

MINUTES
UMATILLA COUNTY CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE
Meeting of June 4, 2019
5:30 p.m., Room 114, Umatilla County Courthouse
Pendleton, Oregon

Committee Members Present: Chair Michele Grable; Vice-Chair Don Miller; Sally Anderson Hansell; Jerry Baker; Genna Banica; Dan Dorran; Mark Gomolski

Absent: Jennifer McClure Spurgeon

County Counsel: Doug Olsen

Guests Present: MaryAlice Ridgway; Suni Danforth; Marlene McClintock; Ann Jolly; Eva Martin; Bud Rupe; Charles E. Danforth; Wes Koklich; Eli Stephens; Rob Lovett; Dennis Aiken

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting began at 5:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order - The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:30, and reminded everyone that this is a public meeting.
2. Minutes of Previous Minutes – Minutes from May 29, 2019 had been sent earlier to Committee; there were no questions or changes. Mr. Dorran moved to approve; seconded by Ms. Anderson-Hansell. Carried 7-0.
3. Additions to Agenda - None
4. Business Items:
 - A. Response to Work Session. The committee discussed reactions to the response received to the proposed recommended changes at the May 29, 2019 work session. Though the feedback and input were appreciated, the members were disappointed with the response from some of the Commissioners and the member of the public. The committee discussed how to move forward with the recommendation, and if any changes should be made. The recommendation was made based on what the committee had learned and heard over the past 15 months, and was designed to meet deficiencies in current structure.
 - B. Recommendation

The most important item for the Committee was the need for a county manager. The need for consistency in management was made clear from the previous meetings. If the change in the time or number of Commissioners would prevent a county manager, then could revise the recommendation. Mr. Dorran moved to revise the recommendation for county structure to only include a county manager, with no further structure changes; seconded by Mr. Miller. Carried 7-0.

The second proposal for the method of election had meet with some resistance at the work session. No revisions were suggested. Ms. Anderson-Hansell moved to forward the recommendation without change; seconded by Mr. Baker. Carried 7-0.

The third proposal for the Sheriff Office changes had one in opposition at the work session. Further discussion with the public member and the Sheriff had clarified the request, so that the public member was comfortable with the proposed changes. Ms. Anderson-Hansell moved to forward the recommendation without change; seconded by Mr. Gomolski. Carried 7-0.

The final recommendation will be sent to the members for review. There is no need for any further meetings, unless need to discuss recommendation. The committee members will present the final report to the Board of Commissioners as soon as possible.

5. Public Comment. The Chair asked those guests present if any wanted to provide comment.
 - A. MaryAlice Ridgway, Pendleton. She had been the County Treasurer prior to the adoption of the Home Rule Charter. She had always believed the county manager was needed. Other department directors had felt the same. The county currently had Commissioner Murdock to manage it, but this will not always be the case. The election process will not insure a qualified and professional manager. She was in support of the recommendations made by the committee.
 - B. Charles Danforth, Milton-Freewater. He had to two letters to submit. One was from Grenella Thompson. He is not in support of any changes to the charter.
 - C. Rob Lovett, Hermiston. He is opposed to a county manager. A manager would be in control and commissioners would not have true oversight. He wants accessibility to those in control of the county.
 - D. Wes Koklich, Milton-Freewater. He is concerned that the cost of the proposed structure changes was not considered. Government continues to grow and spend money.
 - E. Dennis Aiken, Hermiston. Efficiency should not be the objective for government or its management. Part-time commissioners are not desired and will defer to a manager. Need accountability to the citizens and access to a commissioner. He is not supportive of any changes.
 - F. Eli Stephens, Pendleton. Current commissioners are doing the job. He is concerned about the cost of the proposed changes. The guests at the meetings represent the make-up of the county. He wants access to government leaders.

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 6:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas R. Olsen

Umatilla County Counsel