



City of Sunnyvale

Meeting Minutes - Draft

Charter Review Committee

Thursday, May 1, 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: 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

Steve Scandalis voiced concern with the readability of large documents that contain small font sizes.

Brian shared support for implementing a voter identification requirement.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Public Comment opened at 5:11 p.m.

No speakers.

Public Comment closed at 5:11 p.m.

MOTION: Committee Member Oey moved and Committee Member Olevson seconded the motion to approve agenda items 1.A through 1.B as submitted.

The motion carried with the following vote:

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

No: 0

Abstain: 2 - Member Davis
Member Pyne

1.A [25-0097](#) Approve the Charter Review Committee Meeting Minutes of March 6, 2025

Approve the Charter Review Committee Meeting Minutes of March 6, 2025 as submitted.

1.B [25-0560](#) Approve the Charter Review Committee Meeting Minutes of April 3, 2025

Approve the Charter Review Committee Meeting Minutes of April 3, 2025 as submitted.

PUBLIC HEARING/GENERAL BUSINESS

2 [25-0019](#) Presentation and Discussion of Charter Issues Studied by Subcommittee #1: City Council Term and Election; Vacancies; Gender Neutral Language; City Council Qualifications

Members Newswanger, Olevson, Pyne and Vickrey provided the Subcommittee Report on potential Charter Amendments A-1: City Council Term and Election; A-3: Vacancies; A-8: Gender Neutral Language and C-2: City Council Qualifications.

Committee Members provided comments or questions:

- Comment that three amendment topics overlap (e.g. redistricting and voting) and the overlap should be discussed during the prioritization process.
- Comment that the County of Santa Clara (County) held a committee meeting

related to ranked-choice voting and if a Member could provide an overview of the meeting.

- Comment that the ranked-choice voting issue could be studied via the Study Issue process.

Subcommittee Members provided answers:

- The County Finance and Government Operations Committee meeting included discussion of pros and cons of ranked-choice voting. The Committee voted to move the item forward to the County Board of Supervisors for consideration.

Public Hearing opened at 5:37 p.m.

Alice shared concerns related to ranked-choice voting.

Robert voiced concerns related to ranked-choice voting.

Steve Scandalis communicated support for implementing residency requirements, studying alternative voting systems, and revising Section 606(g) (vacancies) for there to be no more than one appointee allowed.

Cindy shared concerns related to ranked-choice voting and election costs.

Brian voiced concerns related to ranked-choice voting and error rates with the ranked-choice voting method.

Mei-Ling communicated concerns related to ranked-choice voting and requested the Committee recommend to City Council that the item be deferred for further study.

Public Hearing closed at 5:56 p.m.

3 [25-0317](#) Presentation and Discussion of Charter Issues Studied by Subcommittee #2: Council Compensation; Presiding Officer-Mayor; Redistricting; Regular Meetings; Franchises

Members Davis, Filley and Oey provided the Subcommittee Report on potential Charter Amendments A-2: Compensation; A-4: Presiding Officer; A-5: Redistricting, A-6: Regular Meetings and C-13: Franchises.

Committee Members provided comments or questions:

- Comments in support of the suggestion to create a job description for the role of Mayor.
- Suggestion that amendment A-2 include language related child-care needs and how the City will address these needs.

Subcommittee Members provided comments or answers:

- Creating job descriptions for mayor and councilmembers is recommended.
- Councilmember general benefits were studied; however, child-care was not included.

Public Hearing opened at 6:09 p.m.

Steve Scandalis communicated support for studying compensation and benefits but commented that these roles should not be considered livelihood jobs. They also shared support for studying amendments related to redistricting and 24 meetings per year.

Zachary Kaufman shared concerns with an amendment related to 24 meetings per year.

Public Hearing closed at 6:14 p.m.

- 4 [25-0571](#) Presentation and Discussion of Charter Issues Studied by Subcommittee #3: Appointive Boards and Commissions (eligibility); Contracts on Public Works; City Manager Powers and Duties; New Issues; Appointive Boards and Commissions

Member Rubino provided the Subcommittee Report on potential Charter Amendments A-2: Compensation; A-7: Appointive Boards and Commissions; B-1: Contracts on Public Works, B-2: City Manager Powers and Duties; C-1: New Issues and C-4 Appointive Boards and Commissions

Public Hearing opened at 6:19 p.m.

Steve Scandalis voiced support for prioritizing amendment A-7 as low priority, amendment B-1 as high priority, amendment B-2 as medium priority and C-4 to be dropped.

Public Hearing closed at 6:23 p.m.

5 [25-0572](#) Prioritization of Potential Charter Amendments for
Recommendation to City Council

Committee Members provided comments or questions related to amendments listed in Category A-Council-Directed Amendments:

- Comments in support of dropping amendment A-7: Article X (Appointive Boards and Commissions).
- Comment in support of prioritizing amendments A-1: Section 601 (City Council Term and Election) and A-5 Section 609 (Redistricting).
- Comments in support of dropping amendment A-7 and prioritizing amendment A-8: General Issue (throughout Charter) as low priority.
- Comment in support of dropping amendments A-7 and A-8 and prioritizing the remaining amendments in Category A.
- Comments in support of prioritizing amendment A-8.

Public Hearing opened at 7:06 p.m.

Steve Scandalis voiced support to drop amendments A-3 Section 606 (Vacancies), A-4: Section 607 (Presiding Officer. Mayor.) A-7 and A-8 and prioritizing the remaining amendments in Category A.

Zachary Kaufman communicated support to drop amendments A-7 and A-6: Section 611 (Regular Meetings).

Cindy shared support to drop amendments A-7 and A-8 and urged the Committee to reconsider the priority level for amendment A-1 from high to low.

Mei-Ling voiced support to drop amendments A-6 and A-7 and prioritizing amendment A-8 for a future election.

Public Hearing closed at 7:15 p.m.

MOTION: Committee Member Oey moved and Committee Member Pyne seconded the motion to drop amendment A-7: Article X (Appointive Boards and Commissions).

The motion carried with the following vote:

Yes: 10 - Chair Larsson
Vice Chair Wickham
Member Davis
Member Filley
Member Newswanger
Member Oey
Member Olevson
Member Pyne
Member Rubino
Member Vickrey

No: 0

MOTION: Committee Member Pyne moved and Committee Member Rubino seconded the motion to drop amendment A-8: Update language to be gender neutral, e.g. using "they" instead of "he/she".

The motion failed with the following vote:

Yes: 2 - Vice Chair Wickham
Member Rubino

No: 8 - Chair Larsson
Member Davis
Member Filley
Member Newswanger
Member Oey
Member Olevson
Member Pyne
Member Vickrey

MOTION: Committee Member Oey moved and Committee Member Vickrey seconded the motion to drop amendment A-6: Section 611 (Regular Meetings).

The motion failed with the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Chair Larsson
Member Oey
Member Olevson
Member Rubino
Member Vickrey

No: 5 - Vice Chair Wickham
Member Davis
Member Filley
Member Newswanger
Member Pyne

Committee Members provided comments or questions related to amendments listed in Category B-City Staff Amendments:

- Comments in support of prioritizing amendments in Category B.

Public Hearing reopened at 7:42 p.m.

Steve Scandalis shared support for prioritizing amendments in Category B.

Public Hearing closed at 7:43 p.m.

Committee Members provided comments or questions related to amendments listed in Category C-CRC Amendments:

- Comment in support of dropping most amendments in Category C except for amendments C-6: Section 1104 (Pay Plan), C-7: Article XII (Retirement), and C-9: Sections 1313 and 1315 (Petty Cash Funds; registering Warrants).
- Comment in support of prioritizing amendment C-3: Section 708 (Publishing of Legal Notices).
- Comment in support of combining similar amendments and recommending to Council that the combined amendments be presented at a future election.
- Comments in support of dropping amendment C-1: New Issues and combining amendments C-5: Section 1100 (Merit Principle), C-6, C-7, C-9 and C-11: Section 1320 (Revenue Bonds) with amendment A-8 General Issue (throughout Charter).
- Comment in support of C-1, C-2 Section 603 (City Council Qualifications), C-4: Article X (Appointive Boards and Commissions), C-8: Section 1302 (Budget, Submission to City Council), C-10: Section 1318 (Independent Audit), C-12: Section 1405 (Campaign Disclosure), and C-13: Article XVI (franchises).
- Concerns shared with combining amendments C-5 and C-9 with amendment A-8 because the suggestions are substantive provision changes and non-substantive language changes.

Vice Chair Wickham left the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Public Hearing reopened at 7:53 p.m.

Steve Scandalis communicated support to drop amendments C-1, C-8, C-10 and C-11 and prioritize amendments C-2, C-3, C-4, C-5, C-6, C-7, and C-12.

Zachary Kaufman voiced support to drop amendment C-8.

Cindy shared support to drop amendment C-2 and suggested that the Committee review the City of San José's provision related to residency if the Committee prioritizes amendment C-2.

Public Hearing closed at 7:58 p.m.

MOTION: Committee Member Pyne moved and Committee Member Oey seconded the motion to drop amendments:

C-1: CRC discussed studying potential new provisions including (a) a diversity statement, (b) native land acknowledgment, and (c) emergency provisions;

C-4: Article X (Appointive Boards and Commissions);

C-8: Section 1302 (Budget. Submission to City Council.);

C-10: Section 1318 (Independent Audit);

C-12: Section 1405 (Campaign Disclosure); and

C-13: Article XVI (Franchises)

The motion carried with the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Chair Larsson
Member Davis
Member Filley
Member Newswanger
Member Oey
Member Olevson
Member Pyne
Member Rubino
Member Vickrey

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Vice Chair Wickham

MOTION: Committee Member Pyne moved and Committee Member Oey seconded the motion to drop amendment C-2: Section 603 (City Council Qualifications).

The motion carried with the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Chair Larsson
Member Davis
Member Filley
Member Newswanger
Member Oey
Member Olevson
Member Pyne
Member Rubino
Member Vickrey

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Vice Chair Wickham

MOTION: Committee Member Oey moved and Committee Member Vickrey seconded the motion to drop amendment C-11: Section 1320 (Revenue Bonds).

The motion carried with the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Chair Larsson
Member Davis
Member Filley
Member Newswanger
Member Oey
Member Olevson
Member Pyne
Member Rubino
Member Vickrey

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Vice Chair Wickham

MOTION: Committee Member Pyne moved and Committee Member Oey seconded the motion to combine amendments:

C-6: Section 1104 (Pay Plan);
C-7: Article XII (Retirement); and
A-8: General Issue (throughout Charter).

Member Olevson left the meeting at 8:14 p.m.

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT: Committee Member Vickrey offered a friendly amendment to replace the motion with drop amendments C-6 and C-7. Committee Members Pyne and Oey accepted the friendly amendment.

MOTION AS AMENDED: Committee Member Pyne moved and Committee Member Oey seconded to drop amendments:

C-6: Section 1104 (Pay Plan); and

C-7: Article XII (Retirement).

The motion as amended carried with the following vote:

Yes: 8 - Chair Larsson
Member Davis
Member Filley
Member Newswanger
Member Oey
Member Pyne
Member Rubino
Member Vickrey

No: 0

Absent: 2 - Vice Chair Wickham
Member Olevson

Member Olevson returned at 8:19 p.m.

Public Hearing reopened at 8:21 p.m.

Steve Scandalis shared support for prioritizing amendments A-2, A-6, B-1, B-2 in the top five and prioritizing amendments A-3, A-4, C-3, C-5, C-9 in the bottom five.

Zachary Kaufman support for prioritizing amendment A-6 last.

Public Hearing closed at 8:27 p.m.

Committee Members provided comments or questions related to prioritizing remaining amendments:

- Comments in support of prioritizing amendments A-1, A-2 and A-5 high.
- Comment in support of prioritizing amendments A-1 and B-2 low and amendments

A-2, A-4, and B-1 high.

- Comment in support of prioritizing amendments A-1 and B-2 high and amendments A-4 and A-1 low.

- Comment in support of prioritizing amendment A-2 high.

MOTION: Committee Member Vickrey moved and Committee Member Pyne seconded the motion to revise the title for amendment A-8 to "Revise language to be gender neutral."

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT: Committee Member Oey offered a friendly amendment to revise the title to "Remove gender-specific language." Committee Members Vickrey and Pyne accepted the friendly amendment.

The motion as amended carried with the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Chair Larsson
Member Davis
Member Filley
Member Newswanger
Member Oey
Member Olevson
Member Pyne
Member Rubino
Member Vickrey

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Vice Chair Wickham

The Committee prioritized the following potential amendments:

A-1: Section 601(City Council Term and Election)

A-2: Section 605 (Compensation)

A-3: Section 606 (Vacancies)

A-4: Section 607 (Presiding Officer. Mayor)

A-5: Section 609 (Redistricting)

A-6: Section 611 (Regular Meetings)

A-8: Remove gender specific language

B-1: Section 1309 (Contracts on Public Works)

B-2: Section 802 (City Manager Powers and Duties)

C-3: Section 708 (Publishing of Legal Notices)

C-5: Section 1100 (Merit Principle)

C-9: Sections 1313 and 1315 (Petty Cash Funds; Registering Warrants)

Member Olevson left the meeting at 9 p.m.

MOTION: Committee Member Pyne moved and Committee Member Oey seconded the motion to accept the Committee's prioritized amendments for recommendation to the City Council and advise the City Council of the Committee's interest in a general Charter cleanup.

The motion carried with the following vote:

Yes: 8 - Chair Larsson
Member Davis
Member Filley
Member Newswanger
Member Oey
Member Pyne
Member Rubino
Member Vickrey

No: 0

Absent: 2 - Vice Chair Wickham
Member Olevson

NON-AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMENTS

-Committee Member Comments

None.

-Staff Comments

Deputy City Manager Connie Verceles announced that the Special Charter Review Committee Meeting of May 13 will be canceled.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Larsson adjourned the meeting at 9:24 p.m.