

**State of Texas
County of Bexar
City of San Antonio**



**Meeting Minutes
Charter Review Commission**

Municipal Plaza Building
114 W. Commerce Street
San Antonio, Texas 78205

Commission Members

Bonnie Prosser Elder, Co-Chair | David Zammiello, Co-Chair
Elva Pai Adams | Josh Baugh | Luisa Casso | Mike Frisbie
Pat Frost | Frank Garza | Martha Martinez-Flores
Naomi Miller | Bobby Perez | Shelley Potter
Dwayne Robinson | Rogelio Saenz | Maria Salazar

Thursday, March 21, 2024

5:30 PM

Central Library

The Charter Review Commission convened a regular meeting at Central Library, 600 Soledad, Auditorium at 5:33 PM. City Clerk Debbie Racca-Sittre took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Members present:

PRESENT: 14 – Prosser Elder, Zammiello, Adams, Baugh, Casso, Garza, Frisbie, Frost, Miller, Perez, Potter, Robinson, Saenz, Salazar

ABSENT: 1 - Martinez-Flores

Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of the minutes from the Charter Review Commission meeting on March 4, 2024.

Member Robinson moved to Approve the minutes of the March 4, 2024 Charter Review Commission meeting. Member Perez seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Prosser Elder, Zammiello, Adams, Baugh, Garza, Frisbie, Frost, Miller, Perez, Potter, Robinson, Saenz, Salazar

Absent: Casso, Martinez-Flores
Public Comments

Individuals may sign up for live public comment the day of the meeting at the meeting location up to 15 minutes before the start of the meeting or prior using SASpeakUp up to 12:00pm the day of the meeting. Those unable to attend the meeting may submit written comment by calling 311 or using SASpeakUp at <https://www.saspeakup.com/CharterReviewCommission> until 4:00 PM on the business day before the meeting. Comments may be provided in English or Spanish and interpretation services will be provided with advanced notice. Voicemail comments can be left at 210.207.6889. Voice messages will be limited to 300 words transcribed. Comments that do not pertain to the agenda items will not be presented to the Commission.

Brett Finley, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the North San Antonio Chamber of Commerce stated that the Chamber strongly supported elimination of the salary and tenure cap for the City Manager.

Mark Wilson representing Early Matters San Antonio and the Up Partnership requested that the Commission add an annual set aside from the City's annual revenue growth dedicated to serving youth.

Ana Trevino representing Texas Rising opposed a raise for the City Manager and recommended keeping the City Manager term limits. She supported raising the pay for the lowest paid workers rather than the highest and recommended pay equity and at least \$59,000 per year for all employees.

Ananda Tomas spoke in support of raises for the City Council but noted that it should not be doubled. She noted that the pay raises should require elected leaders to be full time. Tomas recommended that voters decide City Manager pay and tenure and since it was approved by voters before, they should not be asked again. She opposed limits of the topics or signature requirements to call a special meeting.

Ryan Lugalina-Holland, Christina Martinez, and John Jacobs with the Up Partnership recommended dedicating 20 percent of the growth in the City of San Antonio's annual revenue compared to the previous year to additional grantmaking and initiatives dedicated to young people ages 0-24.

Jecoa Ross opposed adding information to the City Charter as to how or why Special Meetings would be called. He noted that in 2018, the voters passed a City Charter amendment limiting the City Manager's tenure and compensation.

Anthony Cruz spoke in support of increasing the terms of City Councilmembers from 2 years to 4 years but for a limit of three terms instead of two. Cruz supported expanding the City Council to 14 council districts. He also supported allowing City employees to participate in the City's election campaigns and moving elections to November of even years for more voter turnout.

Larry Edmond, representing the Up Partnership, supported designating funds for youth in the City Charter. Kathleen Vale from the Shearer Hills/Ridgeview Neighborhood provided her perspective from having served on the City of Austin's Charter Review Commission and advocated for meetings to be held throughout the City and recommended transparency and public engagement.

Kate Sanchez spoke in opposition to raising the City Manager's salary but supported raising City Council salaries to a reasonable amount and requiring them to be full time and not have other jobs. Sanchez opposed increasing the number of signatures required to call a special meeting or to limit the subjects.

Raymond Zavala spoke in opposition to increasing City Council pay and overall did not support any salary for the Mayor and City Council suggesting they should be volunteers providing community service. Zavala opposed providing funding to non-profits including Haven for Hope noting that he lived within three blocks of the homeless shelter. Zavala stated that the Ethics Review Board had not held elected officials accountable. He recommended lowering the number of signatures needed to force a recall of a bad City Councilmember.

Co-Chair Zammiello thanked the members of the public for providing their input.

Luisa Casso arrived at the meeting at 6:36 p.m. after Public Comment had been completed.

Briefing on the following items:

2. **Briefing and discussion of the preliminary recommendations from the following subcommittees:**
 - a. City Manager tenure and compensation
 - b. Council districts and redistricting

City Manager Tenure and Compensation Subcommittee Report:

City Manager Tenure and Compensation Subcommittee Chair Pat Frost reported that the Subcommittee had met five times, and he reviewed comparison information related to San Antonio metro area governmental entities' executive leadership as well as other cities of similar size, budget, and number of employees. He stated that the Subcommittee reviewed the City Manager's tenure cap of eight years and the compensation cap of 10 times the lowest paid full-time city employee. Frost thanked First Assistant City Attorney Elizabeth Provencio for assisting the Subcommittee and charter language expert Charles E. Zech with Denton, Navarro, Rocha, Bernal, Santee & Zech, PC. Frost noted that the Subcommittee reviewed those comparisons as well as how the City Manager's salary and tenure had been determined before the 2018 amendment.

Frost stated that the Subcommittee concluded that the City of San Antonio could not be competitive with a cap on City Manager tenure and compensation. He stated that the Subcommittee recommended that City Council have the authority and discretion to hire and determine the length of service of the City Manager so that market and competitive indicators could be considered.

DISCUSSION

Co-Chair Zammiello clarified that other local government entities set their chief executive officer's salary and tenure.

Potter asked if the Subcommittee had discussed what might have changed since 2018 when the salary and tenure cap were approved by voters. Frost stated that the Subcommittee felt that the 2018 vote was a referendum on the salary of former City Manager Sheryl Sculley. Potter placed

independent school districts (ISD) as a frame of reference noting that San Antonio area ISD superintendents did not have a cap on their tenure or compensation which were determined by a democratically elected school board.

Baugh commented that it was important to acknowledge that there would come a time that we might not inherit a person like Erik Walsh who was brought up through the ranks and was a committed native San Antonian who was willing to take the lower salary.

Perez asked if there were any large cities that tied compensation to the lowest paid employee. Frost stated that there were none. Perez also asked if the outside consultant considered number of employees as a factor in pay. Frost stated that the number of employees and budget size weighed heavily in the analysis. Perez pointed out that it took a supermajority vote of City Council to appoint the City Manager.

Garza asked if the Subcommittee had considered comparing other cities' lowest paid employees against their City Manager. Frost stated that the Subcommittee did not review lowest paid employee salaries, however, the good news was that City Manager Walsh's salary had increased because the lowest paid employees received increases.

Baugh asked if there was an indication that the lower salaries were increased only so that the City Manager's pay could be raised. Frost dismissed the concern asserting that the City needed to be competitive for all of its employees.

City Council Districts and Redistricting Subcommittee Report:

City Council Districts and Redistricting Subcommittee Chair Frank Garza reported that the Subcommittee had met four times and he reviewed comparison cities by population, size and form of local government, process for redistricting, and charter language. Garza stated that 2021 was the first time an independent redistricting advisory committee had been appointed in San Antonio. Garza provided a chart on the growth of San Antonio and reviewed the history of the single member districts in San Antonio.

Garza stated that the Subcommittee had concluded that there was no need to increase the number of council districts at this time but recommended a review every 10 years after release of the United States Census, however, increasing the number of council districts should be approved by voters and not automatically through the City Charter. Garza added that the Subcommittee recommended an increase in city council office resources to provide constituent services.

Based on experiences from the 2021 Redistricting Advisory Committee, community feedback and research into best practices, the Subcommittee concluded that a hybrid redistricting commission, versus an independent commission, would best serve San Antonio's redistricting process, according to Garza. Garza stated that the Subcommittee recommended adding Charter, Section 4A creating a hybrid redistricting commission composed of 11 total commission members (1 appointed by the mayor and 10 appointed by each Councilmember). He noted that all members must be registered to vote in their respective council district and could not be an elected official to any local, State or Federal office or their immediate family member nor an employee of the City of San Antonio, a Local Government Corporation governed by the City Council, or employed/supervised

by a Councilmember.

Garza stated that the Subcommittee recommended a process where the Redistricting Commission would create and present a plan to City Council. Under this process, the City Council could propose amending the recommended plan in an open meeting with a written explanation for the amendment. He noted that the proposed amendment would go back to the Commission for consideration. He indicated that if the amendment was adopted by the Commission, the amended plan could be adopted by City Council with a majority vote. Garza stated that if the City Council's amended plan was rejected by the Commission, then either: 1) the original recommended plan could be adopted by a majority vote of City Council, or 2) the City Council's amended plan could be approved by three-fourths (9 votes) of the members of the City Council.

Garza indicated that the Subcommittee put a timeline on the process adding that if final action was not taken by the City Council within 45 days after the recommended plan was presented to the City Council for adoption, the recommended plan of the Redistricting Commission would become the final districting plan for the city.

DISCUSSION

Adams asked if the Subcommittee considered the population size of the council districts. Garza stated that there needed to be no more than a 10% population difference between the largest and smallest council district and currently each council district had about 143,000 residents.

Potter clarified that the Subcommittee's recommendations were intended to be placed in the City Charter.

Robinson suggested excluding spouses of city employees, local government corporation employees, or employees of Councilmembers in their private businesses from serving on the Redistricting Committee. Baugh recommended ensuring transparency in the lobbying clause and asked whether the Subcommittee considered population growth triggers for adding council districts. Garza stated that the Subcommittee did not recommend automatic triggers for adding council districts noting that the budgets for the individual districts had grown enough to allow the district offices to have enough staff to respond to the needs of their residents. Perez commented that each council district had 7-9 full time employees to help serve their constituencies and service levels were discussed by the Subcommittee.

Prosser Elder asked about the number of commissioners and why they were only recommending 11. Garza stated that this was similar to other boards and commissions of the City and noted that having over 20 board members made deliberations more difficult. Casso asked how many staff each council district had and the population they served. Garza said that in 2021, the Redistricting Committee ensured that every council district was within 10% of 143,000 based on the 2020 Census; he was unsure how many staffers each council district had.

Co-Chair Prosser Elder summarized that all Subcommittees had presented their preliminary recommendations and noted that the Charter Review Commission (CRC) would have two meetings in April to continue to refine recommendations based on research, discussion, and feedback from the CRC and the public.

Check-in with CRC members:

Co-Chair Zammiello stated that this was also an opportunity to check-in to ensure that the CRC was on the right track to meet the timeline and deliverables and asked each commissioner to provide comments.

Potter asked about community engagement and requested an update on the outreach efforts to ensure neighborhood associations and residents were made aware of the meetings. Assistant Director of the Communications & Engagement Department, Laura Mayes, reported that neighborhood associations and stakeholder groups had received emails. She stated that the department had distributed flyers to all branch libraries, senior centers, and community centers. The department also paid for social media advertising, according to Mayes. Co-Chair Prosser Elder requested a full report on outreach activities at the next meeting.

Robinson stated that he had recommended that someone register to participate but they had difficulty with SA Speak Up. Robinson complimented the Co-Chairs on their direction to ensure that the Subcommittee Chairs kept their Subcommittee Members informed and engaged. Robinson felt that he needed to learn more about the work of the other Subcommittees in which he was not a member. He supported more outreach to the community and meetings in other parts of the City to get feedback and suggested putting ads in VIA busses.

Co-Chair Zammiello stated that he and Co-Chair Prosser Elder had made themselves available to speak at neighborhood meetings. Robinson recommended that the media speak to the Subcommittee Chairs about the recommendations coming from their Subcommittees to ensure consistency. Prosser Elder commented that everybody knew where the Central Library was located and if the CRC kept moving the meeting around, it might be more difficult for residents to find the meeting suggesting that consistency and certainty regarding location and technology were important considerations.

Salazar thanked the Co-Chairs for the structure they had laid out and appreciated the information that had been provided by the Subcommittees.

Co-Chair Zammiello outlined next steps and reminded Commissioners that the first week of May would be time for the CRC to come back with final proposals so the final discussion and action could be completed by the end of May 2024.

ADJOURN:

There being no further discussion and no objection to adjournment, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Approved

Bonnie Prosser Elder, Co-Chair

David Zammiello, Co-Chair

Respectfully Submitted

Debbie Racca-Sittre, City Clerk