

City of Bend Charter Review Committee Minutes
October 10, 2017

1. Call to Order

The meeting of the Charter Review Committee was called to order at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 10, 2017, in the Boardroom at Bend City Hall, 710 NW Wall. Present were committee members Bill Galaway, Co-Chair, Brent Landels, Co-Chair, Stephanie Senner, Richard Ross, Kathleen Meehan Coop, Chad Sage, Dan Fishkin, Anne George, Don Leonard and Angela Chisum. Katy Brook and Kathleen Meehan Coop were excused.

Also present: Justin Livingston, City Councilor, Eric King, City Manager, Mary Winters, City Attorney, Elizabeth Oshel, Associate City Attorney, Damian Syrnyk, Senior Planner, Robyn Christie, City Recorder, and Julia Shumway, Bend Bulletin.

2. Accept Meeting Minutes from September 26, 2017

Meeting minutes were accepted.

3. Review direction from Council

Mr. Ross shared research from Claremont McKenna College on California cities that have switched to Wards. He would also share research from Washington.

Mr. King reported on his recent conversation with Dr. Phil Cooper. He was not aware of recent academic research.

Ms. Chisum shared her research looking at COCC, Parks and the School District. She found consistent under voting in the community (about 20%).

Ms. Senner stated that this was a grass roots issue responding to the sentiment of under representation. This was not originally a Council issue.

Mr. Galaway asked to have motions and votes on some issues. He asked to have discussion and closure on the voting by ward or by city wide. There was discussion on citywide voting. There was concern with a small number of people selecting a candidate. Mr. Landels stated there would be disenfranchisement if the candidate the ward selected was not elected because the rest of the community voted for a different candidate. Mr. Ross spoke to a citywide vote. He stated that nominating by district addressed fairness and minimizes change.

Mr. Fishkin shared his research on Pasadena, California. He read from the Claremont report on the California Voting Rights Act. Ms. Winters stated that was directed at underrepresented minorities.

Mr. Ross asked to share the full summary of interviews with the Council. Mr. Landels had shared it with each of the Councilors.

Mr. Sage asked how neighborhood associations would be tied into wards. Mr. Galaway reported on hearing frustrations with neighborhoods not having a voice. He thought neighborhood boundaries would eventually match ward boundaries.

Mr. Ross shared that in all of the interviews they heard that Councilors elected by ward serve the city first and the ward second. He said the research showed about 20,000 population was the recommended size for ward.

Mr. Galaway posed questions to the Committee:

a. Do we agree that we want to propose a ward system?

Mr. Fishkin moved that the committee agrees to make a recommendation to the City Council on a ward system to be put on the ballot at the May election. Mr. Landels seconded the motion. Passed 9-0

b. Does a ward system impact how we perceive an elected mayor's roles and responsibilities?

Mr. Landels moved to recommend to Council to put a directly elected mayor to the ballot at the May election (with term and salary to be determined by the committee). Mr. Leonard seconded the motion. Passed 9-0.

c. Discussion and closure on the voting by ward or by city wide (candidate lives in ward).

Ward candidate elected from within the ward – polled 4 thumbs up

Ward candidate elected at large – polled 3 thumbs up 2 down

4. Wards

Ms. Winters distributed the Secretary of State's directive on redistricting. Each district shall:

- Be contiguous;
- Utilize existing geographic or political boundaries;
- Not divide communities of common interest; and
- Be connected by transportation links.
- For districts, be of equal population.

Ms. Winters said that the wards cannot dilute the voting strength of any language or ethnic minority group or favor an incumbent elected official.

Mr. Fishkin asked to look at the directive from Secretary of State Richardson. Ms. Winters shared that the directive she provided is relevant for cities.

Ms. Christie provided draft ward maps. There were three maps of 4 wards and 2 maps of 3 wards.

Mr. Syrnyk explained the methodology for calculating populations based on the Buildable Lands Inventory and 2.4 average household size.

Ms. George and Ms. Chisum were more in support of citywide voting. Mr. Leonard favored election within the ward.

Mr. Fishkin asked staff to redistribute the Richardson memo.

The committee discussed scenarios. All presumed a directly elected mayor.

- 6 wards? no support
- 4 wards, and 2 at large
- 4 wards and 2 super wards
- 3 wards, 2 councilors from each

5. Review schedule – next meeting October 24

The next meeting will include:

- Vote by ward or vote citywide
- Mayor term length
- Recent examples of cities that have switched
- 4 vs 3 wards

Mr. Fishkin would like to know the priority of having an elected mayor linked to a ward system.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robyn Christie
City Recorder