



MINUTES

MEETING OF THE CHARTER COMMITTEE

Monday, February 26, 2018, 7:00 p.m.

El Cerrito City Hall
Hillside Conference Room
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530

This Meeting Place Is Wheelchair Accessible

Roll Call

Committee Members Eizenberg, Fadelli, Keller, Lyman, Moore and Chair Patterson all present. City Manager Hanin and City Attorney Woodruff also present.

Chairperson Patterson convened the regular Charter Committee meeting at 7:00 p.m.

1. Oral Communications from the Public

Elizabeth Thorsnes, El Cerrito, stated that question of El Cerrito becoming a Charter City a big deal and that everyone in the city should be informed about what this entails. Ms. Thorsnes said that she hopes to see the public educated about becoming a charter city and hopes that the issue to the voters for a decision. Ms. Thorsnes also expressed concerns about having a real property transfer tax in the city and noted that it is already expensive to own property.

Patricia Wilson, El Cerrito, stated that no one knew about the Charter Committee meetings and said she is retired and is struggling to stay in the city, noted that taxes are already a high proportion of mortgage, insurance and taxes and that she and others are concerned that more taxes will negatively affect the community.

Anne Quinosky, El Cerrito, asked for information regarding procedures for public input and whether there will be an opportunity for additional comment after the committee.

City Manager Hanin and City Attorney Woodruff described the noticing and publication that had occurred regarding Charter City Committee Meetings. Mr. Woodruff also reported on the history of the Council's discussions regarding a city charter and outlined upcoming procedural steps and timelines regarding additional Charter City Committee and City Council discussions. Mr. Woodruff also provided individuals present with background information regarding City Charters, municipal affairs and the real property transfer tax.

COMMUNICATION ACCESS INFORMATION

To request a meeting agenda in large print, Braille, or on DVD, or to request a sign language interpreter for the meeting, call Cheryl Morse, City Clerk at 215-4305 at least FIVE (5) WORKING DAYS NOTICE PRIOR TO THE MEETING to ensure availability.

2. Approval of the Minutes

Approve the February 5 and 12, 2018 Committee meeting minutes.

Action: Moved, seconded (Lyman/Keller?) and carried unanimously to approve the minutes.

3. Review and possible Direction on Draft City Charter

The City Attorney will introduce the draft charter for the Committee's review. The Committee will provide comments and possible direction toward its completion.

Presenter: Sky Woodruff, City Attorney.

Chairperson Patterson invited additional questions, comments and requests for clarification from individuals who were present. Public present asked for clarification regarding establishment of a real property transfer tax, public financing of elections, the Council-Manager form of government and whether to omit certain text from the draft charter regarding compensation.

Action: The Charter Committee reviewed the draft City Charter and provided direction to the City Attorney including the following recommendations:

- The City Attorney will prepare a memo explaining how certain sections within the draft charter work with each other or inter-relate and will include changes in language recommended by the Committee along with a justification for the changes.
- Section 101 – The City Attorney will examine the need or reworking of the word “peculiarly” in final sentence of the section, “The exercise of home rule over each matter set forth in this Charter uniquely benefits the citizens of the City and addresses peculiarly local concerns within the City.”
- Section 203 – Add language stating that the City Council shall appoint the City Manager.
- Section 600 – explain inclusion of language regarding elections in the report that is transmitted to the City Council.

4. Items for next meeting

- a. Discuss draft preamble
- b. Information about potential Real Property Transfer Tax rate and characteristics
- c. Next Steps

Action: The Committee added review of a revised draft Charter. This will include a draft preamble. Information regarding the real property transfer tax rate and characteristics would be in the form of a presentation which would not require action. An overview regarding Charter Cities vs. General Law Cities should also be provided with background information included in the packet for public review. Allow public comment for each agenda item.

5. Adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

Supplemental Communications

Written Comments submitted by Howdy Goudey, El Cerrito.