



King County

Ron Sims

King County Executive

King County Charter Review Commission Public Hearing Summary – April 8, 2008 The Hall at Fauntleroy, West Seattle 6:30pm-8:00pm

The 2007-2008 Charter Review Commission held its first of four public hearings on Tuesday April 8, 2008 at the Hall at Fauntleroy. The purpose of the meetings is to gather feedback from the Commission's report and recommendations.

Commissioner Allan Munro chaired the meeting. Other commissioners in attendance were Mike Lowry, Trisha Bennett, Jim English, Bryan Glynn, Kirstin Haugen, Gregg Hiramawa, Terry Lavender, Gary Long, Sharon Maeda, James Williams, and Mike Wilkins.

Mr. Munro gave opening remarks and introduced the commissioners. Nick Wagner from Council Staff explained that Councilmember Dow Constantine was unable to be at the hearing because he was in Washington, D.C., for a conference on climate control, climate change along with two other councilmembers. He sends his regrets.

Commission staff member Corrie Watterson Bryant gave a presentation on the charter and the charter review process.

Mr. Munro then opened the floor for citizen comments. 16 people made remarks. There were 26 citizens in total.

Summary of issues:

Anti- Discrimination (5 comments)

- Favors the inclusion of gender identity in the anti-discrimination clause
- Supports sexual orientation in the anti-discrimination clause

Instant Runoff Voting (8 comments)

- In Favor of implementing Instant Runoff Voting in King County Elections Systems

Charter Review Commission Process (2 comments)

- Supports a clear, consistent, and open process for appointing and confirming the CRC
- CRC amendments should go straight to the ballot

Citizen Initiative (1 comment)

- Supports a citizen initiative process

Open Space Amendment (1 comment)

- Supports the OSA providing additional protection over open space land owned by the County

Qualifications for Assessor and Elections Director (1 comment)

- Support establishing qualifications for these positions

Regional Committees (2 comments):

- Support the efforts that the Commission has taken to enhance the effectiveness of these committees

Campaign Finance Reform (public funding)(1 comment)

- Would like the commission to address campaign financing reform in light of the passage of ESSB 5278

Summary of Comments by Name:

Pete Lewis, Mayor of Auburn: (Recited remarks as a member of SCA – remarks are attached)

- Supports the proposed changes in the regional committees amendment
- Charter review process should be amended so that the recommendations of the Commission must be submitted to the voters as drafted by the Commission
- Citizens should be able to amend the charter through citizen initiative

Marsha Botzer, of Seattle:

- Recommends including gender identity in the anti-discrimination clause

Josh Friedes, of Seattle:

- Recommends including gender identity in the anti-discrimination clause

Spencer Bergstedt, of Seattle:

- Recommends including gender identity in the anti-discrimination clause

Aidan Key, of Seattle:

- Recommends including gender identity in the anti-discrimination clause

Richard Anderson-Connolly, of Tacoma:

- Favors implementing IRV into our elections system

Denise Smith, of Issaquah:

- Supports the anti-discrimination amendment that includes sexual orientation
- Supports a clear and consistent process for amending the charter

- Supports CRC recommendations going directly to the ballot
- Supports establishing priorities for open space that are based on the character and needs of the population
- Supports amendment to establish qualifications for Assessor and Sheriff
- Supports the efforts the Commission has taken to enhance the effectiveness of these committees
- Supports the CRC addressing the recent campaign financing reform with passage of ESSB 5278 by the state legislature

Julie Enevoldsen, of Seattle:

- Favors implementing IRV into our elections system

Matthew Pfeiffer, of Seattle:

- Favors implementing IRV into our elections system

Jody Grage, of Seattle:

- Favors implementing IRV into our elections system

Fiona Goodnight Collum, of Seattle:

- Favors implementing IRV into our elections system

Duncan Antrey, of Seattle:

- Favors implementing IRV into our elections system

Joe Szwaja, of Seattle:

- Favors implementing IRV into our elections system

Kelly Lind, of Seattle:

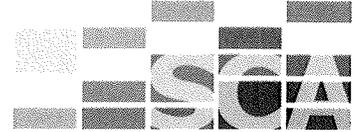
- Favors implementing IRV into our elections system

Brendan Floyd, of Seattle:

- Favors implementing IRV into our elections system

John Lefevre, of Seattle:

- Favors implementing IRV into our elections system



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Good evening.

My name is Ava Frisinger. I am the President of the Board of Directors of the Suburban Cities Association and the Mayor of the City of Issaquah.

I appreciate this opportunity to testify on the proposed amendments to the King County Charter on behalf of the Suburban Cities Association.

The Suburban Cities Association provides information, education and advocacy on behalf of its 35 member cities. Collectively member cities represent approximately 785,000 King County residents or 53% of the population of incorporated King County.

SCA has been pleased to be invited to participate throughout the review process of the King County Charter. Newcastle Councilmember Sonny Putter and SCA Executive Director Karen Goroski have attended and participated in most meetings of the Commission as well as its Regional Governance Committee and work groups. They have been complimentary of the inclusive process of the Commission's work.

Early in 2007 SCA formed a work group to draft the SCA recommendations for amendments to the King County Charter. Those recommendations were vetted at our Public Issues Committee where an average of 25 cities coalesce on a monthly basis. The SCA Board of Directors acted on the work of the Public Issues Committee and on September 20th forwarded our recommendations to the Charter Review Commission. The issues of the suburban cities were grouped into four subject areas:

1. Annexation and Transition
2. Regional Committees
3. County Wide Special Purpose Districts
4. Good Government

Recognizing that the Commission had a limited amount of time to address a myriad of issues, we are pleased that so many of the issues of the suburban cities were included in the areas of "Good Government" and the "Regional Committees".

Although the Commission's proposed amendments to the Charter regarding the Regional Committees do not necessarily correspond to the original recommendations from SCA, we feel much progress was made and appreciate the efforts of all parties involved. Therefore, SCA wholeheartedly supports the recommended amendments in **Sections 230.10, 270.20, and 270.30** for the Regional Committees.

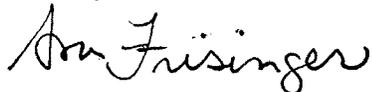
Under the heading of “Good Government”, SCA had recommended ***“that there be urban unincorporated transitional committees in the urban unincorporated areas. We felt that the Charter did not intend for there to be any kind of government structure in urban unincorporated areas.”*** SCA feels that the compromise reached with the Office of the King County Executive and the County Council which has resulted in a proposed Charter amendment in section 320.20 may address our concerns.

SCA had also recommended that ***“the charter review process should be amended so that the recommendations of the commission must be submitted to the voters as drafted by the commission. This new provision will strengthen the role of the Charter Review Commission. It will guarantee that the work of the commission will be reviewed by the voters.”*** The proposed amendment to the Charter in **section 800** that would require the County Council to review and take action on all Charter Review Commission recommendations is a step in the right direction.

Finally, SCA recommended that ***“citizens should be permitted to amend the charter through the citizen initiative process by means of a super majority vote. This option creates a more responsive government which allows the public to submit charter amendments to the voters through the initiative process.”*** The Commission’s proposed amendment in **section 800.20** clarifying the citizen initiative process is generally responsive to the intent of SCA’s recommendation. While the proposed amendment does not require a supermajority vote, it at least sets the threshold for required number of signatures at 20%. This would help ensure that only initiatives with broad-based support are successful

SCA appreciates the many, many hours that the volunteers committed to the Charter Review process. We believe the results were well worth the effort and will encourage the County Council to review and act on your recommendations as written.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ava Frisinger".