

JOHN ARDNER
SHELLEY DENISON
CHRISTOPHER DRESEL

TIM FIER
JACK HOLLIS
DANA STROUD

**GRESHAM CITY CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE –
SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
NOVEMBER 16, 2022
OPEN SESSION – 1 PM
VIA ZOOM MEETING (SEE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW)**

The Gresham City Charter Review Committee will be holding the
November 16, 2022, Meeting at 1 P.M. via Zoom Meeting.

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://greshamoregon.zoom.us/j/84371830748?pwd=R295Ujg5TTdHMFRPVUdLbkY4VWtIZz09>

Passcode: 6Ez4qiaPSq

Or One tap mobile :

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Persons who desire to access the meeting and are unable to access the meeting via Zoom are encouraged to contact Jane Leo, Policy Analyst, by calling 503-618-2508 or emailing by 5:00 pm two business days before the meeting, so that the City can provide alternate arrangements.

Persons who desire translation services for this meeting must notify Jane Leo, Policy Analyst, by calling 503-618-2508 or emailing Jane.Leo@GreshamOregon.gov by 5:00 pm three business days before the meeting, so that the City can make arrangements for translation services.

If you wish to receive notices of future meetings, please contact Jane Leo, Policy Analyst, at Jane.Leo@GreshamOregon.gov or (503) 618-2508.

**GRESHAM CITY CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE –
SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
NOVEMBER 16, 2022**

- 1. PUBLIC COMMENT/TESTIMONY**

- 2. DISCUSSION OF ELECTION/VOTING SYSTEMS**

- 3. UPDATE ON YOUTH AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

- 4. OTHER ITEMS/AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

November 9, 2022 Meeting

Committee Members Present:

Jack Ardner
Tim Fier
Jack Hollis, Chair
Shelley Denison
Dana Stroud

Absent:

Christopher Dresel

Staff Present:

Kevin McConnell, City Attorney
Margarita Contreras, Admin Assistant
Jane Leo, Policy Analyst

1. PUBLIC COMMENT/TESTIMONY

None.

2. COMMUNITY OUTREACH PRESENTATION

SPEAKER: SHANI HARRIS-BAGWELL, BAGWELL CONSULTING

Shani Harris-Bagwell summarized the findings of the Community Outreach program. (Full report including data/cross tabs was provided to the Members prior to the meeting and was included in the meeting packet posted to the City's Charter Review web page.)

Primary findings from discussions with 354 Gresham residents are:

- Gresham citizens want to feel closer to government
- People want to feel heard
- Overwhelming support for districts
 - Respondents were split on support for Single-Member Districts or Multi-Member Districts
 - People need more information as to how Multi-Member Districts would function
 - Some respondents commented Multi-Member Districts would lighten the workload while others were concerned about lack of accountability
- Respondents are more concerned about being represented—feeling closer to their elected officials and sharing lived experiences—than they are about minority representation on the City Council
- Regarding voting methods, “rank” was often mentioned but it is unclear how the word was being defined and applied
- People responded enthusiastically to Ranked Choice Voting but need more education
- Current voting system makes people feel pressured to vote for who would win not necessarily who they want
- Other issues mentioned by respondents—outside the scope of the Charter Review Committee’s directive from Council—include: infrastructure, safety, lack of street lighting, need for more public restrooms

Shani advised that in going forward, the City needs to present to the public a fully formed proposal which explains how a change in government structure would function, what it would do, how it would be paid for, specific to Ranked Choice Voting how implementation would impact voting. A budget needs to be appropriated for voter education.

When asked if participants preferred STAR or Ranked Choice Voting, Shani responded that in her opinion, STAR can be manipulated; a candidate can be “down voted.” As a former San Francisco resident—a city that uses Ranked Choice Voting—she believes it is a more honest vote method.

In response to Vice Chair Ardner’s questions regarding a preferred number of districts, Shani expressed that more districts are better as people will feel closer to their City Councilor and will appreciate the City Councilor having the same livability/neighborhood experiences. However, districts should not be so small that people are divided from their community. To Chair Hollis’ question, Shani reminded the Members they will always have the chance to redistrict depending on changes in population. Ms. Leo commented that because districting is based on population—not to number of registered voters—redistricting is most often tied to the U.S. Census, conducted every ten-years, or to the release of population data every five-years by Portland State University’s Population Research Center.

Chair Hollis summarized that he is hearing that respondents place a higher importance on accountability than on minority representation on Council and that single member districts create accountability. Shani concurred adding that diversity is likely to occur with districts.

Some best practices to consider in drawing City Council district lines: keep the community at the forefront, use natural dividing lines, consider where people congregate such as parks and high schools and Gresham’s neighborhoods. Shani stressed the importance of reviewing maps by population and ethnicity. Ms. Leo reminded the Members that their directive from Council is to consider and make recommendation on districts. The Committee is not tasked with drawing maps. Should Council move forward with such a proposal, mapping will take place under a different process.

3. 2023 ELECTION RESULTS: MULTNOMAH COUNTY BALLOT MEASURE 26-232 RANKED CHOICE VOTING, CITY OF PORTLAND BALLOT MEASURE 26-228 CHARTER CHANGES AND MULTNOMAH COUNTY BALLOT MEASURE 26-230 REPLACES GENDER BINARY PRONOUNS WITH GENDER NEUTRAL TERMS

Ms. Leo presented the vote count—as of 8:00 a.m. on 11/9/2022—for each ballot measure as well as reviewed the number of Active Registered Voters in Multnomah County (567,441) and number of Ballots Counted (240,153):

- Ballot Measure 26-232: YES 151,173 votes, 67.32%; NO 73,392, 32.68%
- Ballot Measure 26-228: YES 103,722 votes, 56.28%; NO 80,569, 43.72%
- Ballot Measure 26-230: YES 142,358 votes, 62.23%; NO 86,404, 37.77%

4. UPDATE ON YOUTH AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Member Denison reported she is reviewing a letter Ms. Leo drafted to high school administrators requesting classroom time to explain and demonstrate the importance of a city charter and Ranked Choice Voting. She confirmed receipt of contact information for Gresham High School’s debate coach provided by Member Stroud.

5. EDITED SUBCOMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENT

In response to a request from the Subcommittee at their previous meeting, Member Stroud edited the Subcommittee’s mission statement. Vice Chair Ardner explained the purpose of asking this be done was so the mission statement would reflect the Subcommittee’s directive and provide citizens with an explanation of the decision-making criteria. He requested the mission statement be included in the final report to City Council. Following a thorough conversation, Member Stroud agreed to incorporate the Members’ comments into a second edit and forward to Ms. Leo. Vice Chair Ardner and Chair Hollis suggested presenting the mission statement to the

full Charter Review Committee (CRC) for approval and adoption. Member Stroud questioned the intent of doing so and expressed concern that CRC Members could get off on tangents. Ms. Leo cautioned that Chair Hollis will need to present it in such a way as to prevent wordsmithing.

6. OTHER ITEMS/AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

The Members set forth the following work schedule:

November 16 and 23: Voting Method (Ranked Choice Voting, STAR)

Members were asked to send Ms. Leo their contentions as to what's the problem, how does a change resolve the problem, pros and cons of the change, and such.

November 30: Possible work session on Voting Method recommendation

November 30 and December 7: Districting

Members were asked to send Ms. Leo their contentions as to what's the problem, how does a change resolve the problem, pros and cons of the change, and such.

December 14: Possible work session on Districting recommendation

Ms. Leo announced the results of the Doodle Poll regarding Members' availability through the end of the calendar year. As of current results, the Subcommittee will not meet December 21 nor December 28 due to lack of quorum.

The CRC meeting schedule: November 14 and December 12 at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom.

There being no further business the Subcommittee adjourned at 3:15p.m.

Administrator Name
Title
High School
Address
City/State/Zip

Dear (Name),

The City of Gresham is currently undertaking an in-depth review of the City Charter, which is the governing document for the City. This work includes extensive public engagement to better understand the desires and priorities of Gresham residents regarding governance. We recognize the importance of including youth in this engagement, especially those who will be of voting age within the next couple of years.

We have developed a classroom activity for high school students (juniors and seniors, specifically) which will introduce students to the purpose of a City Charter and provide information about two key issues being considered by the Charter Review Committee: election systems and districting. Students will participate in a “mock” election in order to help understand the differences between election systems and will complete a brief survey in which they can share their input on Charter topics.

We are asking for the opportunity to hold the activity for students at [SCHOOL]. It would be facilitated by two members of the Charter Review Committee and would take about 45 minutes, though we can be flexible with allotted time. The activity would work best with 25-30 students, and we would be happy to facilitate the activity multiple times for different groups of students.

We will contact you within the next week to discuss any questions and, if there is interest, to schedule the Charter activity. If you would like to reach out to us earlier, please find our contact information below.

Thank you for considering this request.

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