



City of Sunnyvale

Meeting Minutes - Draft

Charter Review Committee

Thursday, February 27, 2025

5:00 PM

Online and Redwood Conference Room,
City Hall, 456 W. Olive Ave., Sunnyvale,
CA 94086

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Larsson called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Chair Larsson led the salute to the United States flag.

ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Member Galen Kim Davis
Member Gustav Larsson
Member Timothy Oey
Member Ken Olevson
Member Martin Pyne
Member Barry Vickrey
Member Kristel Wickham

Absent: 3 - Member Kathryn Filley
Member David Newswanger
Member Gail Rubino

Member Filley arrived at 5:12 p.m.

Member Rubino arrived at 5:45 p.m.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None.

CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTION: Committee Member Davis moved and Committee Member Oey seconded the motion to approve agenda item 1.A with the following amendments:

- Add that Committee Member Newswanger's absence is an excused absence;
- Revision to reflect that Committee Member Wickham was nominated to the office

of Vice Chair by Committee Member Oey; and

- Revision to correct Committee Member Wickham's last name on page three.

The motion carried with the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Member Davis
Member Larsson
Member Oey
Member Olevson
Member Pyne
Member Vickrey
Member Wickham

No: 0

Absent: 3 - Member Filley
Member Newswanger
Member Rubino

1.A [25-0008](#) Approve the Charter Review Committee Meeting Minutes of February 6, 2025

Approve the Charter Review Committee Commission Minutes of February 6, 2025 with the following amendments:

- Add that Committee Member Newswanger's absence is an excused absence;
- Revision to reflect that Committee Member Wickham was nominated to the office of Vice Chair by Committee Member Oey; and
- Revision to correct Committee Member Wickham's last name on page three.

PUBLIC HEARING/GENERAL BUSINESS

2 [25-0115](#) Review and Discussion of Sunnyvale City Charter to Identify Amendments to the Charter

Committee Members provided comments or questions related to the review of the City Charter:

- Comment that it would be useful to have background information for a few of the identified potential issues. Such as, why the "Role of Mayor" or "Alternative Voting Systems" were identified as potential issues.
- Comment that it would be useful to have background information on the failed ballot measure related to Charter Amendments.
- Question regarding how the Committee's review, comments, or suggestions will be

organized or captured.

- Comments related to the Uniform Laws Commission's drafting rules specifically the rule of using gender-neutral language and not using pronouns. It was suggested that this rule be applied during the review of the Charter.
- Comment that during a review of a document, it is less likely to identify an item that needs to be added in comparison to revising or omitting an item.
- Question regarding how to identify and track the items that should be considered for addition in the Charter. Chair Larsson commented that staff will track the items as they are presented.
- Question regarding if there is a charter that is a good example and that members should review.

Staff provided comments and answers:

- The Committee's work will be tracked in a document that will be created following the initial comments and feedback received. This will allow staff to understand how to organize the document.
- Comment that attachment 3 to the Report to the Charter Review Committee dated Feb. 6, 2025 includes information that may provide some insight. Reviewing Council meetings related to establishing a Charter Review Committee may also provide some insight.
- Members were reminded that the Charter is the City's constitution and the Committee's role is to discuss what is appropriate for Sunnyvale. Once specific issues have been identified, Members may find it useful to look at charters from other cities.

Public Hearing opened at 5:25 p.m.

Steve Scandalis suggested that public hearing open after each section is reviewed or discussed by the Committee. They also provided feedback regarding what information should be included in the document that will capture the Committee's work and progress. They requested the Committee consider revising Section 606 (g) to one appointee instead of two appointees.

Public Hearing closed at 5:28 p.m.

The Committee provided comments or questions related to the following Articles:

- Question regarding adding a map to Article II.
- Comment that adding a map to Article II would restrict the City's authority to annex vacant land.

- Question regarding if there are contracts in effect as mentioned in Section 303.
- Comment regarding adding a “history page” to the end of the Charter that captures repealed and amended information.
- Question regarding if it is a standard provision to require voters’ approval for the sale or leasing of a public utility as mentioned in Section 402.
- Comments related to Section 402 were shared including adding where city-owned utilities are located and when a franchise is granted. Comment in support of reviewing the section in more detail further in the review process.
- Comment that Section 402 does not include language related to the acquisition of public utilities.
- Question regarding the preparation of the ballot measure specifically who prepares the language.
- Comment in support of creating a document that captures the Committee’s work and progress was shared.
- Comments in support of reviewing Sections 601(c), 603, 605, 606(a)(3), 607, 609, 611, and 616 in more detail further in the review process.
- Comments in support of streamlining Sections 601(a), 602, and 609.
- Comments in support of reviewing Sections 606(g) and 611 in more detail further in the review process.
- Comments in support of reviewing Section 605 in more detail specifically language related to extended leave.
- Question regarding what is classified as an editorial change and how would the changes be presented to voters.
- Comments regarding concerns with referencing government codes in the charter were shared.
- Comments in support of reviewing Section 605 in more detail specifically language related to compensation for mayor and councilmembers and making the positions feasible for a broader range of the community.
- Comments regarding Section 708 specifically language related to publication of notices in newspaper.
- Comments in support of reviewing Article X in more detail specifically what determines charter versus non-charter board or commission and the requirement of citizenship to serve on a board or commission.
- Comment in support of clarifying Section 1005 specifically language related to qualified elector of the city and if it applies to non-charter boards and commissions.
- Comments in support of reviewing in more detail

Staff provided comments and answers:

- Members were reminded that amendments must be presented to voters and that

the review should include a financial perspective to determine how many ballot measures should be presented to voters.

- Comment that staff have encountered contracts dating back to the 1950's such as maintenance agreements, utility agreements and ownership agreements.
- Comment that "repealed" and "amended" information is part of the codifying process and expected in codes.
- Comment that Section 402 is a common provision for cities with public utilities.
- The Committee will prepare and recommend the draft ballot measure language for Council consideration.
- Comment that editorial changes must be presented to voters and possible ballot measure can reference that the City is modernizing language.
- Comment that provisions related to the publication of notices in newspapers is also found in the municipal code and state law which the city must comply with.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMENTS

-Committee Member Comments

Chair Larsson shared details of Information Only Item 25-0217 "Chair Announcement of Chair-Appointed Ad-Hoc Advisory Committees for the Charter Review Committee (Information Only)". Assignments will be communicated with Subcommittee Members.

-Staff Comments

Deputy City Manager Verceles requested Committee Members hold the evenings of May 20 and June 3 for a potential joint meeting with City Council.

INFORMATION ONLY

[25-0217](#)

Chair Announcement of Chair-Appointed Ad-Hoc Advisory Committees for the Charter Review Committee (Information Only)

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Larsson adjourned the meeting at 7:01 p.m.