

Charter Review Commission
Thursday, March 28, 2019
Council Chambers

Name	Present	Absent
Brooks Boliek	X	
Cameron Thurston	X	
Dan Alpert	X	
John Krouse	X	
Nathan Rickard	X	
Nora Eidelman (7:40pm)	X	
Normand Bernache	X	
Peter King	X	
Ray Ranker	X	
Virdina Gibbs	X	

Guests: Janeen Miller, City Clerk; Sheryl DeWalt, Contract Secretary

Mr. Thurston called the meeting to order at 7:34pm.

1. Review and approve March 11, 2019 minutes: **A motion was made by Mr. King and seconded by Mr. Bernache to approve the March 11, 2019 minutes without amendment. Motion carried 9-0-0.** The Transcript of the March 11th Public Forum will be submitted for approval at the next meeting.
2. The various report sections were discussed by each member:
 - a. University Student Participation – Dan Alpert. Mr. Alpert shared his information on City Council Term Limits among the cities with Big 10 universities.
 - i. It was noted that Iowa has a council of 4 At Large members and 3 District representatives. The district representatives and 2 at large members who get the most votes have 4 year terms. The other 2 at large members have 2 year terms.
 - ii. It was noted that Ohio used to have the three winning candidates with the least amount of votes serving 2 year terms. In August 2018, all council members now serve 4 year terms.
 - iii. Question was raised about whether Big 10 University towns held their elections at the same time as the gubernatorial and/or national elections?
 - iv. Mr. Krouse mentioned that College Park does not provide the University of Maryland any services. He asked if any of the other Big 10 universities are included in their respective city boundaries? It was noted that some Big 10 Universities are located across two municipalities.
 - v. It was suggested the information could be updated showing the population of each city.
 - b. Recall provision – Virdina Gibbs
 - i. Add - College Park doesn't have a recall provision in the City Code.

- ii. The voter roll is inflated due to the transient nature of university students who register to vote here then typically leave in 4 years. It takes about 8 years to remove a voter from the voter roll when the system is working perfectly.
 - iii. Ms. Miller will provide the Commission with a memo she prepared for the Mayor and City Council about the process for removing voters from the state registry.
 - iv. Local cities of Bowie, Rockville, and Takoma Park do have recall procedures based on varying percentages of voters.
- c. Voter Participation – Nathan Rickard
 - i. There is more voter turnout during national elections.
 - ii. The material shows the trends in voter turnout throughout 50 years.
- d. Frequency of campaigns from the perspective of the candidate – Ray Ranker
 - i. Mr. Ranker will send out his report via email
- e. Cost to the City of running elections – Brooks Boliek
 - i. The average spent on campaigns is \$1520.
 - ii. One mayoral campaign cost \$14,000.
- f. Onboarding of new council members – Brooks Boliek
 - i. Each new council members requires something different. It's hard to determine the amount of staff time.
 - ii. Staff offers tours of every building and department but not every council member takes the tour.
 - iii. Onboarding of new elected officials generally occurs during the first 6 months of their term.
 - iv. The budget is reviewed by the Finance Director with each new council member.
- g. Moving to 4 year terms defer candidacy – Cameron Thurston
 - i. Suggestion was made to add 2009-2013.
 - ii. Suggestion was made to add a column to show new members.
 - iii. How many newly elected had to do onboarding?
 - iv. Suggestion was made to see how many people just didn't run again after one term in office.
 - v. On the City's website, there is an election page which shows the voter statistics and history.
 - vi. Can we show what the trend is? Are fewer people running for office or is it something else?
- h. Accountability – Peter King and John Krouse
 - i. The public opinion seems to lean towards 2 year terms to make people more accountable.
 - ii. Should the public comments be included in sections as appropriate, in the introduction, or just a summary? Ms. Miller stated that often times public comments are included as an appendix to reports. Although this information is currently online, the website could be refreshed and/or updated and the information could be purged. For an historical record, it might be better to have a written copy somewhere in the report.

- i. Staggered vs Concurrent terms – Normand Bernache
 - i. Staggered terms will require 2 council members per district with 4 year terms.
 - ii. Allows council member to campaign once every 4 years instead of every other year.
 - iii. Provides stability to City Council.
 - iv. Will ease transition of new members
 - v. The City will still have to have an election every 2 years
 - vi. Very draining on staff time and resources.
 - vii. Mr. Boliek stated he would work with Mr. Bernache as it seems the staggered elections and onboarding of new members coincide.

3. New business
 - a. Ms. Miller asked if anyone would like to write an article for the Municipal Scene since the public comment period closes April 30.
 - b. Please circulate your rough drafts of the report by close of business on Monday, April 8.
 - c. The next meeting will be Wednesday, April 10 at 7:30pm.

Mr. Ranker made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Boliek seconded. All in favor; no opposed. The motion carries 10-0-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:05pm.

Respectfully submitted by Sheryl DeWalt, contract secretary.