MINUTES
April 21, 2022, 5PM

Members present: Meagan Benetti, Ben Echevarria, Ona Ferguson, Laura Pitone, George Proakis, Kat Rutkin, Zoe Iacovino, Jessica Lieberman, Matthew McLaughlin, Lucas Schaber, Beverly (Bev) Schwartz, Crystal Turner
Members not present:
Staff attending: Anna Corning, Hope Williams, Collins Center - Elizabeth Corbo, Collins Center - Steve McGoldrick
Other attending: Jake Wilson

Meeting started at 5:05PM

Decisions:
1. Committee approved minutes from 4/7.
   a. Ten 5s
2. Committee approved the option to draft a version of compensation language that will go into the charter. This language will be process focused but still maintains the values and intention of Ben’s original compensation idea, includes a study committee, and will have a review of wage compensation every 5 years.
   a. Four 5s
   b. Two 4s
   c. Four 3s
3. Committee approved keeping the vacancy process for ward councilor the same as the current charter - if a vacancy occurs more than 180 days until the next municipal election, a special election is held.
   a. Eleven 5s
   b. One 4
4. Committee approved keeping the vacancy process for at-large councilor the same as the current charter - if a vacancy occurs with more than 180 days until the next municipal election, the defeated candidate w/ largest # of votes replaces them - if they decline or there isn’t anyone, there is a special election.
   a. Twelve 5s
5. Committee approved the process of the city council president serving as acting mayor in the case of a temporary absence of the mayor.
   a. Twelve 5s
6. Committee approved the City Council Access to Information provision with the change from “employee” to “department head,” as well as other simplification edits.
   a. Ten 5s
   b. Two 4s

The committee uses the Fist to Five method of voting, a technique for gauging consensus. Voting ranges from 0 to 5. The scale is: 0 - no way, 1 - major issues to be resolved now, 2 - minor issues to be resolved now, 3 - minor issues to be resolved later, 4 - comfortable with this as it is, 5 - love this and will champion it. 0-2 is considered a lack of consensus, while 3-5 is considered consensus.

NOTES

1. Welcome 5:03
   a. Anna welcomed the committee and community members. She gave an update on the timeline of the committee, with the goal of the final meeting being July 14th for a final vote. She also explained the committee should reconvene in August before final submission once all appendixes are complete.

2. Approve 4/7 Minutes 5:09
   a. Meeting minutes from 4/7 were approved.

3. Public Comment 5:10
   a. There were no public comments.

   a. Anna presented the compensation language option to go in the charter which was drafted by Kat and Laura. The committee deliberated if the newly drafted language was process or values centric, and if language that was strongly values centric should go in the charter or belongs elsewhere. The committee felt strongly about finding a way to get compensation language for municipal staff into the charter. The committee also deliberated the proposed implementation committee, specifically who should be on an Equitable Wage Distribution Committee. Members of the writing team and Bev emphasized the ability for the writing team to draft a successful process centric option in the charter with a review every 5 years. Zoe brought up that the writing group will make sure this is an operationalizing of the values.
      i. Straw Poll with 4 options:
         1. Study committee - 1
         2. In charter and transition provisions - 4
         3. In charter and transition provisions but process focused - 5
         4. Do nothing - 0
      ii. Committee approved the option to draft a version of compensation language that will go into the charter. This language will be process focused but still maintains the values and intention of Ben’s original compensation idea, includes a study committee, and will have a review of wage compensation every 5 years.
5. Deliberation Topic 2: Vacancies - City Council and Mayor 5:40  
   a. Committee discussed the vacancy provisions for the charter. Some committee members expressed interest in keeping the vacancy process for ward seats the same as the school committee members. Others emphasized the importance of having ward seats elected in a special election. George Proakis reminded everyone that this was a recent issue and debate for City Council, which Matt McLaughlin echoed.  
      i. Committee approved keeping the vacancy process for ward councilor the same as the current charter - if a vacancy occurs more than 180 days until the next municipal election, a special election is held.  
      ii. Committee approved keeping the vacancy process for at-large councilor the same as the current charter - if a vacancy occurs with more than 180 days until the next municipal election, the defeated candidate w/ largest # of votes replaces them - if they decline or there isn’t anyone, there is a special election.

6. Deliberation Topic 3: Temporary Absence of Mayor 6:00  
   a. The committee deliberated the process for what happens if there is a mayoral vacancy. Bev emphasized that in these cases it can be chaotic, so the committee should lean towards the stability of the city council president serving and not having city council elect someone from amongst themselves. The committee agreed.  
      i. Committee approved the process of the city council president serving as acting mayor in the case of a temporary absence of the mayor.

7. Deliberation Topic 4: City Council Access to Information 6:10  
   a. Committee deliberated the newly drafted language, which was written up post-deliberations from a former meeting. George explained something like this happens already, and Anna responded that this is a formalization of the current process. Some committee members expressed discomfort with the idea of any employee being called in front of council. A proposed solution to the aforementioned concern was removing “employee” and instead focusing the provision on “department heads.”  
   b. Committee approved the City Council Access to Information provision with the change from “employee” to “department head,” as well as other simplicity edits.

8. Deliberation Topic 5: Multiple Member Bodies 6:30  
   a. Anna summarized the responses to the homework sent to the committee regarding their priorities and thoughts on Multiple Member Bodies (MMBs). The committee expressed their concerns about the powerful boards lack of diversity, lack of timelines regarding appointment and reappointment, and maintaining quorum of boards. Some committee members expressed interest in having joint-appointments in certain committees.

9. Closing:  
   a. Anna thanked everyone and reminded them the next meeting is May 5th at 5PM.