

**Snohomish County  
Charter Review Commission  
8<sup>th</sup> Floor Robert J. Drewel Building  
Jackson Board Room  
Wednesday, June 22, 2016  
6:00 p.m.  
MINUTES**

**PRESENT:**

Vice-Chair Miller  
Commissioner Chase  
Commissioner Barton  
Commissioner Donner  
Commissioner Koster  
Commissioner Matthews  
Commissioner O'Donnell  
Commissioner Roulstone  
Commissioner Stanford  
Commissioner Valentine  
Rick Robertson, Commission Attorney  
Chris Roberts, Commission Analyst

**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chair Miller called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

**FLAG SALUTE**

**ROLL CALL**

Vice Chair Miller announced eight members of the Commission in attendance.

**AGENDA**

**Commissioner Chase moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Matthews seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**Commissioner Roulstone moved to approve the June 15 minutes. Commissioner Valentine seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

Vice Chair Miller discussed the process for the evening.

Analyst Roberts gave a presentation discussing the purposes and procedures of the Commission, an overview of the twelve proposals before the Commission, and the next steps of the

Commission.

Ted Hikel of Lynnwood spoke in support of the office of public advocate and holding meetings in each council district. He stated he was concerned about the budget implications of expanding the council, but believed the current proposal was reasonable due to population growth in the county. He expressed support for changing the date of the executive's budget presentation to the council. He expressed concern that the airport commission could become an extension of the airline industry. He stated his support for the nondiscrimination proposal, the human rights commission and changing the appeals process of decisions of the hearing examiner. He spoke in opposition to changing the date of county elections which would lead to even lower turnout for municipal elections. He stated it would not make a difference if the county prosecutor was a partisan office or nonpartisan office.

Barbara Bush, Mukilteo, spoke on behalf of the League of Women Voters. She stated the responsibility for redistricting and reapportionment should rest with an agency which is totally independent of the legislative body they are redistricting. She stated the League supports converting the prosecuting attorney to a nonpartisan office, changing the appeals process of decisions of the hearing examiner, establishing the Paine Field airport commission and the sixty day deadline for confirmation of department directors. She stated the League opposes changing the date of county offices to even numbered years. She stated the League has not been convinced the proposal would improve voter participation. She stated the League supports adding the commission of human rights to the Charter.

Commissioner Donner arrived at 6:26 pm.

Victor Coupez of Mukilteo spoke on behalf of Save Our Communities. He stated his support for the formation of an advisory board for Paine Field. He stated that more community involvement and awareness is a good thing. He mentioned that there are several times where the public was made aware of issues late in the process.

Susanne Phillips, Marysville, stated that most residents of Snohomish County have minimal direct interaction with their county government. She stated that all people ask of their government is that they are cost-effective and efficient. She stated that the cost to add additional seats to the Council would be \$850,000 per year. The cost of a republic is the individual citizen involvement in their government. She stated that rural residents are not represented on the council. She expressed that if workload were a problem, they would spend more time in their offices.

Sam Tay of Edmonds stated his support for the Paine Field Commission, but would rather have the Council make the appointments rather than the Executive. He mentioned that the proposal of the Hearing Examiner would take the Council out of the position to look at what the hearing examiner decides. He spoke about the proposal at Frognot and expressed that Council should have oversight over the hearing examiner.

Victor Harris of Everett stated that voters in the county deserve to know who their leaders are and all offices, except Treasurer should be partisan offices.

Olga Farnuam of Snohomish expressed her opposition to expanding the Council. She stated that she see her rates and taxes increase, while there are cuts to public safety. She mentioned that councilmembers barely work half-time and make over a hundred thousand a year.

Sharon Sheppard of Granite Falls expressed her appreciation for the Commission's work and would like an opportunity to vote on all of the proposals.

Mike Patterson of the Master Builders Association spoke in opposition to expanding the Council, stating the Council cannot afford the costs. He stated that the Council can add constituency service experts rather than creating new elected officials. He expressed his opposition to requiring appeals go to Superior Court. He said that Superior Court is costly and intimidating to the little guy. He stated that county office should be in odd-numbered years to shine a spotlight on local issues.

Chuck Whitfield of Monroe spoke in opposition to expansion of the Council. He stated the costs to expand the Council would be \$850,000 and another \$750,000 for the costs of renovations. He stated that the population center would not represent the rural areas. He stated that members from Mill Creek would not be familiar with issues in rural communities. He stated that he does not need the Council to tell him what to do.

Victor Harris returned to the podium and spoke in opposition to increasing the number of council districts. He stated that the Commission should reduce the term of the council members to one year and limit council members to five terms. He stated the only way to get people involved is to organize. He stated that representatives should be on the top of the ballot.

Pam Pruitt of Mill Creek stated that local government is the most important government that gets things done. She stated that elections should not be moved to even years where voters do not get a chance to see and appreciate the people on the ballot. She expressed the county would not see any cost savings.

Maralyn Chase of Esperance stated that the Commission should consider adding additional councilmembers. Additional councilmembers could address waste, fraud, and abuse, and find efficiencies in county government. She stated that being an elected official is a full-time job, even if they are not always in their office. She stated that it is not fair that the concerns of rural residents are not being addressed. She expressed that she was proud that the county has a Human Rights Commission. She spoke about issues in Mukilteo, bullying in schools, and the increasingly diverse population in the county. She stated that the Human Rights Commission sends a message that the county believes that everyone has justice and fairness on their side.

Andy Skotdal of Everett stated that the Commission may ask voters to trade away essential services for the expansion of the Council. The costs of expansion is nearly two new deputies in each council district. The Council should not be forced into an unfunded mandate, but will make cuts in other services. He stated the expanded Council would shift the balance on the Council toward south county. He stated that Chair Gregerson and Commissioner Matthews have different visions for Paine Field. He stated that asking a divided Council to develop a vision for the airport commission would not be the right way to accomplish that vision. He urged the Commission to allow the Executive to work the issue. He mentioned that the Snohomish County PUD works well with three commissioners. He stated the airport works well because it has a streamlined structure.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Miller stated the next meeting of the Commission is June 29 at 6:00 pm, where the Commission would make final recommendations.

Commissioner Koster moved to adjourn. A Commissioner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Vice Chair Miller adjourned the meeting at 7:03 pm.