



**Charter Review Commission (CRC) SPECIAL Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 25, 2021**

1. Call to Order: 4:03pm

2. Roll Call: All present except: Bill Appel, Liz Lafferty, Dick Grout, & Tom Starr

Members of the Public: Randy Gaylord, Sheriff Ron Krebs, Milene Henley, Amy Vira, Megan McLean, Linnea Anderson, Minor Lile, Alexandra Gayek, Lauren Stephens, Alison Longley

3. Approval of Minutes of 5/19/21 & 5/20/21: Approved as amended.

5/19: Kathryn amended the minutes.

5/20: Jane amended the minutes.

4. Follow up to May 6 Discussion of Ranked Choice Voting

Discussion, including:

- Kyle: In support of RCV in concept. More important that voters in the county have an opportunity to vote on the idea and concept. Some risk about the load of amendments we're proposing. But he doesn't think that should keep people from allowing people to vote on it.
- Kevin: Is Referendum or Initiative possible for RCV?
- Milene: A simple initiative, which becomes an ordinance if supported by state law. If we change our Charter then we have more leeway, so it would take a Charter amendment. You can have an initiative for a Charter amendment, either by the SJCC or by initiative.
- Municipalities having RCV – in some states, cities run their own elections. That used to happen in WA State but now it's done by counties.
- Randy: If passed by SJC, RCV would only be used to elect officers of the county – they're listed in the county Charter – sheriff, treasurer, auditor, assessor and the legislative body. The Prosecuting Attorney election should not be altered by local Charter. So eight eligible positions would be subject to RCV. It would not cover elections for special districts or judges.
- Randy: Sect. 5.10 of the SJC Charter – general laws are the state laws. Anticipates following the state law for top two primary and general election. So it would require an amendment to the Charter to implement RCV now. The Charter can be changed by Initiative or SJCC process. Section 5.10 states there will be nominating primaries and elections shall be conducted in accordance with state law. So would need to change the

Charter to implement RCV.

- The county has been in lawsuits – had to agree to end using a system. When you use systems not certified by the Secretary of State, it opens us up to greater uncertainty.

Motion by Anne Marie, seconded by Jane, to add RCV to the Charter, to be implemented when RCV is passed on the state level.

Discussion, including:

- Kevin: The state measure will be back, changed to allow counties to opt in is his understanding. Really appreciates the idea of RCV – only question is should we put the amendment up now, when we have so many amendments?
- Patty: The public has in its mind right now. If we ignore it and wait, they will know it. People ask her about RCV all the time.
- Jane: If we proceed with a vote on this motion, whether or not it should be on the ballot this year or next year should be a separate matter. Concerns about the process of whittling down the number of amendments.
- Randy: Referral do SJCC who directs it to the county auditor and goes on the ballot 90 days after that. If it's next year, then have to wait until next year to do that. We will have the opportunity to split it, but we can also make recommendations to the SJCC and alter items we see to be amendments as recommendations.
- Dave A: This idea has been in Olympia for a long time. If we pass this here now and then wait to implement it, people lobbying in Olympia will point to that.

Kyle called the question. Anne Marie repeated RCV added as amendment to Charter to be implemented when authorized at state level.

Vote: 7 in favor, 4 opposed, 3 abstentions. Clarification from Randy: Need a majority of commissioners to pass – question is commissioners present at the meeting or all the commissioners on the commission.

Randy thinks it's a 7 to 4 vote. Would need 8 to make the motion pass. Kevin voted in favor, at which point the motion carried.

Motion carried.

Kevin: We do need to answer several questions in the next couple of weeks. He is nervous about this, so we will need to revisit this before we finalize our final tally.

Discussion, including:

- Tony is going to challenge this vote.
- Kevin needs to go back and read the small meetings sections of Robert's Rules.
- Bob: Robert's Rules general: It's the majority of the people voting – 50% of the people voting, it passes. Robert's Rules for small boards – using those even though we're more than 12 members.

- Jane: It's extremely important that the vote we took today stands and all votes were recorded with complete clarity.
- Kevin: Believes Randy's advice is valid and we still have questions to clarify by revisiting the rules. If Tony's challenge is appropriate, we would need to revisit the motion.

Note: The Process Committee will present on Thursday instead of today.

5. Minimum Qualifications for Elected Officials

Discussion.

Maureen presented – said Dick revised their document based on feedback from elected officials.

Paul presented on language for Assessor.

Discussion resumed after Public Comment:

- Maureen: How do you balance the qualification list? Looked at doing minimum qualifications. Wants one vote up or down on the whole package.
- Patty is for not putting any qualifications for office in the Charter.
- Kevin: This would be a Charter amendment.

Up or down vote:

Motion by Bob, seconded by David D., to adopt the slate as proposed by the committee, with amendment to remove RCW reference from Sheriff's piece (training that takes place after elected).

Discussion.

Friendly Amendment by David D. to remove the word "Chief" in language for Auditor's office. Bob accepted the friendly amendment.

Kyle called the question, but it wasn't taken up.

More discussion.

Vote: Motion to accept as a slate the recommendations from the committee with the friendly amendment and the one exception (sheriff): 5 in favor, 9 opposed - **Motion failed**.

Discussion, including:

- Paul and the committee can put it back on the agenda if they have enough support.
- Kevin couldn't vote in favor of them as a full slate. Not to be put forward to the public at this time.
- Maureen: It would have been very difficult to have some elected officials have qualifications and others not. although there are minimum qualifications for the Assessor.

6. Open for Public Comment:

Lauren Stephens: Minutes should list participants first and last names each time. When will there be a single clear document to review ahead of the town halls? The stuff on website is confusing – no explanation of how we’re documenting things. She’s concerned about two summaries:

1. Elected v. Appointed – should county manager remain appointed – findings suggested vote was yes. Not recommended to full CRC. Needs explanation.

2. Climate & Environment Committee minutes –read all of them – very narrow and specific qualifications in the proposal for that Commissioner, but only discussion mentioned in minutes were on April 28, just briefly. Should be fuller explanation of how we got to the very, very specific and limited qualifications for that position. Residency requirements – few people in our county would be qualified to run. Wants to hear from Kevin that he’s not going to run for that office.

Milene is against qualifications for elected office. We’re limiting access to office – ability to run for a public office is a fundamental right in this democracy. Concerned about limited access to office – please take the word “Chief” out of the Auditor position qualifications.

Randy is not at all confident with enforcement of broad qualifications – too soft language to be enforceable. Qualifications based on certificate like for assessor which is easily done. Years residing in the county might be difficult to enforce. Qualifications we add may not be enforceable.

7. New Business – None.

ADJOURNMENT: Adjourned at 6:34pm.

Sharon Abreu
CRC Member

Minutes were approved by consensus at the May 27, 2021 Regular Meeting