

**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**RESEARCH DIVISION**

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**CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

**City Council Chamber, 1st floor, City Hall**

**December 13, 2019**

**9:00 a.m.**

**In attendance:** Commissioners Lindsey Brock (Chair), Jessica Baker (arr. 9:09), Frank Denton, Charles Griggs, Chris Hagan, Heidi Jameson, Ann-Marie Knight, Emily Lisska, Betzy Santiago, Matt Schellenberg, Ronald Swanson, Nelson McCoy (arr. 9:44)

**Excused:** Commissioner

**Also**: Paige Johnston – Office of General Counsel; Jeff Clements and Anthony Baltiero – Council Research Division; Jessica Matthews and Jessica Smith – Legislative Services Division; Melanie Wilkes – Council Staff Services

**Meeting Convened**: 9:07 a.m.

Chairman Brock announced that he would need to leave the meeting at 9:25 to attend to a commitment for his law firm.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the November 22, 2019 were **approved unanimously as distributed**.

Public Comments

None

Remarks from the Chair

Chairman Brock distributed and discussed a draft of revisions to the Charter Revision Commission’s authorizing legislation to provide that the Commission shall exist within the term of single City Council President and to provide that the Council President must file a resolution to initiate action on the Commission’s recommendations when presented. He added a provision for a commissioner to be removed by a vote of 15 members of the City Council. Commissioner Hagen asked about whether the City Council would have to act on the recommendations as a whole or could approve some and not approve others. Mr. Brock said he anticipated that the Council, via amendments to the resolution, could act or not act on whichever ones it saw fit. Mr. Hagen felt that separate resolutions for each recommendation might be a better procedure. Commissioner Baker questioned whether the proposed new timing would work with getting charter revision referenda on the August and November ballots of the year after the Charter Revision Commission is appointed. Chairman Brock said he will be consulting with the General Counsel’s Office about the election filing deadlines. Paige Johnston said that she would ask the Supervisor of Elections for advice on timing and Mr. Brock said he may schedule a noticed meeting to discuss the timing. Commissioner Griggs said he favored having one Council President make the appointments to the commission that would then meet during the term of another President. He also agreed with Mr. Hagen’s recommendation for separate resolution transmitting each recommendation of the commission. Commissioner Schellenberg asked for a redline version of the proposed new language to see the differences from the current language. He felt that the beginning of a Council President’s term is an extremely busy time and not the best time to expect that person to appoint a Charter Revision Commission; he recommended keeping the May appointment date. Mr. Schellenberg said that the latest Florida Constitutional Revision Commission took up too many topics and made too many recommendations which limited its effectiveness in getting things passed. He recommended concentrating on fewer, more important topics to have better success. Commissioner Baker said she agreed with the Chair’s proposal for a single resolution to transmit all of the Commission’s recommendations as a group.

The Chair reminded the group about the February 28, 2020 deadline for submitting the committee reports and recommendations. He then departed the meeting at 9:26 a.m. for another commitment.

Subcommittee Reports

Strategic Planning

Commissioner Santiago provided an update for the subcommittee’s work. There has only been one meeting since the last full CRC meeting. There were three guest speakers at the meeting, including Sam Mousa, Dawn Lockhart, and Joey Grieve. During the meeting there was a fire drill that interrupted Mr. Grieve’s presentation. Mr. Grieve will be coming back in January to finish his presentation. Former City Council Member and Council President Bill Gulliford will be presenting at the next subcommittee meeting. Additionally, the subcommittee will be working on writing up an initial draft of its recommendations at the next meeting with the hopes of having a draft by the middle of January.

Mr. Schellenberg commented on information provided by Sam Mousa and stated that he misrepresented Mr. Schellenberg’s work during the Blueprint for Improvement II. Mr. Schellenberg talked about CPACs and asked if the Commission was aware of the CPACs in Jacksonville. He continued by talking about Council leaders coming together in a meeting to discuss strategic planning and talked about the importance of getting department heads together to listen to each other to understand what is going on. He referenced Resolution 2013-79 (encouraging the Mayor to form a Council of Leaders with the CEOs of the independent authorities, School Superintendent, Chamber of Commerce, Civic Council, etc.) as an example of what has been proposed and what hasn’t been done. Ms. Lisska mentioned that they are still in the process of fact-finding and that they did not have a full discussion with the guest speakers from their previous meeting. Mr. Denton talked about Dawn Lockhart’s presentation at the Urban Services Subcommittee and CPACs and provided some information about their formation and function. Mr. Denton mentioned that they are going to be meeting with the head of one of the local CPACs at a future meeting. Ms. Knight asked for more information from OGC about CPACs. Mr. Hagan opined on CPACs and talked about their structure and felt that they can be helpful in the process of the Strategic Planning Subcommittee if they had better structure and mission. Mr. Griggs stated that CPACs could be better used in an advisory role and that they may not be able to help with the structural elements of what is needed for the work that needs to be done.

Chairman Brock opened the floor to two members of CPACs in attendance to comment on their work. Northwest CPAC Chair Tonya Clark-Murray disagreed with some of the comments that were made about CPACs. She said that you can’t judge what a CPAC does if you don’t come out to the meetings and see what they do. She outlined some of the work that her CPAC conducts. She noted that they act as a liaison between citizens and city services and local programs. She noted that CPACs often write resolutions to express the needs of their local citizens. She provided the example of writing a resolution regarding the local adult arcade gaming sites. Kim Pryor, Urban Core CPAC Chair, talked about some of the work that her CPAC has done. She mentioned zoning changes that are brought up by the citizens. She noted that the CPACs should be notified of public town hall meetings to be able to participate. Ms. Pryor provided examples of why it is important for CPACs to be involved in public meetings, including the demolition of local buildings. Mr. Griggs provided clarification to the speakers noting that he truly appreciates the work that is done by CPACs. He stated that CPACs are important for public engagement issues and asked how the Charter could be amended to help utilize the resources of the CPACs. Ms. Pryor explained that even though her CPAC has smaller attendance, they have individuals heavily connected to the public. Mr. Griggs expressed concerns about the CPACs’ ability to interconnect and be a part of the strategic planning concept that the subcommittee is working on.

Urban Core

Commissioner Knight provided an update on the subcommittee’s work. There have been two guest speakers since the last full CRC meeting, including Lori Boyer and Dawn Lockhart. She talked about the importance of gathering historical facts and said their current phase of work includes learning about the current state of things within the Urban Core. She continued by outlining the subcommittee’s plans for future meetings. She noted that they are still in the fact-finding process of gathering information about multiple issues, including septic tanks, health issues, and other areas of the Urban Core’s infrastructure. Ms. Knight talked about Ms. Mills’ focus on the Blueprint for Improvement II and her focus on getting recommendations taken up by the City Council. She mentioned Lori Boyer’s suggestion to think outside of just the Urban Core for providing recommendations. Mr. Denton talked about their guest speakers’ concerns about creating an urban core investment authority and the possibility of other areas or neighborhoods feeling left out. He continued to talk about the difficulties of securing funding for an urban core investment authority. Mr. Schellenberg talked about the minority access City Council districts and opined that they should be eliminated to provide a better focus on the areas that need improvements. He talked about the issues regarding redistricting and minority access districts. He opined that the fifty-year-old minority access districts are no longer relevant and that the focus needs to be on the Urban Core. Chairman Brock talked about the broken promises of the Urban Core. Mr. Griggs mentioned that the Urban Core needs to be focused on necessary improvements and political issues should not be an issue. Mr. Denton agreed with Mr. Griggs and Mr. Brock and discussed the reasons why the focus needs to be on the Urban Core, including crime, education and health issues. Mr. Griggs discussed the financial component of creating an urban core investment authority. He referenced multiple potential funding sources that were presented by LISC at a previous subcommittee meeting. Ms. Lisska asked when the subcommittee is going to define the geographical boundaries of the Urban Core. Ms. Knight stated that they hope to have that definition defined by the end of January. Ms. Knight and Ms. Lisska discussed some of the health concerns and safety concerns in the Urban Core.

Dr. Evie A. Welch provided her perspective on some of the major issues concerning the Urban Core. She spoke about the Cathedral District and noted that it is a very diverse area. She felt that the biggest problem is the public perception of the area not being safe. She encouraged the continuation of CPAC and other public meetings. She provided the boundaries of her neighborhood and surrounding Council Districts. She encouraged reviewing the upcoming census to determine if boundaries need to be adjusted. She encouraged the City and general public to work together.

Mr. Griggs asked Ms. Knight to state the goal of the Urban Services District Subcommittee to the present CPAC members. Ms. Knight read the mission of the subcommittee. Mr. Griggs stated that their goal is not to hinder the CPACs, but to find a way for everyone to coordinate.

Kim Pryor of the Urban Core CPAC thanked Mr. Griggs for the clarification and noted that the CPACs are willing to help the CRC efforts and asked how they can help in the process. Ms. Knight said that she plans to include the CPACs in her subcommittee’s work.

Government Structure and Institutional Knowledge

Commissioner Swanson thanked the CPAC members for attending and speaking to the commission. He encouraged all the subcommittees to reach out to the CPACs and other local groups to make sure no one is left out of the process. Mr. Swanson provided updates on the subcommittee’s work. He noted that the group has trimmed their focus topic list to four topics and that the four topics have been assigned to members of the subcommittee to start drafting recommendations. The topics include: nonpartisan elections, term limits, balance of power, and election dates. He continued by stating that the subcommittee will hear from the General Counsel, Jason Gabriel at a future meeting to determine if the issue of OGC will be taken up.

General Counsel Issues – Commissioner Schellenberg Meeting

Chairman Brock discussed his reasoning for including this area on the agenda and asked Mr. Schellenberg to comment on the possibility of holding a noticed meeting on the OGC. Mr. Schellenberg noted that he has no issue with the opinions of the General Counsel, but he has concerns about the OGC’s interactions with the independent authorities. He stated that he is willing to hold a noticed meeting if anyone is still interested. Mr. Hagan asked about the scope of a potential noticed meeting on this issue. Mr. Brock noted that it would just be a noticed meeting between interested members and not the formation of a committee to address the OGC issue.

Other Business

Commissioner Baker talked about ballot deadlines as they relate to the possibility of changing the dates of picking future CRC members. She noted that ballots have to be submitted and printed two months in advance of an election. Mr. Schellenberg asked about military ballots and Ms. Baker noted said it is one month for military ballots. She suggested redefining the timeline to accommodate the election/ballot process. Mr. Brock noted that he will work with OGC to refine the timing and language of his recommendations provided in the draft. Mr. Griggs asked about having another town hall style meeting in the future to accommodate the general public. Mr. Brock noted that he plans on having a town hall meeting in March after the recommendations have been drafted to get the public’s input. Mr. Griggs asked about the possibility of getting new recommendations from the town hall meeting and how they would be handled. Mr. Brock said that he plans to get the agenda out to the CPACs in advance so that they can come prepared. Mr. Griggs and Mr. Brock discussed the idea of having a town hall at the subcommittee level prior to submitting their recommendations to give the public a chance to provide their input. This would give more time to make revisions based on public input.

Chairman Brock adjourned the meeting.

**Meeting adjourned:** 10:40 a.m.

Minutes: Jeff Clements, Council Research Division

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Posted 12.18.19 12:00 p.m.