

Charter Review Commission (CRC)

Justice & Equity Committee Meeting Minutes

April 19, 2021 4:00pm – 5:30pm

Start time: 4:01pm

End time: 5:45pm

1. Recording/ Roll Call

In Attendance: Jane, Kyle, Sharon, Kevin

Guest Speakers: James Wolf & Mike Thomas

Others Present: Linnea Anderson

2. Approval of Minutes from April 12, 2021 – Approved as amended by Jane.

3. Presentation by / Discussion with James Wolf, Manager, SJC Human Resources Dept. (30 mins.)

James Wolf provided background into his job and the work he's done since hired in late 2016, including updating personnel policies last revised in 1991, adopted through ordinance late in 2017. He said he would like to have additional updates to recently-updated ordinances made by resolution.

James said that his budget includes advertising positions. They talk to different dept. heads who may have to pay for that from their own budget. They include language to make sure people understand that the county is an equal opportunity employer and it's a great place to live. He said the biggest challenge is for people to find housing in SJC to do these jobs. And that many of the positions can be done remotely. In terms of equal pay, he said that SJC is good because we don't have a lot of latitude in determining how someone gets paid – the county follows a structure from the unions. At present, there are more female than male employees - 163 female, 133 male. The county is focused on hiring the best available talent.

James said that most language in other county charters is essentially

the same language set forth under state and federal law. If the CRC wants to add something to the SJC Charter, it should be a very simple sentence saying that the county complies with state and federal law regarding discrimination in hiring, etc. The CRC would list it by the substance of those policies.

Kevin said that the CRC can go stronger in language, beyond just saying we agree with the state, and cited an example from California.

4. Composition and mandate of the proposed SJC Ethics and Justice Oversight Commission.

Discussion.

Look at King County's Charter for guidance, but with broader focus.

- Who would be represented and how many people would be on the Commission?
- Ask Ms. Obenhaus about this.
- Ask Berto Gándara about this on April 26.

Discussion of questions for Berto Gándara, including issues of housing, transportation and interaction with the wider communities on the islands. Sharon to draft questions for Berto re how is the Latinx community doing in SJC, generally and regarding relationships with deputies, justice system, neighbors, schools, etc., and what community priorities aren't being met? Run these questions by Jane & Kyle by end of day on Wednesday.

5. Next Meeting: Identify sections of the Charter where issues of Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and non-discrimination, need to be reflected, and, the idea (from the Process Committee) of a new Section 1 containing a 'Bill of Rights' – inclusive of human rights and rights of nature.

If possible, attend the Process Committee meeting at 10:30 Tuesday morning – they'll be focusing in on the Bill of Rights. Can send anything we want included to Kyle.

6. Confirm Guest Speaker List through May 3, and one-on-one interviews to be held by Committee members.
Berto will speak with us on April 26.
Jane will reach out to Kevin about specific questions for Lummi Nation rep's.

7. New Business: Next week:

Jane: Two things for next meeting:

- The composition and mandate of the Commission.
 - An anti-discrimination clause for the charter, and how our county can continue to lead in this effort – that these principals will be upheld no matter who is in charge within the county.
- Jane will run the proposed text by us next week.

8. Public Comment 5:20 – no public comment

9. Adjourn – Adjourned at 5:45