

April 14, 2021 Charter Review Commission Regular Meeting

Call to Order: Chair Kevin Ranker called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm.

Roll Call: Sharon Abreu, David Anderson, Bill Appel, Janet Brownell, Kyle Davies, Paul Dossett, Jane Fuller, Patty Garcia, Tony Ghazel, Richard Grout, Liz Lafferty, Bob O'Connell, Kevin Ranker (Chair), Olivia Roseberry (Vice Chair), Maureen See, Anne Marie Shanks, Tom Starr. David Dehlendorf's absence was excused.

Guests: Lisa Ayrault, Alix Cimino-Hurt, Colin Cole, Jon DeVaan, and Kit Muehlman from FairVote Washington, and Sharon Hanek from Pierce County.

Others Present: Jim Deuel, SJC Auditor Milene Henley, Prosecuting Attorney Randy Gaylord, Minor Lile, Alexandra Gayek, Michelline Halliday, Carl de Boer, Rick Hughes, David Turnoy, Liz Smith, Kelley Unger, Rhonda Pederson, C Carter, Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Amy Vira, Ron Metcalf, Nick Knoellinger, Mike Thomas, Kathryn Hansen (CRC Assistant), and one unidentified caller.

Approval of April 7, 2021 meeting **minutes**.

MOVED by Tom Starr; **SECONDED** by Sharon Abreu, to approve the Minutes as presented. Discussion followed. 17 Ayes, 0 Opposed, 0 Abstained. **MOTION PASSED.**

FairVote Washington. Kevin welcomed representatives from FairVote Washington and added that though Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) was discussed in the Elections Committee, he felt the whole Commission should have the opportunity to learn more about Ranked Choice Voting.

Lisa Ayrault introduced the FairVote Washington team. They have also given presentations about RCV to Clallam, Clark, King, and other Washington counties. Their presentation asserted that RCV avoids vote splitting, promotes more civil campaigns and single higher turnout elections, and better represents voters' interests than our current 'top two' primary election. They explained the election options available to San Juan County, under RCV.

CRC members then asked questions about the ability to use the County's existing elections equipment and County Auditor Milene Henley chimed in with information. Questions were also raised about the Pierce County attempt to use RCV and whether RCV would be used for some or all races.

Sharon Hanek, Pierce County. Kevin introduced Sharon as the Chair of the 2016 Pierce County Charter Review Commission. She also served as an election observer in 2008 and 2009. Sharon shared her experience with RCV in Pierce County. She explained that voters did not understand the system and didn't apply their second and third choices. She characterized the process as expensive, time-consuming, and difficult to educate voters.

Sharon fielded questions from the Commission, including recent technological improvements, algorithms, equipment requirements, and costs.

Kevin encouraged members to send questions to FairVote Washington, Ms. Hanek, or Auditor Henley. He thanked all speakers for their informative presentations.

Committee Reports. Elected vs. Appointed. Maureen See sent their Committee summary to members earlier today. Tony Ghazel shared their task list with the group, noting that items are not shown in priority order, nor are all items complete. There was member discussion as they

moved through the list. The list will be published on the CRC website, <https://www.sanjuanco.com/1764/Charter-Review-Commission>.

Kevin announced that tonight's CRC meeting would go until 6:15pm.

Committee Reports. Elected vs. Appointed, continued. Further discussion.

Open for Public Comment. Chair Ranker opened public comment.

Ron Metcalf, Lopez, said he was surprised that Ranked Choice Voting failed in committee; he is in favor of RCV.

Jim Deuel, Orcas, opined that the transparent way to maintain ballot chain of custody is paper ballots with no algorithms.

Rick Hughes, Orcas, thanked the Commissioners for their work.

David Turnoy, Orcas, plugged RCV as a great innovation.

Kyle Davies reminded guests that all CRC & Committee meeting videos can be viewed online on the County's YouTube Playlist, <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLgQQ-TzAmhOK5pljVo9RzWmHbODxvwGYJ>.

Jane Fuller clarified that the Elections Committee opted to take no action on RCV, but to see whether information from FairVote WA and others should be presented to the full Commission.

Committee Reports. Elected vs. Appointed, continued. There was more discussion, including consolidation of financial departments, minimum requirements for elected positions, and importance of diversity and inclusion. The committee will complete their task list and produce their findings which will document their rationale.

New Business. Kevin shared his vision for the process moving from committee to CRC proposals on the various issues. As stressed by Dick Grout, items of greatest priority will be addressed first, others if there is additional time. He encouraged members to do their homework if several members feel compelled to bring a topic back to the full CRC for further consideration. All proposals must be voted on by the full commission.

Chair Ranker also recommended increasing meetings to two times per week, beginning the week of April 26. There was a brief review of upcoming agendas.

CRC Budget. Kevin asked Kathryn to send the current budget to all members. He desires to fill the void left by Kathryn's absences in April, May, and June and find someone to do research and help write proposals.

Meeting adjourned at 6:26 pm.

Kathryn Hansen
Recording Secretary

Minutes were approved by consensus at the April 21, 2021 Regular Meeting