

Dear Chair Ranker and Fellow Commissioners,

I want to thank you for your kindness and grace and great discussions during the July 12th CRC meeting. Shortly after we had finished approving recommendations on non-discrimination, justice and equity, and the digital ink had not yet dried, I enquired if the six amendment recommendations that we just finished, will be presented to the SJCC and then be placed on the next November ballot; I was told that was so. I then requested to make a motion (full language below) to essentially end our 2021 CRC work, the motion was appropriately seconded. I was met with reaction that was hard to describe but nonetheless I understood to mean that CR Commissioners, whom I respect, were not ready for a motion to end our work. When I was asked to explain the reason, I proceeded to explain that SJC CR Sections 9.32 and 9.20 (e) state that we are done when we present FINAL amendments AND that the recommended amendments will be placed on the NEXT November ballot. In my view FINAL referred to each amendment recommendation to be placed on the NEXT November ballot not the slate of amendment recommendations. I expected push back and I expected that the vote will not go my way. What I did not expect was the vitriol and ad hominin attacks by my dear and gentle colleagues on the CRC. When I explained that this motion was different from the previous motion of a few weeks ago, which was regarding two different sets of amendment presentations to the SJCC, than this motion which is to end our term and thus our task. One CRC Commissioner said that this was “not the truth”, another said that my motion was “disingenuous”, another said that “this is going around the two-ballot idea, another said that “if commissioners don’t want to be on the CRC they can quit/resign” and others commented that our work was not done. Some of the discussion was completely out of order as some even said that the chair can “rule” on the motion; early on we accepted to use Roberts Rule Small Board to conduct our meetings where the chair acts as the arbiter of the meeting, may join the debate and may vote, that’s it. There was a motion and a second, debate ensues and then a vote. I accept responsibility for my motion and explanation but, I regret, that some of my colleagues’ reactions were not reflective of civil and respectful dialog. When there are differences of opinion and different understanding of facts is when the true practice of “anti-discrimination, justice and equality” manifest themselves, not when everyone agrees with everyone else. If we all agree all the time, then 17 of us are redundant and not needed. Maybe it will help us demonstrate what we mean when we present language of tolerance that we practice our own tolerance in these meetings where well-meaning volunteers and very busy elected public servants are trying to do their best and with whom we may not agree.

- The vote on my motion is done and we move on. I do believe in the democratic process and the majority carries the day.
- My motion was in accordance with what I believe that the charter is instructing. Maybe a charter amendment for Section 9.20 could be read below and could solve future CRC misunderstandings:

- Section 9.20 (e) The term of office shall be the shorter of one (1) year or **when a 2/3 majority of the full commission membership vote to end the CRC commissioners' term of office.** *final recommendations are submitted to the Legislative Body [County Council] for referral to the voters.*
- I was never against having all the amendments presented to the council; evidenced by my suggestion in a previous CRC meeting to do so and present all that we have so far to the SJC Council with the caveat that some language was ready and done to go to the ballot this November and some were not ready for “prime time”. A commissioner suggested, at that meeting, that we were done and did not understand what I meant.

Thank you, dear commissioners, for your time and please consider this document as a record and my “minority report” regarding the issue of the CRC term of office motion and subsequent vote.

Respectfully,



Tony P. Ghazel

7/13/2021

2021 CRC Commissioner, District 2, Orcas Island

Reference:

The motion as presented on 7/12/2021:

Motion to declare that the work of the 2021 SJC CRC is finished upon delivery of the final amendments' recommendations to the SJC Council during the council's July 13th 2021 meeting. Pursuant to SJC Charter Sections 9.32 and 9.20 (1) (e).

Second by Commissioner Tom Starr.

The motion failed.

Sections used to support the motion:

Section 9.32 – Amendments by the Charter Review Commission

The CRC may propose amendments to the Charter by filing such proposed amendments with the County Council who shall submit the amendment to the voters at the next November general election at least ninety (90) days after the filing and registration of the amendments.

Section 9.20 – Election Procedures and Period of Office

(1) (e) The term of office shall be the shorter of one (1) year or when final recommendations are submitted to the Legislative Body [County Council] for referral to the voters.