WHATCOM COUNTY CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION
Record of Proceedings
Regular Meeting of April 13, 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, Jon
Mutchler, Barbara Ryan, Eileen Sobjack, Thomas Stuen, Alie Walker

Absent: None

3. FLAG SALUTE

4. PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION

The following people spoke:

- Keith Willnauer, County Assessor, spoke about proposed amendment 8
  regarding changing the title of Assessor to Property Assessor.
- Debbie Adelstein, County Auditor, spoke about proposed amendment 8
  regarding changing the title of Auditor to Auditor and Elections Officer.
- Matt Petryni, RESources, spoke about proposed amendment 1
  regarding district-only voting.
- Vinsa Biciunas spoke about district-only voting.
- Larry Helm spoke about district-only voting.
- Penny Cowen spoke about district-only voting.
- Delaine Clizbe spoke about district-only voting.
- Dr. Joseph Garcia spoke about district-only voting.
- Abe Jacobson spoke about district-only voting.
- Kent Murray spoke about district-only voting.
- Max Perry spoke about district-only voting.
- Peter Willing spoke about district-only voting.
- Dale Petersen spoke about district-only voting.
- Carrie D'Angelo spoke about district-only voting.
- Marybeth Teigrob spoke about district-only voting.
- Michelle Luke spoke about district-only voting.
- John Kirk submitted a handout (on file) and spoke about County
  contracts with nonprofit agencies.
- Joe Knight spoke about district-only voting.
- Elliot Fine spoke about district-only voting.

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• Kris Halterman spoke about district-only voting.
• Lorraine Newman spoke about district-only voting.
• David Curley spoke about district-only voting.
• Dan McShane spoke about district-only voting and creating more than three districts.
• Bob Hicks spoke about district-only voting and commissioner debates with speakers.
• Lisa McShane submitted a handout (on file) and spoke about district-only voting and the location of district boundaries.
• Ronna Loerch spoke about district-only voting and removing money from elections.
• James Gibson spoke about district boundaries, the number of districts, and the number of proposed amendments that will go on the ballot.
• Janice Schuch spoke about district-only voting.
• Patrick Alesse spoke about district-only voting.
• Karl Uppiano spoke about district-only voting.
• Roger Murphy spoke about district-only voting.
• Charles Law spoke about the divisiveness of political campaigns in Whatcom County.
• Adrian Eisinger spoke about district-only voting and community projects that include the vehicle development program and Western Washington University and waterfront development.
• Sandy Lawrence spoke about district-only voting.
• Matthew Goggins spoke about district-only voting and redistricting.
• Jayson Reimer spoke about district-only voting.
• Ellen Howard spoke about transparency and whether people are listening to public speakers.
• Dave Onkels spoke about district-only voting.
• Louanne Chapman spoke about district-only voting.
• Clarissa Mansfield spoke about district-only voting.
• Judith Akins spoke about district-only voting.
• Eric Broussard spoke about district-only voting.
• Jim Dickinson spoke about district-only voting, the number of Council districts, and replacing the County Executive with a County manager.
• Kathy Kershner spoke about money in elections and district-only voting.
• Grant Steed spoke about district-only voting.
• Cipriano Maurisio spoke about adding diversity language to the Charter Preamble.
• Pat Hamill spoke about district-only voting.
• Robert Holt spoke about district-only voting.

(The Commission took a break from 8:38 p.m. to 8:54 p.m.)

• L.W. Brown spoke about district-only voting.
• Matthew Aamot spoke about district-only voting.
5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MARCH 23, 2015

Joe Elenbaas moved to approve the Minutes. The motion was seconded.

The motion passed by general consent.

6. OLD BUSINESS: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE ON PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENTS FOR VOTERS AT THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION

Proposed Amendment 8 from Jon Mutchler: Shall the Charter be amended to provide voter education concerning county officials' election titles by requiring ballots to refer to the Assessor as the "Property Assessor" and the Auditor as the "Auditor and Elections Officer"?

Motion failed 6-9 with debate, with Donovan, Mackiewicz, May, Mutchler, Ryan, and Walker in favor.

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

Joe Elenbaas moved to postpone to the next meeting to address questions about allocating votes and implementing language. The motion was seconded.

The motion carried by general consent.

7. OLD BUSINESS: PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENTS FOR VOTERS AT THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION

The Commission voted to forward these proposed amendments to Whatcom County voters. They were not discussed at tonight’s meeting. However, any commissioner may move to reconsider these amendments during any meeting.

- Proposed Amendment 1 from Joe Elenbaas: Shall the Charter be amended to provide for election of council members within the council district from which the candidate was nominated?
- Proposed Amendment 2 from Joe Elenbaas: Shall the Charter in Article 5.40 and Article 5.60 be amended to increase the "concise statement" limit from 20 words to 40 words?
- Proposed Amendment 3 from Ben Elenbaas: Shall Charter Section 8.20 be amended to prohibit the County Council from proposing Charter amendments on matters that have been approved by a 2/3 majority of voters?
- Proposed Amendment 5 from Todd Donovan: Shall the Charter be amended to facilitate voting on initiative and referendum?
- Proposed Amendment 6 from Ken Bell: Shall the Charter be amended to apply term limits to the County Councilmembers?
- Proposed Amendment 10 from Chet Dow: Shall Charter Section 8.23 be amended to prohibit the County Council from proposing any Charter amendment to Charter sections 2.12 or 2.13?
8.  NEW BUSINESS

Pending Amendment 12 from Jon Mutchler: Shall the Charter be amended to include a new section to require compliance with the Washington State Open Public Meetings Act and impose a civil penalty on violations of the Act?

Mutchler moved to forward his revised version to the next meeting as Old Business. The motion was seconded.

The Chair stated it would be scheduled on the next meeting as Old Business.

The Commission discussed the option of holding a formal public hearing on proposed Charter amendments.

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

Mutchler moved to forward to the next meeting as Old Business. The motion was seconded.

The Chair stated it would be scheduled on the next meeting as Old Business.

9.  ADJOURN

Joe Elenbaas moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded.

The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned 9:45 p.m.

The Commission approved these minutes on April 27, 2015

[Signatures]

Jill Nixon, Recording Secretary

Chet Dow, Commission Secretary  Ben Elenbaas, Commission Chair