



City of Sunnyvale

Meeting Minutes

Charter Review Committee

Thursday, September 4, 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 5:00 p.m.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Chair Larsson led the salute to the United States flag.

ROLL CALL

Present: 9 - Chair Gustav Larsson
Vice Chair Kristel Wickham
Member Galen Kim Davis
Member David Newswanger
Member Timothy Oey
Member Ken Olevson
Member Martin Pyne
Member Gail Rubino
Member Barry Vickrey

Absent: 1 - Member Kathryn Filley

Member Filley's absence is excused.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Steve Scandalis presented historical information related to Sunnyvale City Council vacancies between 1913 and 2025.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Member Pyne moved and Vice Chair Wickham seconded the motion to approve agenda item 1.A as submitted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Chair Larsson
Vice Chair Wickham
Member Newswanger
Member Oey
Member Olevson
Member Pyne
Member Rubino

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Member Filley

Abstain: 2 - Member Davis
Member Vickrey

1.A [25-0638](#) Approve the Charter Review Committee Meeting Minutes of August 7, 2025

Approve the Charter Review Committee Minutes of August 7, 2025 as submitted.

PUBLIC HEARING/GENERAL BUSINESS

2 [25-0875](#) Discussion and Possible Action on Survey to Gather Community Feedback on Potential Charter Amendments Related to Council Vacancies, Council and Mayor Compensation, Alternative Public Works Delivery Methods, and City Manager Claim Settlement Authority

Deputy City Manager Connie Verceles provided the staff report.

Committee Members provided comments or questions related to the survey:

- Comment in support of including demographic questions related to the individual's voter status and if they participated in the last election.
- Question about including a chart by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development on Santa Clara County income limit to help orient people on salary expectations in the area.
- Comment that "median earnings" and "median income" are each referenced in question 2C, and that they should match.
- Comment related to question 2G, it is believed that Sunnyvale's minimum wage is tied to the inflation rate.
- Comment in support of replacing question 5C with an alternative question.
- Comment that the chart by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development on income may be confusing.
- Comments in support of including a guide or background information on the

issues being presented.

- Suggestions related to formatting or language for questions 2D, 2F, 2G and 3 were provided.
- Comment that it is unclear who the survey target audience will be; therefore, an "other" response option should be included in question 5A.
- Suggestion for the survey to include two questions: "What benefits are most important to you?" and "What concerns do you have?" and that the questions are related to the design-build and settlement authority limit issues.
- Suggestion that Section 1 (filling vacancies) include information related to the cost associated with holding a special election.
- Comments in support of eliminating yes/no responses and instead using responses that explain the choices.
- Comments in support of scheduling a special Charter Review Committee meeting for September 25.

Staff provided comments and answers:

- Comment that a question about voter status can be included in the survey, should the Committee choose.
- Comment that staff need to familiarize themselves with the chart to determine if it should be included in the survey.
- Comment that Sunnyvale's minimum wage has a cap of 5% and there has been a year when the inflation rate was higher than 5%.
- Comment that the survey is one data set for the Committee to utilize in making their final recommendation to the City Council.

Member Pyne left the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Public Hearing opened at 6:32 p.m.

Zach Kaufman communicated concern with offering a sizable salary because it may attract career politicians and spoke towards question 2.F.

Steve Scandalis shared support for including background information for issues being presented and proposed revisions to survey sections 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Public Hearing closed at 6:38 p.m.

MOTION: Committee Member Oey moved and Committee Member Davis seconded the motion to amend the survey as follows:

- Remove question 2E;
- Replace the demographic questions with two questions: "Are you a registered voter in Sunnyvale?" and "Did you vote in the November 2024 election?"; and
- Add information to Section 1 that compares the cost and voter turnout for a general election versus a special election.

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT: Member Newswanger offered a friendly amendment to revise the response options to question 1A to:

- "Should the Charter allow vacancies to be filled through special elections with higher cost, lower turnout, and shorter vacancy"; and
- "Should the Charter allow vacancies to be filled through general elections with lower cost, higher turnout, and longer vacancy."

Members Oey and Davis accepted the friendly amendment.

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT: Member Davis offered a friendly amendment to direct staff to change all "yes/no" questions as they exist. Member Oey clarified that if the friendly amendment requests staff to replace "yes/no" with responses that state what the choice/response means. Member Davis confirmed Member Oey's clarification. Member Oey accepted the friendly amendment.

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT: Member Newswanger offered a friendly amendment to add a question (1C) to read "Should the appointment that fills a vacancy be limited to 10 months?" Member Oey declined to accept the friendly amendment.

The motion as amended carried with the following vote:

Yes: 8 - Chair Larsson
Vice Chair Wickham
Member Davis
Member Newswanger
Member Oey
Member Olevson
Member Rubino
Member Vickrey

No: 0

Absent: 2 - Member Filley
Member Pyne

MOTION: Committee Member Vickrey moved and Committee Member Oey seconded the motion to schedule a Charter Review Committee meeting for

Thursday, September 25, 2025.

The motion carried with the following vote:

Yes: 8 - Chair Larsson
Vice Chair Wickham
Member Davis
Member Newswanger
Member Oey
Member Olevson
Member Rubino
Member Vickrey

No: 0

Absent: 2 - Member Filley
Member Pyne

MOTION: Committee Member Newswanger moved and Committee Member Oey seconded the motion to add a question (1.C) with responses to read “Long appointments can affect benefit costs for the City” and options: “Appointments should be limited to 10 months to limit costs ” and “Appointments should be for the duration of the vacancy to minimize the inefficiency of turnover.”

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT: Member Davis offered a friendly amendment to revise the question to “What is an acceptable limit to the length of a council appointment?” with a fill-in option for response. Member Newswanger declined to accept the friendly amendment.

The motion failed with the following vote:

Yes: 0

No: 8 - Chair Larsson
Vice Chair Wickham
Member Davis
Member Newswanger
Member Oey
Member Olevson
Member Rubino
Member Vickrey

Absent: 2 - Member Filley
Member Pyne

Committee Members provided additional comments related to the survey:

- Comment in support of removing question 4B from the survey.
- Comment in support of revising question 4A to read "Which of the following methods do you support for public works projects" and suggestions for responses were provided.
- Comment in support of removing question 4A from the survey.
- Comment in support of keeping questions 4A and 4B in the survey.

Chair Larsson polled members on removing questions 4A and 4B from the survey. The questions will not be included in the survey.

Public Hearing opened at 7:53 p.m.

Steve Scandalis shared support for keeping either question 4A or 4B in the survey and encouraged the Committee to consider adding question 1C in the survey.

Public Hearing closed at 7:56 p.m.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMENTS

-Committee Member Comments

Member Newswanger confirmed that members may submit additional survey comments to staff.

-Staff Comments

Deputy City Manager Connie Verceles announced that the Charter Review Committee (CRC) will meet at 6 p.m. on September 25 and that the CRC meeting on October 2 will be canceled.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Larsson adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.