Kansas City Charter Review Commission

Public Listening Session Meeting Minutes

5.15.23

Co-Chairs Steadman and Co-Chair Slaughter present at the Gregg/Klice Community Center (1600 E 17th Terrace, Kansas City, MO 64108) with Commissioners Rose, McGee, Vance, Jones, Miller, Brown, and Johnston present. Reid Day of the Mayor's office, Howard Rice, Marilyn Sanders, and Monica Sanders present from the Clerk's office. Co-Chair Slaughter leads the Commission through introductions and preliminary summary of the Commission's work.

Commissioner Jones begins the substantive portion of the meeting by summarizing the centralized filing system proposed revision. She notes the Commission has unanimously voted to establish centralized filing system and random ballot order as a recommended Charter change. No member of the public desired to provide comment on this proposal.

Commissioner Vance summarizes the possibility of moving the municipal election cycle. She notes that the Commission received the recommendation to shift to even years aligned with federal elections, but indicated that the Commission has more thoroughly considered either moving to an August/November cycle in odd years or to recommend no changes at all to this portion of the Charter. Several public comments were provided, with several speaking in favor of the current election cycle set forth in the Charter.

Commissioner McGee then moves into discussion of proposals to change how votes are tabulated, and explains that no consensus has been reached but that the Commission was considering a runoff system using a 50+1 model, a 2/3rds runoff model, or the "Clay County Model" based on the Clay County Charter. Several public comments were received in favor of adopting a ranked choice voting system, while others expressed opinions that ranked choice voting would disenfranchise voters. Other comments generally supported idea that voter education and turnout should be focus of City's efforts related to elections.

Commissioner Miller moves into discussion of petition threshold revisions and explains the concept of a floor for required signatures that works in conjunction with votes cast in the last mayoral election. Several comments were made in opposition to raising petition thresholds, while others noted consistency of a "floor" was an intriguing concept.

The Commission then opened the session to general public comment. Several commenters reiterated or expanded upon prior statements, while others spoke to adding language about future Charter Review commissions and how public engagement is conducted.

The meeting adjourned.