



City of Sunnyvale

Meeting Minutes

Charter Review Committee

Thursday, October 23, 2025

6:00 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 6:00 p.m.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Chair Larsson led the salute to the United States flag.

ROLL CALL

Present: 10 - Chair Gustav Larsson
Vice Chair Kristel Wickham
Member Galen Kim Davis
Member Kathryn Filley
Member David Newswanger
Member Timothy Oey
Member Ken Olevson
Member Martin Pyne
Member Gail Rubino
Member Barry Vickrey

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Larsson announced that the Committee will hear Public Hearing/General Business Item 4- Receive Community Survey Results before the other Public Hearing/General Business agenda items.

No speakers.

PUBLIC HEARING/GENERAL BUSINESS

4 [25-1018](#) Receive Community Survey Results

At this time, the Committee heard Public Hearing/General Business Item 4- Receive Community Survey Results.

Deputy City Manager Connie Verceles provided the staff report.

Committee Members provided comments or questions related to the survey results:

- Question related to the number of registered voters in Sunnyvale. Comment that this information allows for analysis of the number of respondents (302) compared to registered voters.
- Question about whether staff can identify how many unregistered respondents reside in Sunnyvale.
- Question related to the response rate of this survey compared to other surveys the City has administered.
- Question related to whether an individual was permitted to take the survey multiple times.
- Question about whether staff would be providing an analysis of the survey results. For example, survey comments and the number of registered respondents vs unregistered respondents.

Staff provided comments related to the survey results:

- Comment that as of February 2025 there were 72,759 registered voters in Sunnyvale.
- Comment that it is not possible to identify if an unregistered respondent resides in Sunnyvale.
- Comment that unregistered participants had the ability to take the survey multiple times. The system does not track Internet Protocol (IP) addresses.
- Comment that this survey had a successful response rate compared to other surveys.
- Comment that individuals may perform their own analysis via the survey platform.

Public Hearing opened at 6:21 p.m.

Zachary Kaufman spoke towards survey questions related to filling council vacancies and compensation for councilmembers and mayor.

Steve Scandalis shared a presentation related to survey results, comments, and concerns with missing context, clarity and details in survey questions.

Public Hearing closed at 6:32 p.m.

Committee Members provided additional comments or questions related to the survey results:

- Comments that the results related to the question about the City Manager's authority to settle claims may indicate that respondents are unfamiliar (or confused) with the meaning of "authority to settle claims."
- Question about whether Committee Members can use survey data submitted by a member of the public.
- Comments in support of explaining "authority to settle claims" in future surveys, polling, publications, etc. Survey results indicate that clarity is needed.

Staff provided answers:

- Committee Members were encouraged to run reports or gather data themselves via the survey platform.

1 [25-1002](#) Discuss and Provide Feedback on Subcommittee Draft Report
Regarding Council Meeting Frequency

Chair Larsson provided an overview of the next steps, which include feedback on the Subcommittee draft reports that will become the Committee's final report to City Council. Revisions to Subcommittee reports are due to staff by Wednesday, November 19. The Committee will consider the draft report at its December 4 meeting.

Deputy City Manager Connie Verceles provided the staff report.

Member Vickrey provided the Subcommittee report.

Committee Members provided comments or questions related to the Subcommittee report on Council Meeting Frequency:

- Question whether the Subcommittee's supplemental attachment about Bay Area council meeting schedules should be included in the Committee's final report.
- Comment that the supplemental attachment be revised to reflect "Annual Consolidated Finance Report" instead of "Consolidated Annual Finance Report", if it is included in the final report. Additional revisions include Mountain View's City Council observes a two-month break (July and August), and the Sunnyvale City Council consists of seven members.
- Comment in support of including whether the council meetings for the Bay Area cities are outlined in their respective charter or by ordinance.
- Comment in support of adding language related to how a four-week and six-week break could be created.
- Comments in support for including examples of how a four-week and six-week break could be created.

Subcommittee Member Vickrey and Staff provided comments:

- Comment that it may not be necessary to include the supplemental information to City Council, but it would be a decision for the Committee.
- Comment that Committee Members may submit revisions to staff. Staff will share the suggested edits with the Subcommittee.

Public Hearing opened at 7:07 p.m.

Steve Scandalis voiced support for including examples of how a four-week and six-week break could be created.

Public Hearing closed at 7:10 p.m.

Members were polled on the next steps, which include that Subcommittee reports are due to staff by November 19, and the Committee will review the draft report at their December 4 meeting.

2 [25-1003](#) Discuss and Provide Feedback on Subcommittee Draft Report
Regarding Contracts for Public Works Projects

Deputy City Manager Connie Verceles provided the staff report.

Vice Chair Wickham provided the Subcommittee report.

Committee Members provided comments or questions related to the Subcommittee report on Contracts for Public Works Projects:

- Question whether the Subcommittee recommendation should include specific Charter language amendments.

Staff provided comments:

- Comment that it is acceptable for the recommendation to include a redline of the existing Charter language and proposed new language.

Public Hearing opened at 7:22 p.m.

Steve Scandalis urged the Committee to refrain from using the word “modernize” in their final report and shared concerns related to explaining this topic to voters.

Public Hearing closed at 7:25 p.m.

Committee Members provided additional comments:

- Comment in support of removing the word “modernize” from the report.
- Comments in support of the Subcommittee’s recommendation.
- Comments in support of including specific Charter language amendments.
- Question about the Committee’s opportunity to review the proposed Charter language prior to the December 4 meeting.

Staff provided comments:

- Comment that a review of the proposed revisions could occur at the November 6 meeting.

Chair Larsson polled Members on the Subcommittee proposing new Charter language for this item. The Subcommittee will submit the proposed Charter language.

**3 [25-1004](#) Discuss and Provide Feedback on Subcommittee Draft Report
Regarding City Manager Settlement Authority**

Deputy City Manager Connie Verceles provided the staff report.

Member Rubino provided the Subcommittee report.

Committee Members provided comments or questions related to the Subcommittee report on City Manager Settlement Authority:

- Comment in support of advising Council to conduct additional polling on this topic due to the survey results.
- Comments in support of the Subcommittee’s recommendation.
- Comment that the Committee can recommend the City Manager’s settlement authority be tied to the contract approval authority of \$250,000, and that the amount be set by ordinance.
- Comments in support of the settlement authority and contract approval authority being set to the same amount.

Staff provided comments or answers:

- Comment that the Charter amendment could indicate that Council adopts a settlement authority limit by ordinance. Unless and until an ordinance is adopted, the settlement authority remains at the state law level of \$50,000.
- Comment that if a measure is placed on the ballot, Council could preliminarily adopt an ordinance specifying the settlement amount and effective date with a

provision stating the ordinance would only become effective if voters approve the Charter amendment.

Public Hearing opened at 7:59 p.m.

Zachary Kaufman spoke about providing voters with information on the correlation between the Council's settlement amount and the City Manager's recommended settlement amount.

Steve Scandalis voiced concern with the settlement authority and contract approval authority being set to the same amount.

Public Hearing closed at 8:04 p.m.

Chair Larsson polled Members on the Subcommittee revising the report to:

- include information on where other cities have set their settlement authority amount limit;
- the recommendation be revised to include Council amend the Charter to set the settlement authority by ordinance;
- Council adopt an ordinance preliminarily, that specifies the settlement limit amount and an effective date contingent upon voter approval of a Charter amendment; and
- Council consider setting the settlement authority limit to be the same as the contract approval authority.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMENTS

-Committee Member Comments

Chair Larsson shared information about the number of meetings and events they attended as a Councilmember.

Member Olevson clarified that Subcommittee reports are due by Wednesday, October 29.

-Staff Comments

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Larsson adjourned the meeting at 8:28 p.m.