



City of Cleveland Heights Charter Review Commission

Decisions and Rationales - Amended

4 January 2018
Council Chambers
Cleveland Heights City Hall

Charter Review Commission: *Present;* Patrycia Ajdukiewicz, Jessica Cohen, Craig Cobb, Michael Gaynier, Howard Maier, John Newman, Jr., Carla Rautenberg, Vince Reddy, Maia Rucker, Allosious Snodgrass, Katherine Solender, James Vail, Sarah West; *Absent;* David Perelman, Randy Keller.

1. Acceptance of Decisions and Rationales from 7 December 2017

Moved and seconded to accept the Decisions and Rationales 7 December 2017. Accepted unanimously.

2. Public Comment Rules

The discussion about how to handle public comment was continued from last time. All noted it was important to provide opportunities for those attending meetings to address the Commission. Some argued that it is important to allow comments on particular items. The Chair suggested setting at least 15 minutes at the end of the business meeting for any questions and comments on items discussed in the meeting as well as on any issue of concern to the speaker. Speakers could have up to three minutes each depending upon how many want to speak. If more than five want to speak, individual time would be proportionately reduced. Some members noted the Commission is working on behalf of the public and members of the public should be able to speak as desired. Also, some time may be made available after discussion of a major issue for public comment during the business meeting. The Decision was to permit all who want to speak to be able to do so, with a reasonable limit for an individual to speak, both after a major decision and after business. Speakers may be able to address any issue of concern to them. Finally, the Committee can revisit the policy based on experience with the policy.

3. Research on location of Councilmembers

Need to research perceptions of some parts of the community not being represented. Data is needed on where members of Council live, and lived, over time. Decision was to have the Facilitator research location of members of Cleveland Heights City Council over time. Data will be mapped where members were located while on Council at different points of time.

4. Scope of Review

Wide ranging discussion on what provisions of the Charter to review when and how. Chair suggested moving through the Charter in order. Others noted that form of government is an over-arching issue that affects many parts of the charter. It was also noted that looking at the issues surrounding the Council involves other parts of the charter as well, such as the nature of the executive. Some emphasized the need for data on the issues of how to structure the government. A suggestion was made to do a Likert type survey by which respondents could evaluate how the current form of government handled specific issues and processes, such as finances, parks, etc. Some suggested a general survey of the community on some of the issues.

The timing of Commission recommendations was also discussed. Some wanted to be able to have recommendations available to the Council for possible inclusion in the next election. This would require the Commission to make recommendations by May. At this point, Council Member Mike Ungar requested permission to address the Commission. He noted that the Council had addressed issues of timing and decided to leave that decision up to the Commission. The Council wanted the Commission to have sufficient discretion to do all regardless of the time frame that would be necessary to make effective recommendations.

The Chair also noted that concerns with data affects the next Agenda item, the design of questions for members of council and administrators. The answers to the questions may help understand issues with current form of government. The Chair noted that the Facilitator is compiling specific research on forms of government and had shared a handout on forms of government with the Agenda for this meeting.

The Decision was to continue to examine the form of government by reviewing the responses to the brief survey of city officials. The Chair, Vice Chair and Facilitator will look at the responses the week of the next meeting and determine who to invite to speak to the Commission. All responses will be available to the Commission. An Agenda for the meeting will be available as soon after the decision is finalized as is possible.

5. Adoption of Brief Survey for Council members, City Manager and Administrators

The Discussion on the survey, which was also part of the discussion on the previous topic, was resumed. The Committee debated the desired format of the survey, looking at both quantitative and qualitative formats. After serious discussion, the Committee decided on the draft questions as part of a qualitative approach. Many argued that the target group understood the charter and probable issues with it so that an open-ended survey would gather sufficient details. The Committee then discussed the need to gather information on the form of government. The Committee decided to add a specific question about the form of government to the draft questions distributed at the previous meeting. The question stated, “What parts of the current structure of the City government are: (a) serving the City well; (b) not serving the City well?”

A final format issue was whether respondents could submit survey answers without individual identity. Most agreed quickly that elected officials should identify their responses and would want to do so. However, some working for the administration may not feel comfortable making specific comments. The Committee decided that administrators could submit responses without identification.

The desirable time frame was to have the survey sent to respondents as soon as possible with answers requested before the next meeting of the Committee. The responses would be sent to the Facilitator who would assemble the responses for the next meeting. The Chair, Vice Chair and Facilitator will meet before the next meeting and ascertain who to invite to speak to the Committee.

6. Scheduling of the next meeting

The Committee had agreed at the last meeting to meet the first Thursday of each month and hold the third Thursday of each month open for a meeting. Many noted the Committee needed considerable time to talk about the issues around the Charter, particularly difficult and complex issues such as form of government. Various days were also examined for the meetings, but many noted that Thursdays had been agreed upon earlier and seemed to work for members. The decision was to meet on Thursday, 18 January, with the Chair, Vice Chair and Facilitator to meet before the meeting to determine who to invite to the meeting. A member noted that the first Thursday in April would be during Passover. The Chair stated that the Committee would look at a different date for that meeting later. The Chair shared that the Facilitator was setting up an online calendar for the Committee. Originally, the ideal was an interactive calendar that all members could change. However, the IT staff noted that was not possible. A calendar will be created and maintained by the Facilitator. This will help members plan for meetings.

7. Meeting adjourned

Moved and seconded to adjourn to the next meeting time, 7:00 PM on Thursday 18 January. Motion adopted by consensus.