



# City of Tacoma

## Committee of the Whole Minutes

747 Market Street Tacoma, WA 98402

9th Floor Visibility Center

May 20, 2014

3:00 PM

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### Call To Order

Deputy Mayor Woodards called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m.

**Present:** 7 - Boe, Campbell, Ibsen, Lonergan, Mello, Walker and Woodards

**Absent:** 2 - Thoms and Mayor Strickland

### Briefing Items

1. **14-0415** Charter Review Proposed Amendments Discussion

City Attorney Elizabeth Pauli reviewed the materials provided today, including the proposed Form of Government Charter; the proposed alternate recommendation of the Charter Review Committee; individual amendment sheets; and a draft timeline.

Ms. Pauli stated all Council Members should have received a memorandum from Mayor Strickland requesting submission of any new proposed amendments or questions to staff regarding the current proposed amendments. She provided a status update, stating one additional proposed amendment has been received from Mayor Strickland in addition to a request for information from staff; and the Human Resources Department has submitted a proposed amendment that did not go before the Charter Review Committee.

Ms. Pauli then reviewed the draft process timeline. Discussion ensued regarding the timeline and some sections that need to be clarified and/or confirmed. Discussion ensued regarding whether all amendments must go on the 2014 General Election ballot, if they could go on the 2015 ballot, and if they could be placed on both ballots. Ms. Pauli clarified only the review of the City Charter itself is required every ten years.

Ms. Pauli provided background information on the 1992 and 2004 Charter Reviews, including the number of proposed amendments from the committees, the number of amendments that were placed on the ballot, and the number of amendments approved by the voters. She reviewed the process by which the Council has conducted their review in the past, including public hearings and special meetings to review the amendments. She then discussed this year's

proposed amendments, noting there are over 30 and staff have consolidated some into like groups. Discussion ensued regarding holding a public hearing in early June followed by at least two special meetings. Council Member Mello stated he is open to having more than two special meetings and requested staff focus the special meetings on sections of the City Charter, noting it may help staff prepare for the discussion and help Council focus their thoughts.

Deputy Mayor Woodards asked each Council Member to speak on the amendments they are most interested in to help plan the special meetings in order to place them on the schedule now, noting meetings could be cancelled later if needed. Discussion ensued regarding when the cutoff would be for adding any additional amendments; the last date to adopt the resolution for the For and Against Committees, and the due date for ballot titles for the Voters' Pamphlet. Ms. Pauli stated if the Council could be done with their review and be at a decision point by the end of June, staff could have the month of July to work. She suggested the Council set a public hearing date at the meeting of June 3, 2014, to set the date for a public hearing on the 2014 Charter Review recommendations on June 10, 2014 and hold two special Council meetings on June 17 and 24, 2014 to review the amendments. Council Member Campbell requested staff work with the City Manager's Office and potentially hold the special meetings earlier in the day if the Study Session agenda allows for it. Council Member Lonergan inquired about the cost of placing items on the General Election ballot and the cost difference between placing them on the 2014 ballot versus the 2015 ballot. Deputy Mayor Woodards stated Council would now take turns identifying the recommendations they are most interested in; and requested that if any Council Members have any additional proposed amendments, that they be submitted no later than Friday, May 23, 2014.

Council Member Mello stated he is interested in holding a discussion on term limits, noting it was not included in the committee's final recommendation.

Council Member Walker stated she does not have any additional proposed amendments at this time, but she has questions on some of the proposed amendments, including the form of government, particularly the fiscal impact; and on having less Council representation by reducing a Council position. She noted she is interested in full-time staffing for the Current City Council; and noted it was not clear in the proposal regarding the Salary Review Commission on when it would start. She stated the form of government proposal should go on the ballot, but Council needs to see the fiscal impact. She stated she is also interested in the City/Tacoma Public Utilities (TPU) relationship; the immediate enactment of the emergencies that come up; the Salary Review Commission, gender neutral language; term limits, and the proposal that allows City employees to participate in homeowner conservation programs. She requested an analysis and/or a comparison with the City of Spokane that shows what their fiscal note is with regard to their form of

government.

Council Member Ibsen stated he is interested in three categories: the obvious cleanup/housekeeping items, the form of government, and utility governance.

Council Member Lonergan discussed the importance of the process. He concurred with Council Member Ibsen's comments on the cleanup/housekeeping items to comply with state law. He stated he would be interested in hearing input on the Salary Review Commission and re-districting Commission. He noted he does not have any new recommendations at this time other than concurring with Council Member Mello on term limits being worthy of a discussion. He also noted the need for discussion on utility-related items, the way in which the Charter Review Committee arrived at their decisions, and on the form of government proposal.

Council Member Boe stated he needs to see the financial impacts of a change of the form of government. He stated he is considering adding an amendment to require a supermajority vote of the Council for tax increases, noting a supermajority vote of the Council is required for use of their contingency funds. He concurred with Council Member Ibsen's comments on the obvious cleanup/housekeeping items; and noted he is interested in the gender neutral language, columbariums, the Pierce County Auditor's proposed housekeeping amendments, the effective date for emergency ordinances, and the incorporation of the Landmarks Preservation Commission and the Neighborhood Council's into the City Charter.

Council Member Campbell stated he would like to bring forward a recommendation regarding publically-financed campaigns, noting he needs assistance from staff and needs information on state laws. He requested information on state language regarding Council's designation as part-time or full-time. He also requested information on Section 4.12 regarding the utility. He then listed items he is interested in: all recommendations of the Pierce County Auditor, the gender neutral language, removal of the section regarding cemeteries; emergency ordinances, pecuniary interest; and incorporation of the Neighborhood Councils into the Charter. He stated if the Council moves forward with the Neighborhood Council proposal, he would like to see the Neighborhood Business Districts recognized equally.

Deputy Mayor Woodards stated she concurs with Council Member Campbell regarding the Neighborhood Councils and Neighborhood Business Districts, or either add both into the Charter, or leave them out. She stated she is also interested in the F-1 requirement; in having a little more oversight with TPU, and in Council confirmation of department heads and the Utility Director. She concurred with Council Member Campbell's request for more information on 4.12 Utility. She stated she is not proposing any new amendments, but does share the interest in discussing term limits, agrees with the proposed cleanup

language/housekeeping items; and wants to know how best to consolidate the proposed amendments and move them forward to the ballot.

## **Council Consideration Requests**

None.

## **Committee Reports**

Due to time constraints, Deputy Mayor Woodards stated Committee Reports would be postponed until the next Committee of the Whole meeting.

## **Other Items of Interest**

### **2. 14-0426**

Christina Watts, City Manager's Office, stated the City's Events and Recognitions Committee, established in 2013, has not planned the City of Destiny Awards before and wanted to do something different, so this year the City has partnered with RSVP of United Way Pierce County and the Tacoma Rainiers, and will hold the event on Wednesday, May 28, 2014, at 5:00 p.m., at Cheney Stadium. She then reviewed the outline for the event, stating a pre-game reception begins at 5:00 p.m. in the Cheney Stadium Summit Club, at approximately 5:20 p.m., there will be a brief program and Council Members will present award winners with signed baseballs; and at 6:00 p.m., Council Members and award recipients will move to the field for the recognition ceremony, and Council Members will present award winners with the traditional glass awards. She noted the ceremony should be concluded by 6:45 p.m. Discussion ensued regarding the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability (IPS) Committee meeting also scheduled for May 28, 2014, which begins at 4:30 p.m., and whether the IPS meeting should begin earlier, reschedule, or re-locate.

## **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:24 p.m.

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Victoria Woodards, Deputy Mayor

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Doris Sorum, City Clerk