

Kansas City Charter Review Commission

Meeting Minutes

5.2.23

Those in attendance: Co-Chair Jack Steadman, Commissioners Margaret Jones, Michael McGee, Linda Brown, Jenny Johnston, Eric Rose, Wilson Vance, and Adam Miller. Co-Chair Karen Slaughter participated virtually. Reid Day of the Mayor's Office, Matt Gigliotti of the Law Department, and Marilyn Sanders and Howard Rice of the Clerk's Office also attended.

Co-Chair Slaughter provided introduction and general overview of the meeting goals and structure. Co-Chair Steadman provided a summary of the April 25th meeting minutes and accepted a motion for approval of the minutes. All present approved the minutes.

The Commission turned the floor to Reid Day of the Mayor's Office, who explained that the proposal to revise portions of Charter Article X related to the Parks and Recreation Board and Department was being withdrawn or rescinded such that the Mayor's Office was no longer proposing amendment to the Charter in this regard. Parks Board President Jack Hollard briefly addressed the Commission thereafter.

The Commission discussed the public listening session held the previous evening at Northland Neighborhoods, Inc. Commissioners summarized public comments about proposals and feedback. There were several public comments related to the Article X proposal, which the Mayor's office has now rescinded, as well as comments about the Commission's timeline, and a few other comments related to proposals being considered by the Commission and others suggested by member of the public. Commissioners acknowledged some of the comments are related to items that cannot be changed via Charter due to Missouri law, or others that were not appropriate for Charter revisions. Due to concerns about the impact of changing the City's election cycle on the City's fiscal year, the Commissioners expressed a desire to hear from the Finance Director.

The Commission moved to a discussion of the timeline to make proposals and recommendations to the Mayor and Council. The Mayor's Office has requested recommendations be submitted for introduction to Council by May 18, 2023 and consideration thereafter in order to meet deadlines to have any recommended Charter changes on an August ballot. Commissioners recognized the pace of the Commission's work, and noted limited issues for consideration such that the timeline could be met while others expressed a desire to continue meeting rather than meeting the Mayor's deadline to place recommended changes on the August ballot. The Commission noted they can have an additional public listening session on Monday May 15th and hold a regular meeting on May 16th, and directed City staff to make arrangements for a third listening session.

Following a break, the Commission moved into a discussion of Article VII thresholds related to recall, initiative, and referendum petitions. The Mayor's Office provided a summary of additional information that was provided in a revised briefing primer. Commissioners expressed hesitation in using registered voters as proposed by the Mayor's office because the thresholds would be much higher than current limits and potentially higher than turnout in municipal elections held under the current schedule. Commissioners discussed potential recommendations that would change the recall threshold rather than all thresholds, and also discussed the "Columbia model" which has been adopted by Columbia, Missouri and utilizes a "floor" or base number of required signatures while also using the measure of voters in the

last mayoral election as currently used in the Charter. The Commission generally agreed that increasing the number of signatures would be beneficial, but they are also cognizant not to impose overly high and unattainable restrictions. Commissioners also requested additional information from City staff related to prior petition efforts and election turnout.

The Commissioners decided to direct Law to create a proposed redline recommended change that uses a floor for petition thresholds based on an average of the turnout in prior elections years. The Commission proposed using a 5% threshold with a floor of 4,000 voters for initiative petitions, a 10% threshold with a floor of 7,000 voters for referendum petitions, and a 25% threshold with a floor of 18,000 voters for recall petitions.

The Commission then moved into public comment where commentators spoke about ranked choice voting and provided additional comment on the Commission's work to date.

The meeting adjourned following public comment.