



CLEVELAND HEIGHTS

Charter Review Commission

May 1, 2024

6:00 PM

City Hall – Executive Conference Room

1) Call to Order

- a. Chair Linda Striefsky called the meeting to order.

2) Roll Call

- a. Members present: Linda Striefsky, Graig Kluge, Stephanie Morris, Jonathan Ciesla, Roland Anglin, Harriet Applegate, Graham Ball, Drew Herzig, and Guy Thellian.
- b. Staff present: Assistant Law Director Lee Crumrine

3) Approval of Minutes of April 20 and April 27 meetings (pending availability).

- a. Motion to approve the minutes of April 20 by Jonathan Ciesla, seconded by Harriet Applegate. Approved unanimously.

4) Review and Confirm or Amend Agenda

- a. Jonathan Ciesla suggested adding to the agenda discussion of whether to invite recently-appointed Councilmember Jim Posch to speak with the CRC.

5) Public Comments

- a. None.

6) Old Business

- a. Discussion of new draft of proposed text for Ranked Choice Voting charter provision and ordinance from Drew Herzig and Harriet Applegate.
 - i. Drew Herzig stated that they have a revised draft that they will circulate to the CRC and asked to discuss it at the next meeting.
- b. Discussion of revised draft of proposed text from Guy Thellian on Finance and Budget matters.
 - i. Chair reported that there are minor changes in a revised draft that the CRC needs to approve.
 - ii. Guy Thellian asked to remove the word “tax” from the title of Section 9.2 because it addresses more than just the tax budget.
- c. Discussion of revised draft of land acknowledgment.

- i. Guy Thellian stated that he examined the top 10 major cities in the country and some states by searching for “acknowledgment” and “indigenous,” and he found no results.
 - ii. Graham Ball noted that Portland, Maine, passed a land acknowledgment. He made an argument that a land acknowledgment belongs in a Charter. Harriet Applegate stated that she agreed that it belongs in the Charter.
 - iii. Drew Herzig stated that it is important for the public to have that conversation. Drew Herzig asked members who would not want to recommend an amendment for a land acknowledgment to abstain and not block it.
 - iv. Graig Kluge stated his belief that it does not belong in the Charter, Stephanie Morris asked why it does not belong in the Charter, and Chair and Graig Kluge responded that it is better presented and considered in a resolution by Council and that other groups may feel slighted by it. Drew Herzig stated that acknowledging this injustice does not diminish acknowledgment of other injustices.
 - v. Harriet Applegate made a distinction between acknowledgment of the injustice against indigenous peoples and other groups because they were subject to genocide.
 - vi. To address members’ concerns, Graham Ball stated that the acknowledgment of one group is not a denigration of any other group. He stated that there are no backlashes against other institutions that have adopted land acknowledgments. He stated that there is precedent in Portland, Maine, who have not experienced claims for land as a result. He stated that a Charter amendment rather than a resolution would make the City reckon and engage with this issue.
 - vii. Motion to adopt the land acknowledgment in the preamble by Graham Ball, seconded by Drew Herzig. Motion failed 4-5 with one abstention.
 - viii. Motion by Chair to include in the final report a recommendation to Council that Council consider measures to recognize the rights of indigenous people, past injustices against indigenous people, and continuing presence of indigenous people in our community, including a land acknowledgment and event or activity, seconded by Graham Ball. Motion passed 9-0. Graham Ball to draft that section of the report.
- d. Status report on plans for second public input meeting to be held May 21.
- i. Guy Thellian is preparing a press release to submit to the Sun Press and the Cleveland Jewish News.
 - ii. Guy Thellian and Harriet Applegate are to distribute fliers.
 - iii. Assistant Law Director Lee Crumrine has provided the flier to Mike Thomas to include in the city newsletter.
 - iv. Chair asked for comments on the drafts of slides for the public input meeting. Drew Herzig suggested changing the description of the purpose from “solicit” to “ask.” He also suggested adding that a charter amendment requires Council and voter approval rather than just voter approval. Harriet Applegate asked what is meant by the history of..., and Chair responded that it is an explanation of Charter
 - v. Stephanie Morris suggested making the wording of the slides more accessible including simpler language.

- vi. Assistant Law Director Lee Crumrine to visit the library on May 20 to check preparations for the meeting. Drew Herzig to talk to the library about the layout and arrangement of chairs, tables, and lectern.
- e. Discuss any CRC member questions/comments on revisions to charter draft and discuss remaining issues list items
 - i. In Article 11 regarding boards and commissions, Chair suggested adding a provision that allows Council to abolish and combine commissions other than the City Planning Commission and Civil Service Commission. Assistant Law Director Lee Crumrine to add that language before Saturday.
 - ii. The CRC discussed whether substantive provisions can be subsequently made to initiatives. Guy Thellian did some additional research on this topic in addition to research done by Assistant Law Director Lee Crumrine. He explained the different approaches of other cities. Chair stated that she found the Lakewood provision confusing. Guy Thellian stated that the problem with the current draft is that there is no limitations on amendments to the petition without going back to petitioners. Drew Herzig stated his preference for a provision that prevents no substantive changes.
 - iii. Motion to strike from Section 8.1 (c) “In no instance may any such change, addition or amendment substantively alter the measure as it had appeared in the petition originally circulated for signatures” by Chair, seconded by Jonathan Ciesla. Guy Thellian stated his concern about having initiatives go to the ballot with substantive changes that occur after petition signatures are collected. Chair noted that some charters do not allow changes. Harriet Applegate stated her support for the motion. Motion passed 7-2.
 - iv. Motion by Chair to amend “The committee to which the petition is referred may provide” to “The committee to which the petition is referred shall provide” and “public hearings” to “public meetings, with opportunity for public comments” in Section 8.1(b), seconded by Harriet Applegate. Motion passed 9-0.
 - v. Assistant Law Director Lee Crumrine to make revisions in this section to clarify between the council committee and petitioners committee.
- f. Discussion of the use of the term “canvass.”
 - i. The CRC deferred consideration of the issue of “canvass” until the next meeting.

7) Review of Meeting Action Items

- a. Guy Thellian to propose a finalized draft of the finance provisions.
- b. Drew Herzig and Harriet Applegate to provide a draft ranked choice ordinance at the next meeting.

8) Public Comment

- a. None.

9) Review of Meeting for Lessons Learned

- a. None.

10) Adjourn

- a. Motion to adjourn by Jonathan Ciesla, seconded by Drew Herzig. Approved unanimously. Adjourned at 7:57 P.M.

Next meeting: Saturday, May 4, 2024, at 2:00 P.M.