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WHATCOM COUNTY CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION

Record of Proceedings
Regular Meeting of May 11, 2015

1. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Ben Elenbaas called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Garden Level Conference Room, 322 N. Commercial Street, Bellingham, Washington.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Ken Bell, Todd Donovan, Chet Dow, Ben Elenbaas, Joe Elenbaas, Yvonne Goldsmith, Wes Kentch, Cliff Langley, Eli Mackiewicz, Richard May, Barbara Ryan, Eileen Sobjack, Thomas Stuen, Alie Walker

Absent: Jon Mutchler

3. FLAG SALUTE

4. PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION

The following people spoke:

Glen Morgan, Thurston County, spoke about proposed amendment 16.

Bob Burr spoke about district-only voting, bipartisanship, and proposed amendment 9 regarding creating five council districts.

Douglas Bannick spoke about district-only voting.

Clarissa Mansfield spoke about Commission minutes, district-only voting, and proposed amendment 16.

Sandy Lawrence submitted a handout (*on file*) and spoke about climate change.

Joan Drinkwin, Northwest Straits Interim Director, spoke about proposed amendment 16.

Greg Brown spoke about proposed amendments 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17.

Karl Uppiano spoke about district-only voting.

Sandy Robson spoke about district-only voting, 3, 10, and 16.

Dave McClusky spoke about district-only voting.

Kent Murray spoke about district-only voting.

Ronna Loerch spoke about district-only voting.

John Kirk spoke about district-only voting, representation and partisanship,

Anne Mulvey spoke about district-only voting and proposed amendment 16 and proposed amendment 14.

1 **5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR APRIL 27, 2015**

2 Ben Elenbaas moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded.

3
4
5 The motion was approved by general consent.

6
7
8 **6. OLD BUSINESS**

9
10 Proposed Amendment 13 from Eli Mackiewicz: Shall the Charter be amended to include four
11 political parties, instead of two, in the districting process?

12
13 Mackiewicz they will have to change the title based on substitute amendment. He
14 moved to amend, "5 percent of Whatcom County's popular vote..." The motion was
15 seconded.

16
17 Joe Elenbaas moved to amend the amendment, "...15 percent of Whatcom County's
18 vote..." The motion was seconded.

19
20 Ken Bell stated bifurcate the motions. The Chair agreed.

21
22 Joe moved to postpone to the next meeting. The motion was seconded.

23
24 Motion to postpone failed 7-7 with Bell, Donovan, Dow, Ben Elebaas, Joe Elenbaas,
25 Langley, and Sobjack in favor.

26
27 Mackiewicz motion to amend carried 12-2 with Bell and Ben Elenbaas opposed.

28
29 Joe Elenbaas motion to amend carried 14-0.

30
31 Mackiewicz moved to amend, "...gubernatorial primary or presidential..." The motion
32 was seconded.

33
34 Motion carried 10-3-1 with Ryan, Sobjack, and Stuen opposed and Ben Elenbaas
35 abstained.

36
37 Stuen moved to delete "gubernatorial primary." The motion was seconded.

38
39 Stuen's motion to amend failed 4-9-1 with Joe Elenbaas, Langley, Stuen, and Ryan in
40 favor, Ben Elenbaas abstained.

41
42 Motion to approve as amended carried 11-3 with Dow, Ryan, and Sobjack opposed.

43
44 *The Commission took a break from 8:20 p.m. to 8:40 p.m.*

45
46 Proposed Amendment 14 from Todd Donovan and Jon Mutchler: Shall the Charter be
47 amended to lower the threshold requirement for ballot signatures for Whatcom County
48 Charter changes from 20% to 15% for citizen initiatives?

49
50 Motion to approve the amendment carried 9-5 with Bell, Dow, Goldsmith,
51 Mackiewicz, and Sobjack opposed.

52
53 Proposed Amendment 15 from Jon Mutchler: County Auditor duties and responsibilities

54
55 Debbie Adelstein, County Auditor, spoke.

1 Ryan moved to postpone to the next meeting. The motion was seconded.

2
3 Motion to postpone carried 8-5.

4
5 Proposed Amendment 16 from Wes Kentch: Shall the Charter be amended to increase
6 transparency in funding between Whatcom County and nonprofit non-government
7 organizations (NGOs)?

8
9 Kentch moved to approve the revised version as a substitute, with amendments to
10 delete the phrase "or gifts" in all instances from the proposed language and strike "annual"
11 The motion was seconded.

12
13 Ryan moved to call the question.

14
15 Joe Elenbaas moved to postpone to the next meeting. The motion was seconded.

16
17 The Chair ruled that the Commission would vote on the motion to postpone.

18
19 Ryan appealed the Chair's ruling.

20
21 The appeal failed with debate 3-9-1 with Ryan, Stuen, and Walker in favor and May
22 abstaining and Mackiewicz and Mutchler absent.

23
24 The motion to postpone carried 9-4 with Donovan, May, Ryan, and Walker opposed
25 and Mutchler and Mackiewicz absent.

26
27 Proposed Amendment 17 from Richard May: Shall the Charter be amended to include a
28 section on districting restrictions?

29
30 This item was not discussed.

31
32 **14. ADJOURN**

33
34 Bell moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded.

35
36 The motion was approved by general consent.

37
38 The meeting adjourned at 9:38 p.m.

39
40 The Commission approved these minutes on June 8, 2015

41
42
43 
44 _____
45 Jill Nixon, Recording Secretary

46
47
48 
49 _____
50 Chet Dow, Commission Secretary

51 
52 _____
Ben Elenbaas, Commission Chair