



Charter Review Commission (CRC) Regular Meeting Minutes
May 12, 2021

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call – Bill absent, Olivia joined late. Kathryn Hansen.

Members of the Public: Randy Gaylord, Amy Vira, Milene Henley, Rhonda Pederson, Carl de Boor, Anne Whirledge-Karp, Chom Graecen, John Pierre van Dongen, Jonathan Welch, Kai Sanburn, LW Gutschmidt, Michelline Halliday, Ben Bama, Minor Lile, Robin Reid, Vince Dauciunas, Karen Parker, Liz Flan, Cindy Wolf, Rick Hughes, Lucy Lee, Mike Thomas, Linnea Anderson, and two unidentified callers.

3. Approval of Minutes of 5/5/21 & 5/6/21:

Motion by Paul, seconded by Jane, to approve the 5/5 minutes. Approved.

Motion by Maureen, seconded by Sharon, to approve the 5/6 minutes. Approved. 2 abstentions: Kyle & Liz.

4. Follow up to May 6:

- Minimum qualifications for elected officials:

Dick: Not ready yet. Put on calendar for next Wed or Thu

- Decision to revisit (or not) electing the County Manager/Executive. A procedural motion to see if 5 or more commissioners would like to revisit this topic of electing a County Manager or County Executive at a future time. **Motion by Dave, seconded by Maureen.**

Vote: Motion passed. 3 opposed (Tom, Paul, Tony) and one abstention (Kevin).

5. Committee Report – Climate & Environment (follow up to April 7)

Anne Marie presented.

The motion to create Office of Climate & Environment headed by a Climate & Environment Commissioner passed the Climate & Environment committee.

Q&A - included discussions around:

- elected v. appointed
- suggestion to add archeological resources and heritage language
- concern about children's future

- suggestion to add explanation of why we're including Indigenous people on the advisory committee
- staffing of this department
- support for having a builder on this committee
- fear around unintended consequences of this position and what authority it would and would not have (executive, not legislative)
- ability of the SJCC to deal with the challenges of climate change and environmental degradation
- nature of the position and relationship with the SJCC
- funding
- need for more enforcement
- request by David Dehlendorf to research whether the other counties have elected or appointed positions – said that Clark & Pierce counties have appointed positions?
- Kevin: There is no other elected climate office anywhere else in the country – we would be the first.
- Olivia: What happened to # 3, 4 & 5? Green waste proposal? All 3 SJCC members have said they don't support an elected position. She's sure they're coming up with some kind of plan – how could they not? Commissioner Roseberry shared rumors that members of the Commission may run for this position and questioned if that would be a conflict.
- CRC is on the docket for June 8 before the SJCC – plan is we will come up with our final recommendations, go before the SJCC. They don't have the ability to change our recommendations, they can add additional recommendations and hold a public hearing so the public can weigh in on it. Then that would go to the ballot.
- question by Maureen about the possibility of forming a separate group that will work on transition after the CRC disbands
- Kevin: issue of prioritization – a very difficult thing. This official would be able to prioritize issues of climate & environment because that's their ONLY job.
- Length of language that would appear on the ballot

Motion by Kyle to take the vote on issue one; second by Liz.

Dick: Friendly amendment: Do what Kevin proposed – approve the idea of creating this office headed by an elected official with the understanding that a lot of the detail would get worked out later.

David will vote no because he wants to hear from the other 6 counties first – he

doesn't think we have enough information.

Vote: Motion passed: 11 in favor; 4 opposed – David D, Olivia, Tom, Paul (Tony was not in the meeting at this point); 1 abstention – Patty

Dick requested that anyone who hasn't read the rest of the Climate & Environment proposal, please do so and know where they stand before the next meeting.

6. Public Comment:

Rick Hughes: Operates Ray's Pharmacy – cannot support an elected position and will actively oppose it for so many reasons. It will cost a lot of money. Thinks we'll lose a lot of really good staff over this. If position is created, however, he will run for the position.

Jonathan Welch: Question re funding – no idea where we would come up with the money for this position.

Ben Bama (SJI): Good to hear Anne Marie go into detail on feedback she's gotten with issues of getting enforcement to happen. From his experience and that of others he knows, getting enforcement of code violations is quite difficult. If nothing else comes out of this whole thing, the ability to enforce the rules we do have much better will be very significant. Still hopes we'll have new rules.

Robin Reid: Professor of Environmental Science & Sustainability – Her students are angry at our generation for not moving harder and faster on climate change. She appreciates what we're trying to do. Encourages us to be bolder and even more proactive. Our environmental laws are not being enforced or effective – encourages us to consider the Rights of Nature and Bill of Rights that the Process Committee has been working on – might call it "Earth Justice". She liked the comments about collaboration, like including a homebuilder as part of the OCE. Take full advantage of the talent in the county – using carrots rather than sticks first and foremost – giving people incentive to do the right thing and making sure they know what that is. Have the hammer ready behind the carrot. She doesn't understand how this official would have power if it weren't an elected position.

Chom Greacen (Lopez): Supports some experimentation – we don't know how to best to address the unprecedented crisis we're in but doesn't hurt to go bold and try and give it our best shot, given the urgency we're faced with. We want to leave a good legacy for future generations. Supports what Robin said about incorporating Rights of Nature language into the Charter. Enforcement sounds like a hard-edged approach in this era of great division. Is there a way to bring people together and bring everyone along as part of the solution? Restorative justice, etc. – to repair relationships and get to a solution? She would love for the county to be nimble, flexible - to be able to adjust along the way – that kind of quality to be considered.

Kai Sanburn (Lopez): First priority in how we approach governance and change as a society – advocates for Rights of Nature and behavioral changes that are needed, taking a more holistic approach to climate and protection of nature.

Cindy Wolf (Orcas)(SJCC): She doesn't wish to do anything inappropriate. She wholeheartedly supports the idea of permeating every decision made in the county with an awareness of climate change and environmental preservation. That is the approach that she intends to take on the SJCC.

Nathan Beau Brandow owns a number of businesses in islands and in the region. Thinks this seems tragically misguided. The county won't have any impact on the broader issue.

7. New Business:

Discussion of issues with regard to hiring a new administrative person

Jane: The J&E Committee will not be ready by next week without the help of an assistant doing research for us.

Randy: Made comments regarding our potential contract for additional support staff vs. deputy prosecutor.

Kevin made comments regarding Commission needs.

Motion made by Maureen to adjourn, Janet seconded.

ADJOURNMENT – Adjourned at 6:35pm

Sharon Abreu
CRC Member

Minutes were approved by consensus at the May 19, 2021 Regular Meeting