



Charter Change Committee Meeting ***Remote***, Thursday, August 25th, 2022, at 6:00 pm 8/25/2022

CHARTER CHANGE COMMITTEE

Thursday, August 25, 2022

Via Zoom (Remote)

DRAFT MINUTES

Members Present: Councilor Bergman (Chair), Councilor Carpenter, Councilor Traverse

Staff Present: Tim Devlin (Assistant City Attorney), Gillian Nanton (Assistant Director, Community & Economic Development Office (CEDO)), Scott Rogers (CEDO's Community Development Manager).

Others in Attendance:

- Board of Registration of Voters, Ward Clerks, and Inspectors of Elections: Wendy Coe, Jeff Comstock, Grace Grundhouaseer, Helen Rock

Meeting called to order at 6:03 PM.

1.0 Agenda

1.01 Motion to adopt/amend agenda

Motion to Adopt Agenda as is.

Motion by Councilor Carpenter, Seconded by Councilor Bergman

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous

2.0 Adopt Minutes from 8/10/2022

Motion to Adopt Minutes from 8/10/2022 without changes.

Motion by Councilor Carpenter, Seconded by Councilor Traverse

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous.

3.0 Public Forum

No comments during the open public forum.



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4.01 Discussion of Siting of Polling Places

Discussion of Siting of Polling Places Charter Change v4.2 - 2022.08.25:

Attorney Devlin: Introduction of update draft language.

Councilor Carpenter: Are elections run by ward or districts?

Councilor Bergman: Wards. Also, we want to avoid creating inadvertent problems for state or federal elections.

Councilor Traverse: Likes the idea of language of working "in consulting with Ward and Ward Inspectors." Should we remove the word "Districts" here and elsewhere? Update "Ward Inspectors" to "Inspectors of elections." Regarding 17 V.S.A. 2501(e), does not want this to cause confusion with existing polling places (like BED) which does not have different problems.

Councilor Bergman: This language allows for locating polling places outside a ward. No officials have supported that voters casting votes in a polling outside of a ward, and now Gene does not.

Councilor Carpenter: Support the possibility of voters casting votes in a polling outside of a ward if convenient and accessible. Councilor Traverse: supports flexibility to allow voters casting votes in a polling outside of a ward. Interested in hearing what elections officials have to say.

Wendy Coe: Supports flexibility in locating polling outside of ward. Unclear the meaning of 17 V.S.A. § 2501 (a).

Jeff Comstock: Regarding 17 V.S.A. § 2501 (a), likes the reference to what "separate and distinct" means. Agrees with SC that it does not have to be far and is convenient. Likes "in consultation" language. Should change "Ward Inspectors" to "Inspectors of election."

Helen Rock: On Board of Registration of Voters. Agrees with SC on accessibility. Changes can easily confuse voters. Support having polling places in each ward. There is confusion about districts and where to vote. Support removing from polling place from Catholic church because some voters are uncomfortable.

Councilor Carpenter: Supports having more voter drop boxes.

Councilor Traverse: Perhaps can add language to allow voting 'either within the wards or within close proximity of wards.' Concern over what 'separate and distinct' entails.



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Councilor Bergman: supports language about polling places being in close proximity into ward. Perhaps add on Line 30, prior to last sentence. Want to be clear that this will allow voting set-up to permitting like voting for state and federal races. Should check this conforms with new language in §8.

Councilor Bergman: Who else should be contacted for feedback? Perhaps the City Council Ad Hoc Committee on Redistricting.

Grace Grundhauser: On Board of Registration of Voters. Believes that the rest of the Board of Registration of Voters would be interested in learning more and providing feedback. Can a member of this Charter Change Committee attend? Will provide meeting dates.

Jeff Comstock: The Ad Hoc Committee on Redistricting is now defunct. Instead, recommends reaching out to Neighborhood Planning Assemblies (NPAs).

Councilor Carpenter: Also support bring this to Board of Registration of Voters, as well as City Council.

Motion: Move to bring draft language to City Council on Sept. 19th, 2022, as modified by to-be-added language to permit voters to cast votes either in 'their own ward' or another ward at a polling place in close proximity to their own."

Motion by Councilor Carpenter, Seconded by Councilor Traverse

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous

Councilor Bergman: Will draft memo.

Councilor Traverse: When is the latest that charter changes have to be approved by City Council?

Councilor Bergman: December 12, 2022

Attorney Devlin: Agreed.



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4.02 Discussion of All Legal Resident Voting

Discussion of Burlington Communication and Outreach Plan - Legal Resident Non-Citizen Voting - 8.10.22 Final Draft:

Helen Rock: Any concerns with voting in local elections interfering with legal residents' ability to gain citizenship?

Councilor Bergman: this has been looked into, and the answer is that it likely not problematic.

Assistant Director Nanton: Provided update on outreach:

Received questions:

- Who qualifies as "legal voter"
- What documentation is needed? (Attorney Devlin will ask Associate City Clerk, Sarah Montgomery, for a response.)
- Why do we want this?

Reaching out to NPAs and already met with some. Other Community meetings, e.g. at Old North End Community, after national elections to reduce confusion.

Currently examining best language for signs, etc.

CEDO team is meeting every two weeks to discuss outreach.

Councilor Traverse: Will CEDO staff be presenting at NPA meetings?

Assistant Director Nanton: Anticipating on Councilors to present. Need confirmation on NPAs for Wards 5 and 8; have dates and times for all others.

Assistant Director Nanton: Any other feedback on FAQs? Thinks should add some more questions, i.e. Who qualifies as "legal voter"; what documentation is needed? Advocates should just send out FAQ for translation now.

Councilor Bergman:

Councilor Carpenter: can add other items to Website.

Councilor Traverse: agree to send out 'as is'.

Motion: Move to request that CEDO advance the current version of Frequently Asked Questions for translation and preparation for use for public engagement.

Motion by Councilor Carpenter, Seconded by Councilor Traverse





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Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous

Wendy Coe: Concern over needing interpreters at polls on the day of the election.

1.

i. **Discussion of Redistricting**

Resolution - Advisory Question on Redistricting v1.2 - 2022.08.25:

Councilor Traverse: Has concerns that an advisory question on the subject of redistricting will confuse voters. Supports delaying this going on March 2023 election.

Councilor Carpenter: does not agree will created confusion with voters on March 2023 election. Supports just putting it on the ballot as a binding measure, and not as an advisory question.

Wendy Coe: supports using the replacement term of "wards and districts" to be consistent with Siting of Polling Questions.

Councilor Bergman: Inclined to not bring forward. Okay with this as advisory language. Will prioritize a charter change for metes and bounds language for new map. Supports delaying this past March 2023 language.

Councilor Carpenter: What happens is new map fails? Will be a whole other year to wait.

Councilor Bergman:

Motion to postpone discussion to the first committee first meeting after March 2023 election.

Motion by Council Bergman, Seconded by Councilor Carpenter.

Passes: Unanimous

Scheduling of future meetings:

Tuesday, September 13th at 5:30PM



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5.0 Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn.

Motion by Councilor Carpenter, Seconded by Councilor Traverse

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM.