

Charter Review Commission (CRC)
Climate & Environment Committee April 21, 2021

Start time: 10:03am

End time: 12:07pm (approx.)

1. Recording/ Roll Call

Attending: Anne Marie, Kevin, Liz, Kyle, Tom, Sharon, Dick, Bob

Others Present: Alexandra Gayek, Michelline Halliday, Steve Ulvi, Kai Sanburn

2. Minutes

Kevin Ranker moved to accept minutes from 4/14/21 with change. Liz Lafferty seconded. MOTION PASSED.

3. Continue discussion about the scope of the Office of the Climate and Environment Commissioner (working title).

Discussion on language in Bob O'Connell's "Proposed Duties and Mission of the Climate and Environment Commissioner and the Climate and Environment Department"

- Separate the "Rights of Nature" and the Climate and Environment Commissioner/Department because we need to know what the Bill of Rights/Rights of Nature are before we can vote on them. Scope of work Kyle started to put together is extremely helpful – bounce off of that to decide what are the functions of this government and this department are. Kyle drafted another version of the functions and shared that on screen. It was noted Snohomish County just went through a similar reorganization in its CRC. . Kevin and Kyle, and possible also Liz, will meet in FH on 4/22 to hash things out and form a response to Liz's question.

Discussion of fleet management, greenhouse gas reduction, Rights of Nature, the need for some committees to interface with each other, county executive positions.

Kyle drafted another diagram of functions which he shared on screen.

4. Review Status of the Issues Assigned to Climate and Environment Committee

Issues assigned to Environment and Climate Committee – see document AM gave us – she needs other people to let her know if we're on the right track. Went over the various assignments:

Assignment #1: CRC should have an independently elected Commissioner.

Assignment #2: Will current structure serve our county in the next decade in line with the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)? Goal #13 is to take urgent action to combat climate change – this is incorporated in our mission already. Discussion included

Kevin: Two resolutions passed by the SJCC that have not been acted on. We're setting up the means to make possible what we're dreaming of – to create that structure.

Assignment #3: Resilience Officer – Bill Appel put forward as an appointed position – Do we want to have a conversation with him or not? It was noted the duties of that office are similar to the one we're working to create – can we get that Director to speak to that? What different options are there and how to strengthen them?

Assignment #4: Build-out Analysis – what Joe Symons talks about – how much carrying capacity do the islands really have? Discussion about what aspects of the Planning Dept. this falls under - it's an action, not something we do in the County Charter. We can do charter amendments and recommendations to the SJCC to consider.

Sharon & Liz expressed the importance of following through on carrying capacity and volunteered to work on this, with guidance.

Assignment #5: Green Waste- It depends on how we structure this dept. concerning green waste.

Bob suggested we start a list of proposed recommendations to the SJCC for the CRC to look at, and include this.

Tom proposed the need to use language more specific than “harmful” – recommended language is “**probable, significant, negative environmental impact**”. Kevin agreed noting we need to use deliberate, prescriptive words, within the law and scope of this Commission, otherwise no action will take place.

5. New Business: None.

6. Public Comment

Alexandra Gayek commented on the permitting process and Rights of Nature.

Michelline Halliday commented on the CRC’s work trying to balance Rights of Nature with the need of folks to make a living.

Ben Bama commented in strong support of Rights of Nature – he’s relying on the CRC to bring it to the ballot so he can vote on it. Asked if CRC’s work is it going to be pass/fail, or give and take, where things can get modified in order to pass.

Kevin: Typically we don’t get into Q&A during public comment, but good question. CRC comes up with recommendations which (hopefully) will be on the ballot by this Nov. If there is continuing debate on some issues, some recommendations might be on the ballot this year, and some next year. Our recommendations go to the SJCC, which can’t alter our recommendations. They can hold public

hearing and discuss our recommendations, and then put them on the ballot in Nov. Very unusual, but it could happen that SJCC can recommend additional or competing recommendations. In the past, there's been a strong push from the public and the CRC to the SJCC to NOT do that.

Steve Ulvy commented re his letter to the CRC – he appreciates the entire CRC. Hasn't heard anything about a climate action plan – the CRC will need that to help clarify and drive things. Did the CRC discuss rejecting the idea of having a super advisory committee on climate and environment to the existing SJCC?

Anne Marie said she'll get back to Steve on his questions.

7. Adjourn – Adjourned at 12:07 (approx)