” established under Article XIX of the Charter in 2009.
Example: What happens when a timely appointment isn’t made, or what happens when the Mayor is re-elected and does the City Attorney have to be reconfirmed? The Committee has not been staffed.
3. The provision of the Charter that requires nine and only nine Council Districts so as to potentially allow more than nine districts.
Example: Is it still appropriate to have the same number of districts that we had in the 1974?
4. The provisions relating to public financing of campaigns and other election provisions in need of update or revision.
5. The provision in the Charter requiring photo identification for voters in regular municipal elections.
6. No voter identification law at state level, but City has one for Municipal elections

Mr. Melendrez calls attention to the June 15, 2015 deadline.

3. Setting of Meeting Schedule

Mr. White encourages Task Force to start considering these remedies and discuss a meeting schedule so that the Task Force may make the deadline. Mr. White asks the Task Force if Thursdays at 5PM will work. Task Force informally agrees. Mr. Antoon suggests putting a time limit on the meeting. Mr. White states that he has been approached by potential presenters and notes holding a public hearing. Mr. White confirms that this Task Force will conduct business as if it was an open meeting. The Task Force considers keeping the meeting to two hours.

Mr. Gallegos makes a motion to meet every Thursday from 5PM-7PM in the Council Committee Room with the understanding that it can be cancelled at any time. The motion was seconded by Mr. Stetson. The motion carries.

4. Needs of the Task Force

Mr. Gallegos suggests that Mayor and Council Staff go through the proposed amendments and inform the Task Force of any legal issues with regard to potential revisions that they become aware of. Mr. Melendrez offers to take a look at this.

The Task Force considers presenting majority and minority recommendations to the Council. Ms. Mason states that the Task Force will need different research for each discussion. Mr. White states that campaign finance reform and number of districts

may need more discussion. Ms. Mason asks for more information on the voter identification issue.

5. Other Business

Mr. Bucholtz suggests two ideas for additional consideration: Should the Council act as a Quasi-judicial body? Could the Council act more efficiently during Council Meetings in respect to time to discuss important matters/ official business by holding a separate “business meeting” (in reference to proclamations, memorials, political presentations etc.)? Mr. White states that the Task Force will take up question of “other issues” at next meeting.

Mr. Thompson states he worked on a major rewrite to try to take the Quasi-judicial work away from Council and give it to another body. Mr. Melendrez offered to look for that work. Mr. White asks the Task Force to look at additions to review next week. Mr. Antoon asks what if there is a tie when voting. The Task Force informally agrees that Roberts Rules prevail. (A tie fails).

The Task force then discusses its role as a recommending body. Mr. Antoon suggests prioritizing recommendations. Ms. Mason suggests creating an appendix for future commissions to review in addition to the Charter Report.

Mr. Gallegos brings up Public Outreach. Mr. White states that the Task Force will hold a Public hearing. Council Staff directed by Mr. White to prepare a press release announcing meeting time and other information to the public. Mr. Antoon suggests allowing for public participation. Mr. White states that is the Task Force’s charge is to represent the public, to bring ideas on how the city government can improve.

Mr. White points out that the driver for the June 15th deadline is to have these recommendations go before the council in enough time that they can be considered for the October 2015 municipal election. Mr. White suggests vetting every idea brought forth by Task Force Members.

The Task Force then discusses what should be included on the agenda for the next meeting to be held on May 7, 2015. Mr. Thompson suggests having a presentation to start the next meeting. Ms. Heather Ferguson from New Mexico Common Cause offers to prepare a 30 min presentation for the Task Force at the next meeting to discuss public financing of campaigns. Mr. White directs staff to include a provision for the public to request time to present before the Task Force in the press release.

The Task Force discusses a public hearing. It is suggested that the public hearing be held after the Task Force has time to vet issues. It is informally decided that the dates will be assigned at next meeting.

Mr. Thompson brings up questions about when appointments really need to be made. Mr. Melendrez states that Task Force members can ask staff for information during a meeting or at another time at the discretion of the chair.

Ms. Hernandez introduces herself to the Task Force. Mr. White again talks about bringing the Mayors appointees up to speed as soon as they are named.

The Task Force discusses what additional support they will need from both Administration and City Council Staff and additional items that will be considered at the next meeting.

Mr. White suggests that staff reach out to acting City Clerk to address issues and problems that have developed with election code in respect the public finance provisions of the charter.

Mr. Antoon suggests that the Mayor's appointees be encouraged to listen to the audio recording of this meeting.

6. Adjourn

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:14PM.