



City of Sunnyvale

Meeting Minutes

Charter Review Committee

Thursday, April 3, 2025

5:00 PM

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

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Wickham called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Vice Chair Wickham led the salute to the United States flag.

ROLL CALL

- Present:** 7 - Vice Chair Kristel Wickham
Member Kathryn Filley
Member David Newswanger
Member Timothy Oey
Member Ken Olevson
Member Gail Rubino
Member Barry Vickrey
- Absent:** 3 - Chair Gustav Larsson
Member Galen Kim Davis
Member Martin Pyne

Chair Larsson's and Member Davis and Pyne's absences are excused.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Steve Scandalis shared comments related to the vacant seat on the Charter Review Committee (CRC) and urged members to watch the recording of the March 18, 2025 Council meeting.

Mei-Ling communicated support for adding a CRC section to the City Charter (Charter) and commented that the list of potential Charter amendments may require a multi-election approach.

Bob provided information related to the cost of conducting a general and primary

election in 2022.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Public Comment opened at 5:17 p.m.

Steve Scandalis voiced support for the CRC meeting minutes being available in a timely manner and commented on the use of gender-neutral terminology in the minutes.

Public Comment closed at 5:20 p.m.

MOTION: Committee Member Olevson moved and Committee Member Rubino seconded the motion to approve agenda item 1.A as submitted.

The motion carried with the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Vice Chair Wickham
Member Oey
Member Olevson
Member Rubino
Member Vickrey

No: 0

Absent: 3 - Chair Larsson
Member Davis
Member Pyne

Abstain: 2 - Member Filley
Member Newswanger

1.A [25-0289](#) Approve the Charter Review Committee Meeting Minutes of February 27, 2025

Approve the Charter Review Committee Meeting Minutes of February 27, 2025 as submitted.

PUBLIC HEARING/GENERAL BUSINESS

2 [25-0382](#) Discussion and Prioritization of Issues to Study for Potential Amendments to the Sunnyvale City Charter

Senior Assistant City Attorney Melissa Tronquet provided the staff report.

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

- Question regarding what the Committee's role is in determining how the amendments are presented to the voters.
- Question regarding adding a Charter Review Committee (CRC) section to the Charter.
- Comment that some of the issues may be better handled as an Ordinance as opposed to outlining in the Charter.
- Comments in support of prioritizing issues at the next CRC meeting as opposed to during tonight's agenda item. This provides members with time to research and better understand each issue.
- Question regarding how to identify provisions that need to be added to the Charter and if staff is aware of what other cities have placed on the ballots related to charter amendments.

Staff provided comments and answers:

- Comment that step two of the review process may include polling on issues that could provide the Committee and Council with guidance on how to present the amendment revisions to voters.
- Comment that the Charter includes a provision that allows City Council to create boards and commissions. This provision does not require that the CRC be included in the Charter.
- Comment that prioritizing issues during tonight's agenda item is not required. The staff recommendation includes prioritizing and gradually reducing the number of issues on the list.
- Comment that staff may be able to research information related to what other cities have placed on the ballot. The research would be time intensive so applying criteria would be beneficial. Criteria such as cities similar in size to Sunnyvale.

Public Hearing opened at 5:38 p.m.

Robert Edwards commented on Council-Directed Issue 1 - Section 601 (City Council Term and Election) specifically that Sunnyvale recently removed ranked choice voting from the Charter.

Liang Tang shared their opposition to Council-Directed Issue 1 specifically ranked choice voting and Council-Directed Issue Number 7 - Article X (Appointive Boards

and Commissions).

Alice Kao spoke towards Council-Directed Issue 1 specifically concerns with ranked choice voting and Council-Directed Issue Number 8 - General Issues throughout Charter (Update Language to be Gender Neutral) specifically the failure of Measure F.

Steve Scandalis commented on utilizing high, medium and low for prioritizing of issues. They voiced support for Council-Directed Issues 1, 2 - Section 605 (Compensation), 3 - Section 606 (Vacancies) specifically revising Section 606(g), 5 – Section 609 (Redistricting), 6 – Section 611 (Regular Meetings) , and shared their opposition to Council-Directed Issues 7 and 8.

Brian Bertacini voiced their opposition to Council-Directed Issue 1 specifically ranked choice voting.

Hannah shared their opposition to Council-Directed Issue 1 specifically ranked choice voting and Council-Directed Issue Number 7 specifically removing the citizenship eligibility requirement.

Mei-Ling Stefan communicated their opposition to Council-Directed Issue 1 and spoke towards Council-Directed Issues 2, 3, 4 – Section 607 (Presiding Officer. Mayor), 7 and 8.

Cindy Pang voiced their opposition to Council-Directed Issue 1 specifically ranked choice voting and Council-Directed Issue Number 7.

Sarah Xu shared their opposition to Council-Directed Issue 1 specifically ranked choice voting, Council-Directed Issue 4 and Council-Directed Issue 7 specifically the failure of Measure F.

Xi communicated their opposition to Council-Directed Issue 1 specifically ranked choice voting and Council-Directed Issue 7 specifically removing the citizenship eligibility requirement.

Jen voiced their concerns with ranked choice voting and Council-Directed Issues 7 and 8 specifically the failure of Measure F.

Public Hearing closed at 6:13 p.m.

Committee Members provided comments related to issues outlined in Section A - Council-Directed Issues:

- Comment in support of considering how individuals have voted on past measures when deciding which measures should be presented to the voters in the future.
- Comments in support of prioritizing issues at the next CRC meeting as opposed to during tonight's agenda item. This provides members with time to research and better understand each issue.
- Comment in support of a measure that is solely to modernize the Charter language and would not include substantive changes.
- Comments in support of studying the issues identified in Section A.

Senior Assistant City Attorney Melissa Tronquet provided an overview of issues outlined in Section B - Issues Recommended by Sunnyvale City Staff and City Manager.

Committee Members provided comments or questions related to issues outlined in Section B:

- Question regarding adding a provision to Section 802 specifically if the settlement amount would be disclosed as part of a Council meeting.
- Question regarding Section 802 specifically if there is a recommended settlement amount.
- Comment in support of having additional information related to the settlement of claims. For example, how many claims are received and what is the average settlement amount.
- Comment that additional information is needed related to Section 1309 specifically what are the alternative project delivery methods.
- Comments in support of having staff provide sample language from other city charters that cover public contracting or better project delivery methods identified.
- Comments in support of prioritizing issues at the next CRC meeting.
- Comments in support of studying the issues identified in Section B.

Staff provided comments and answers:

- Comment that the settlement of claims against the city would be disclosed via the "List of Claims and Bills Approved for Payment by the City Manager".
- Comment that the recommended settlement amount needs to be studied by the

Committee. As a reference, the City Manager's threshold for approving contracts is \$250,000. Beyond \$250,000 requires City Council approval.

- Comment that State laws now authorize alternative delivery methods that allow the process to be consolidated and promote cost efficiency.
- Comment related to access to additional information specifically that the role of the Ad-Hoc Advisory Committees is to conduct research and report back findings to the entire Committee.

Public Hearing reopened at 6:42 p.m.

Steve Scandalis shared support for Sunnyvale City Staff and City Manager Issues 1- Section 1309 (Contracts on Public Works) and 2 - Section 802 (City Manager Powers and Duties) with a recommendation to increase the City Manager's threshold for approving claims and settlements to \$75,000 or \$100,000.

Jen voiced support for having additional information regarding claims and sample language from other city charters about project delivery methods.

Public Hearing closed at 6:48 p.m.

Committee Members provided comments related to issues outlined in Section C: Additional Issues Discussed by CRC at March Meetings:

- Comment that the list does not include "adding a transportation commission".

Staff provided comments and answers:

- Comment that adding a transportation commission may be included as part of Council-Directed Issue 7.

Public Hearing reopened at 6:55 p.m.

Steve Scandalis communicated support for adding a transportation commission, studying CRC Issues 2 - Section 603 (City Council Qualifications) , 3 - Section 708 (Publishing of Legal Notices), 5 - Section 1100 (Merit Principle), 6 - Section 1104 (Pay Plan), 7 - Article XII (Retirement) , 10 Section 1318 (Independent Audit) and 11 - Section 1320 (Revenue Bond) and opposition to studying CRC Issues 1 - New Issues, 4 - Article X (Appointive Boards and Commissions) and 8 - Section 1302 (Budget, Submission to City Council).

Zachary Kaufman spoke towards CRC Issue 2 specifically increasing the residency requirement and applying the requirements to boards and commissions.

Mei-Ling Stefan shared support for increasing the residency requirement for Council, Boards and Commissions with Council having the higher residency requirement.

Jen voiced support for increasing the residency requirement for Council, Boards and Commissions and commented towards CRC Issue 8 specifically their support for Sunnyvale's 20-year budget policy.

Public Hearing closed at 7:03 p.m.

3 [25-0384](#) Discussion of Subcommittee Assignments, Next Steps and Deliverables

Vice Chair Wickham announced Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee assignments as follows:

Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee 1 – Members Newswanger, Olevson, Pyne, Vickrey

Topics:

- A.1 City Council Term and Election
- A.3 Vacancies
- A.8 Gender Neutral Language
- C.2 City Council Qualifications

Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee 2 – Members Davis, Filley, Oey

Topics:

- A.2 Compensation
- A.4 Presiding Officer. Mayor
- A.5 Redistricting
- A.6 Regular Meetings
- C.13 Franchises

Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee 3 – Chair Larsson, Vice Chair Wickham, Member Rubino

Topics:

- A.7 Appointive Boards and Commissions (eligibility)
- B.1 Contracts on Public Works
- B.2 City Manager Powers and Duties
- C.1 New Issues
- C.4 Appointive Boards and Commissions

Committee Members provided recommendations or questions related to assignments:

- Recommendation that the assignments be shared with Members via email.
- Recommendation that the Vice Chair identify a convener for each Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee.
- Question regarding the method that Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee should use to report findings to the entire Committee.

- Vice Chair Wickham identified Members to serve in the role of convener for each Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee with the understanding that Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee may reassign the role.

Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee 1: Member Vickrey

Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee 2: Member Oey

Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee 3: Member Rubino

Vice Chair Wickham provided an overview of a sample spreadsheet template that the Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee can use to capture information on assigned topics such as impact, alternatives, key issues, priority, etc. Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee reports are to be submitted to City staff a week before a scheduled meeting and in Adobe PDF format.

Committee Members provided comments related to the spreadsheet template:

- Comment in support of including if the issue has been on a ballot and the results of the ballot.
- Comment in support of both Adobe and Excel formats of the spreadsheet be shared with Members.

Staff commented that the Adobe format of the spreadsheet will be shared with the Members and staff will research alternatives if this method presents issues.

Committee Members communicated support to not have a meeting on April 24.

Vice Chair Wickham announced that two Committee meetings will need to be held in May. The next regular meeting is scheduled for 5 p.m. on May 1. Staff will poll Members for a special meeting date and time in May.

Public Hearing opened at 7:32 p.m.

Steve Scandalis encouraged Members to watch the March 18, 2025 Council meeting, specifically the discussion about the CRC's work and shared additional information the Ad-Hoc Advisory Committees may want to include in their spreadsheet.

Public Hearing closed at 7:35 p.m.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMENTS

-Committee Member Comments

Member Vickrey shared they will be absent from the August 7, 2025 Charter Review Committee meeting.

-Staff Comments

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Wickham adjourned the meeting at 7:42 p.m.