

Charter Review Commission (CRC) Regular Meeting Minutes

June 3, 2021

1. Call to Order - Start time: 10:06

1a. Land Acknowledgment - read by Jane Fuller

2. Roll Call:

In attendance: Kevin, Sharon, Dick, Patty, Paul, David, Maureen, David D, Jane, Bill, Anne Marie, Tom, Bob, Dave A, Liz. Olivia & Kyle joined the meeting late.

Members of the Public: Megan McLean, Minor Lile, Nancy DeVaux

3. Approve Minutes from May 31st meeting:

Motion made by Maureen, seconded by Patty to adopt the May 31 CRC meeting minutes.
Minutes approved unanimously.

4. Debrief Town Hall meetings & discussion about final steps:

Discussion around criticisms and kudos regarding county government that either were expressed or implied in the Town Hall comments:

Highlights from Town Halls included:

- Idea of forest preservation for carbon credits
- Thought experiment to think about what will be changed by 2030 and be able to describe that to the public - have that down in bullet points so people appreciate what good this will be doing.
- Don't lose focus on nature when focusing on climate change.
- The public is going to work hard to get these amendments past – they need to hear themselves represented clearly and strongly or we won't have them as allies to get these passed. What we write has to be reflective of what the public has told us they want. Identify where have we lost community support and what can we do to let the public know we have really heard them. We need to make sure we represent the voices that have been strongest and most consistent throughout this process. We have to address these specific concerns. We also have to be realistic about what we can change going forward.
- People understood that the Declaration of Community Values was what we could legally put into the Charter. But that really wasn't stressed at all in the town halls, where they really only heard about the creation of the Climate & Environment Commissioner. That's why the people that were so supportive of our work on Rights of Nature have backed off a little bit.

- **Bob to give Patty a call about this:** People don't understand what the Climate & Environment Commissioner can and cannot do. People need to know exactly what this new Commissioner would be empowered to do, and what it will do here over the next 10 years – what it will look like 10 years from now. If we can put this out in a really simple sheet, that would help a lot.
- More discussion about the role of the Climate & Environment Commissioner. Some people feel that the new office should not be separated from development. And that if there are members of the business community on the new advocacy committee, it will become trying to appease those groups yet again, and the natural environment will end up not being the primary focus of this group.
- We need to get some details out there as soon as we can. People on both sides of the political aisle were telling us that.

(Kyle and Olivia joined the meeting)

- Kevin: What we really need is very factual bullet points. **The leads on the different issues need to work over the next full days to pull together fact sheets explaining what we're addressing, why we're addressing it, and why the solution we've proposed is the solution that we are putting forward.**
- Tom: Need to specify the problems - need to be clearly illustrated in this fact sheet.
- Jane: The SJCC already passed a resolution on a safe and inclusive community – it was compelled to do so by the people who voted for the SJCC, who saw the problems brewing in our county. She's happy to help prepare the information needed for fact sheets, and to support that point – that this is an issue that needs to be taken seriously – to embed these values and principles for the future.
- Dave: the CRC needs to focus on issues that effect voters directly. Specifically, the amendments dealing with three term limits for SJCC, Initiatives, Office of Climate & Environment, and Public Advocate. These issues will effect what is on the ballot in 2022 so they need to be voted on in 2021.
- Further discussion took place around elected vs. appointed Climate & Environment Commissioner. The point was made that an appointed Commissioner can be fired for doing the *right* thing, whereas an elected official cannot.
- Further discussion took place around whether or not the county government is adequately addressing issues of Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, including some discussion around the makeup of this CRC not being representative of our whole community in terms of diversity or economic status, and what we can put in the Charter that will make a real difference in the county.
- Olivia: Invited everyone to re-watch the town halls videos and correct her numbers if she got any wrong. Also expressed concern that there's been a lot of replying all to the full CRC – stressed the importance of understanding OPMA.
- Kevin: Emphasized that the Charter creates the structure to allow things to take place or not. If we can put together a powerful structure in this Charter, it will allow incredible things to take place. If we don't, it won't. We have heard from dozens of people that there is inherent racism and inequality in our community, so we need to do more to highlight and address it. Make sure we don't just talk about climate change, but it also

comes back to the environment. When he talks about climate change, it's all encompassing of everything, but not everybody is thinking about it that way. There are a lot of flaws in our county continue regarding environmental protections. Heard from several staff and past staff about good ideas put forward that go nowhere, and that problems put forward looking for solutions go nowhere.

- Jane: It's the responsibility of the county government to represent the people having those negative experiences. Regarding the CRCs not being representative of the whole county in terms of diversity and economic status, this is precisely why the Justice & Equity Committee reached out to people that don't have voice here.
- Kyle: Ask ourselves how does a group of people, a place, a society, this county, embrace or at least open a door so anyone that represents a different group access a position on the CRC, how do they become a Commissioner, how can they put themselves out there and be taken seriously when they're expressing to us that they essentially live in fear or live marginalized because some other set of dynamics in the county keep them from participating in some aspects of daily living. It's a problem he can't fix, but he can be part of a group that creates a mechanism to fix it, so that all these people have an opportunity.
- Tony: Agrees totally with what Jane and Kyle said. But as citizens and as a community, we also have to work hard to actually make things work better.
- Bob: Once you put things in a document and the community agrees by voting for them, then you can do things to follow up on those specific values. Until then, you don't have the tool. The Charter gives us the tools to accomplish what we want to accomplish.
- Bill: The economy prevents some people from participating in government, from seeing their children get off to school, or participating in seeing that their children move in the circles where their futures are better assured. They're on a work schedule, or they have health problems, or there's dissonance within the family. There are limits to what we can declare and feel good about in terms of what's available. Getting people to commit money to low-income jobs and low-income housing is a matter desperately needed here, and it's not a government function. It's completely missing from our effort, and we need to accept the fact that what we're doing has its limitations.
- Sharon: This is a democratic process. Not everyone on the June 2 Town Hall feels represented by the work of the CRC. What do we do about that? We were elected by people who want us to represent them, and a majority of us are concerned about climate change and justice and equity. We are reflecting the majority of the county by virtue of having been elected, and listening to the concerns of those who elected us. Certain kinds of compromise render any efforts meaningless, for example with climate change. One member of the public said he had "individual values", not "community values". If we don't think in terms of our neighbors, we are sunk as a species, in my opinion. None of us live in a bubble.
- Kevin: (01:02:36) Delivered a heartfelt apology responding to the joke he made during the May 24 Justice & Equity Committee meeting. Ended by saying that he has to question his own privilege every single day for the rest of his life. And he thinks that is what this Charter is getting us to do – this discussion we're having on Justice, Equity & Inclusion in our own county. We often still have it wrong because we think we're all progressive thinking, but when you actually look at what our government is doing and

what it *could* be doing, they're two different things. This is our opportunity to get it right – to put it in the law of the land so it doesn't change when someone else gets elected. If we put it in the Charter, it's as permanent as we can get.

- Anne Marie: We're doing work for the next 10 years. Look at how our county and communities have changed just in the last year, with the pandemic, real estate prices – heightens the inequity and makes it harder for people to be a part of the community.
- Maureen: She supports being bold and doing something here that will have a more lasting effect. We are trying to prioritize all these pieces, then we have to negotiate those priorities. So let's all be patient with each other and the points that are being made here.
- Jane: Spoke about her apology emails regarding the comments made in jest during the May 24 Justice & Equity Committee meeting that were insensitive. She continues to receive emails from people who are very angry at her for writing to the OWC that they spread information to their coalition that was quite misleading in a certain way. She's been accused of being a bully, a gaslighter and someone who has no concept of what black people experience. Yet, since she was born, she has grown up with a black adopted brother who she's watched being discriminated against throughout her life. She knows what sexual harassment feels like because she has been sexually harassed herself. She very much wished the people who were unhappy could have reached out to her as co-chair of the committee or the chair of the commission to say they didn't appreciate the language that was used, rather than going out to the community and defaming us because we behaved in a silly manner that was inconsiderate and insensitive. It's been a very painful few days for her – very hurtful. The work she's been doing on this comes from a place of deep caring and lived reality. She is sorry to anybody she's offended.
- Kevin: This is stressful. We're spending way more time than we thought we would. Some of us are getting hate mail. It's impacted his family, his daughter. We need to be there for each other, even when we have differences. We are a team. We share at least one thing in common – we love the communities in which we live.... Remember that we're all at least starting from a common place – that will help us. And we have a lot of work to do over the next weeks. Ha ideas to propose on that. So let's start from a place of caring for and supporting each other, even when we have differences.
- Tony: He's hearing people's hearts being put out and speaking from that space. That's really energizing him. We need to also be cognizant that 50% of our children K-6 were on the poverty level when he was on the school board. There's poverty, housing issues, transportation problems. All these things are part of a vision for this community and county. Don't forget that when he's gone to Olympia to talk about school funding, people didn't realize that 50% of our children are in poverty – they would laugh at him. Loves Anne Marie's vision with the ecological benefits in our community, but also other things we need to be working on as well as a county, so keep that in our minds as well.
- Liz: Wanted to illuminate what Anne Marie was saying for us to keep the context for what a unique and precedent time in history we've tried to do a very unreasonable task – if we keep that context in firmly front of us, it will help us remember that history is asking something different of us right now, and we're doing our darnedest to deliver on that.

- David D: Our focus now should be on how are we going to communicate these issues to the public. Likes the idea of the fact sheets – we should move on to that because we’re running out of time. It’s not going to be easy. What is the timing of the fact sheets? When will they go out?
- Kevin: We need to move on, but this conversation has been one of the most powerful we’ve had as a Commission – this is really valuable, people speaking from their hearts.
- Liz: Expressed her respect for Kevin on his reflective apology – to notice how hurtful we can be, even when that’s not the intent. We’re all learning as we go along.

5. Review of approved motions: Briefly touched upon – see above.

6. New Business:

- Not meeting as a full commission on June 4.
- Some committees need to continue conversations.

Fact Sheets:

- All amendments have been voted on and the data was there when it was voted on in incredible detail – that detail was part of those votes and it's on the record.... A lot of the questions being asked in the town halls, we have that data, but we can’t expect the public to go through all that minutia. So we need the Fact Sheets to boil that down for the public.
- We need work groups working on and finalizing those.
- Outstanding questions on the Climate & Environment Commissioner position from Randy can be addressed very simply over the next few days. Anne Marie and a few others will meet in the next few days, and that would be a good group to put together that fact sheet.
- Start working on the fact sheets and the finalization of the actual date – work with Megan to finalize the language. Then Randy will review it to make sure it fits within the scope that we’re talking about.
- **We have 3 tasks:**
 - 1) Answer outstanding questions.
 - 2) Finalize language in Charter form - Megan will work with us as groups to finalize sections; then she has to take the whole thing and make it the new Charter.
 - 3) Fact Sheets - how are we putting this to the public, and how will the public receive this in the November election(s). **Still need to discuss whether one or two ballots. Are there other groups that need to get together to think about the fact sheets?**

Megan suggested we **develop a template for the Fact Sheets that we all get so we have a plan** - based loosely on what we did for the slides – we’ll have:

- 1) an issue
- 2) a proposal - each group to come up with a 2-3 sentence summary of problem we’re trying to solve, and actual proposal language.
- 3) a title (4 words, maybe 5, counting prepositions & articles)

She will come with a template for everybody to fill in and send back to her, and then can start to edit and clean it up, and then back to the CRC for final approval.

Kevin:

- **Start by sending the templates to any subcommittee that has an amendment or recommendation being proposed. Fill it out as Megan laid out which will be in the template and send it to her.** She will critique it in a way that makes it more usable.
- Fact Sheets will be developed while we're still sitting here – they will come from us in official capacity and we continue to be available.
- Timing issue: Having canceled our June 8 presentation to the SJCC, we need to decide what our schedule/process is. We have to submit the list of amendments to the SJCC (no requirement for us to presentation for them.) The SJCC has to turn them around to the county Auditor to be placed on the ballot. The Prosecuting Attorney (Randy) will have a lot of work to do, reviewing and making sure he or his staff have time to write the nonpartisan/nonbiased titles and other pieces. The Auditor has to find someone to write the “pro” and “con” statement for each ballot measure. **August 3 is our drop-dead deadline to get everything to our county Auditor.** We have less time than we thought, potentially, so we're going to continue working, and **over the next 14 or so days, we will come to a conclusion on exactly what we're doing, based on Randy's memo.**

We need to discuss these things:

- We may decide we're only doing one ballot, Nov. 2021. If so, do we want to put 11 amendments on the ballot, or possibly make some into recommendations?
- **Timing of submitting fact sheets to the public/SJCC: Begin working on them today.** The fact sheets are our own creation - there is zero deadline on that - **we want to get them started and out to the public asap – needs to happen in the next week or two. This will be up to all of us.**
- Regardless of whether or not we're going for a 2022 ballot, in the coming weeks this commission, or a subset, will begin going out to the public and educating the public on these. When our term is done, after submitting our final proposals, we can form a “friends of the charter” group and actively educate the public with regard to the importance of these issues. He hopes we will do that. If we go for the 2022 ballot as well, it's important for us to still to do that, so that there is a clear firewall between our work, and he talked about the differences we'll have to get into.

Discussion:

- Patty: Bullet points are to be educational - the most immediate bullet points at least should really be for the amendments only, because those are what the public will vote on.
- Kevin: The fact sheet template can include the recommendations, but we do need to prioritize the amendments.
- Dick: When can we expect her template? **Let's set a deadline today for when each committees have to have their language submitted.**
- Megan: We need a title, purpose/problem/justification and then the actual Charter language. We can go ahead and start working on that – the challenge is to really focus it

down to that much material – only 2-3 sentences on the problem we’re endeavoring to solve. She’ll get the template out asap.

- Dick: Asked Megan to send to the full CRC what she just said as a temporary outline so we wind up starting in the same direction.

Deadline:

- **Kevin asked that we get at least drafts back to Megan by next Wednesday.**
- Megan: **Some people are having trouble finding emails from her – check your junk mail and put her email address in our contacts.**
- Jane: Asked for a Friday deadline to work with her committee.
- Kevin: **Aim for Wednesday, understanding that Justice & Equity, and maybe a couple of other committees, may need a couple more days to get it in, by Friday then.**
- Anne Marie also has a fair amount of work to do.
- Bill: Make sure Randy has perused it before we hand anything to the SJCC because we lose control at that moment. If Randy then says something has to be changed, then we no longer exist, so that step has to be complete. Have everything including what we would like to use for voter promotion done and hand it to the SJCC at the same time.
- Kevin: Couldn’t agree more. When we turn something over to the SJCC, we need to have all our t’s crossed. Will be doing back and forth with Randy.
- Bob: When we have declared our final recommendations are in and we are no more, form “committee for a better charter” made up of us and people that feel they know a sufficient amount about each amendment, and have meetings on each of the islands. Our term goes to Dec. 31 or when we turn in our final recommendations.
- Kyle: Struggling a bit with will there be agreement on the role of government – what is government supposed to do for people? Another conversation to be had. Some of these amendments/recommendations are not necessarily in response to a defined and specific problem. Climate change is bigger than that. Some of the social justice issues. There’s not a single lived experience for all of us. How do we work that into the material and the outreach? How do we speak to the next 10 years? He thinks he will struggle with defining that – just the terms – purpose vs. justification vs. problem. How do we have a conversation with a member of the public about why something we’ve coalesced around is so important for the future?
- Maureen: **We need a little more information on the end of our term and the beginning of an educational campaign.** Very important – it’s not as clean as we’re making it sound. She has a lot of experience with this. We might need a written instruction from Randy that everyone can look at and use - because we can’t use our commissioner status in any campaigning. Given the way we’re pushing the dates out, we need more clarification so nobody makes this mistake.
- Kevin: It is very clear that, even if we continue for a second ballot measure and stay in office until Dec. 31, we CAN go out and educate the public. However, there are VERY STRICT parameters on how that is done. So if we choose to do that, **he would ask that Randy or a member of his staff address the full CRC to make sure we understand exactly what we can and can’t do.** For example, we can’t use any public funds, which includes our county email addresses. That’s that firewall that has to be very clear. We

need to be very clear on how we do public education, appropriately and legally. He would love a refresher course in this.

- Kevin: There's a ton of work to be done, whether in committees or subsets of committees, to finalize language. Send drafts to Megan. We need to write these ideas up in a usable format so Megan can work with it.

NOTE: Next full CRC meeting is Wednesday, June 9 at 4pm.

Kevin:

- **We need to post that this Friday's meeting is canceled.** Doesn't mean days off. And we will circle back.
- **Executive Committee needs to meet to flush out some of this language on the general piece, and then come back to the full CRC with recommendations. Asked the leads of subcommittees that have amendments (or recommendations, but particularly amendments) to reach out to their committees and schedule a meeting in order to finalize language. Probably need to advertise committee meetings.** Subsets of committees can meet and discuss – needs to start happening quickly.

Olivia: **Let her know when we're having our committee meetings.** She needs to give us a new zoom link. She'll put the meetings on the calendar. **Let her set up the meetings!** She's working on CRC stuff basically 5:30-7:30 am.

Committee work – completed and not:

- Maureen: **EvA committee can do term limits by email, but everybody on the committee has to check their county emails regularly.**
- Bob: Process Committee is completely done.
- Tony: Elections Committee is done. He will make sure Megan has the verbiage for RCV.
- Jane: What language do we need to confirm for the Justice & Equity committee? Four proposed amendments and recommendations - Prioritizing finalizing amendment language?
- Kevin: Yes. He's talking about finalizing amendment language and getting that to Megan. Reach out to Megan and make sure she has what she needs. Then the committee probably doesn't need to meet on it.
- Patty: Initiative & Referendum – they have pretty clear stuff there. Hopefully come up with bullet points for what they already have. Doesn't think they'll need to meet. But they do have a mission to send to Megan all of their information, which Patty will take on as lead.

Template for Fact Sheet and Format for Making Changes:

- Megan: **Identify very clearly which committee, which section in Charter, etc - as much info as possible.** She just sent emails laying out what we need to get the fact sheets started and what she's looking for to start building the Master Document. **Underline/Strikeout format** to use: If it's new section, let her know that and where it

belongs. Underline any new text and strikeout anything that gets eliminated. If amendment, use underline/strikeout format to make the changes - a huge time-saver for her.

- Maureen: We don't have access to a Word document of the Charter.
- Megan: Can copy and paste the text into a Word document. If not, she can start to put that together, but she would just copy and paste from the existing Charter.
- Kevin: Language is not just the proposed language. It's also where it fits in the Charter – how is it to be placed. That's why red line strikeout is a good idea on the original Charter language. (New numbering will get worked out in the end.)

Executive Committee:

- Kevin: Great value in the conversations of the Executive Committee - would like to continue meeting. Currently 7 members. Concern going to 8 is close to having that chain meeting problem.
- Dick: Objects to adding any other member at this point, because the Executive Committee has had enough discussions, we kind of know where we are. If we add another person, we are likely to revisit things we don't need to revisit.
- Bob: Agrees with Dick, although he's in the Liz fan club.
- Kevin: Legally we could go to 8 members, but Randy asked us not to.
- Jane: Executive Committee worked intensively and in the course of that there were intense discussions and work done. So not sure how adding another person at this time would benefit the completion of our work.
- Patty: Thinks the Executive Committee has done a fantastic job!
- Liz: Only requesting to sit in on the Executive Committee meetings as an observer, not to join the committee.
- **Kevin will send her a link when we set up our next Executive Committee meeting.**
- Bob: Is Executive Committee different from the other subcommittees that were there with a certain task? Did we advertise our meetings?
- Kevin: No, because we were just a handful of people saying let's get some work done – work sessions.

Upcoming Committee Meetings:

- Olivia: **Any committee meetings next week must be posted by this Friday at noon.** Needs confirmation, and would have to happen after Wednesday.
- Kevin: **Can do a special meeting before Wednesday.**
- Anne Marie: **She sent an email to everybody saying that the Climate & Environment on the 9th from 10-12.**
- Anne Marie: 12:30-2:00 C&E meeting on Friday 6/4 to work on the legal issue -not a full committee mtg. Randy will not be there. Bob is in that meeting.
- **Kevin will send an email re time for Executive Committee meeting.**

Issue of Qualifications:

- Kevin: Revisiting the issue of Qualifications, as individual votes, for elected officials. Not a requirement for 5 people to bring it back because this was not through that process. It was an up or down vote for the entire slate. 6 people raised hands in favor of revisiting this issue – for Kevin to reschedule it for a future meeting. Not voting on it right now. Wants to advertise this so the public and elected officials can come into the meeting when we're vote. **Put this on the agenda for next week – if so, it needs to be finalized. This will be on the agenda for June 9.**
- Kevin: **Asked this committee to give an update to the full CRC on the issue – describe them as we're going to put motions on the floor, individually.** Figure out who is going to present, and let Kevin, Olivia and Kathryn know.
- Dick: Will be involved in this with Maureen. Heard that there were 3 or 4 people who said, after that vote, that there was one issue on one elected office that they had an issue with, and that's why they voted against the slate. It would be useful to him if people would identify which office and what the problem was, so they can be ready with a proposed change.
- Maureen will reach out to people before Wednesday's meeting.

NOTE: Bill will be absent Wednesday – has a post-surgery appointment. Bill will be available to go over some things with Kevin.

7. Open for Public Comment – No public comments were made.

ADJOURNMENT - Motion by Tom to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at approx. 12:20 pm.

SHARON'S NOTE: Executive Committee rescheduled from Friday 6/4 to Monday 6/7.

Sharon Abreu
CRC Member

Minutes were approved by consensus at the June 9, 2021 Regular Meeting