

**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

**Monday, March 4, 2024**

**5:30 PM**

**Central Library**

The Charter Review Commission convened a regular meeting at Central Library, 600 Soledad, Auditorium at 5:32 PM. City Clerk Debbie Racca-Sittre took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Members present:

**PRESENT: 12** – Prosser Elder, Zammiello, Adams, Baugh, Casso, Frisbie, Martinez-Flores, Miller, Potter, Robinson, Saenz, Salazar

**ABSENT: 3** - Garza, Frost, Perez

**Approval of Minutes**

**1. Approval of the minutes from the Charter Review Commission meeting on February 22, 2024.**

Dwayne Robinson moved to make a correction to the draft minutes as his name was incorrectly listed. The correction was supported by unanimous consent of the members present.

Member Frisbie moved to Approve the minutes of the February 22, 2024 Charter Review Commission meeting. Member Salazar seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Prosser Elder, Zammiello, Adams, Baugh, Frisbie, Miller, Robinson, Saenz,

Salazar  
**Absent:** Casso, Garza, Frost, Martinez-Flores, Perez, Potter

Luisa Casso, Martha Martinez-Flores, and Shelly Potter arrived after the minutes had been approved.

## **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. Those unable to attend the meeting may submit written comment by calling 311 or using SASpeakUp 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.

Assistant City Attorney Iliana Castillo Daily introduced the process for Public Comment at the Charter Review Commission (CRC) meeting noting that individuals would be given three minutes and groups would be given up to nine minutes to speak. She added that American Sign Language and Spanish translation were available.

Anthony Cruz, student at UTSA, recommended increasing the size of the City Council to improve representation.

Lexi Johnson recommended including public interest in the calling of special meetings rule as many had come forward asking City Council to hold a special meeting to call for a cease fire in Gaza. April L., Jecoa Ross, and Antonio Allevato requested no change to the 3-signature memo special meeting process contending that City Council should talk about all issues and almost anything could be considered a municipal question.

Councilmember Courage recommended that the City Manager term limits and salary cap be changed to ten times the average salary of a City employee, rather than the lowest paid. Councilmember Courage supported moving City Council to two, four-year terms and supported an increase in pay for the Mayor and Councilmembers based on an index based on the average family income. Councilmember Courage recommended additional council districts.

David Adelman supported extension of City Council to two, four-year terms with elections staggered every two years and the elimination of term limits and salary limits for the City Manager.

Ryan Lugalia-Holton; Dalia Flores Contreras, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at City Education Partners (CEP); Denise Barkhurst and Kenneth Olson with Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Texas and Excel Beyond the Bell; Simon Salas President and CEO, Good Samaritan Community Services; and Christina Martinez Board, President of San Antonio Independent School District Board of Trustees recommended expanding the charge of the CRC to include the budget, and to dedicate 20% of the City's future revenue growth to young people.

Guillermo Vasquez, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Texas Area Field Services Director, spoke in support of allowing City employees to participate in political campaigns by allowing them to block walk, phone bank, and actively promote their chosen candidate.

Vicente Aguilar Castillo commented that the only the law of the land was that of the United States Constitution Article 6, Section 2 and 3.

Jeff Webster, President and CEO of the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce, thanked the CRC for their consideration and analysis.

Paul Lovell and Cassel Brice, Pastor for a deaf church in San Antonio requested more access to the City Council for deaf and hearing-impaired residents and recommended more advocacy and representation for the deaf community on the City Council including meeting with their advocate and representative Yenter Tu.

Adelita Cantu spoke in support of removing the City Manager's salary cap and tenure but noted that it should not apply to the current City Manager.

Raymond Zavala spoke in opposition to increasing City Council pay and overall did not support a salary for the Mayor and City Council. Zavala supported leaving the City Manager salary and tenure cap as it was. He also recommended two, three-year terms for Councilmembers and requested that more common folks be appointed on boards and commissions.

Co-Chair Zammiello thanked members of the public for taking the time to participate.

**Briefing on the following items:**

2. Briefing and discussion of the preliminary recommendations from the following subcommittees:
  - a. Ethics officer and other ethics revisions
  - b. City Council compensation and term length
  - c. Language modernization

Co-Chair Zammiello asked the Subcommittee chairs to present their preliminary recommendations and provided a roadmap for the process which included additional public input and a refinement period in April 2024, with finalization of the Subcommittee proposals in May 2024.

Co-Chair Zammiello outlined meeting protocols which included respect for others' opinions and time.

Potter asked that prohibition on employees participating in political campaigns be considered after the full charge was completed. She also asked that in future meetings, that anyone who makes a personal attack should stop.

Ethics Officer and Other Revisions Subcommittee Chair Mike Frisbie introduced the members of the Subcommittee, outlined the charge, and noted that the first few meetings had been focused on fact finding and discovery. The Subcommittee met five times, reviewed best practices, the City's

organizational structure, heard from two subject matter experts and performed research and analysis, according to Frisbie.

Frisbie reported that the Subcommittee concluded that there was no benefit to removing the Ethics Auditor position from the Office of the City Auditor, funding for the Ethics Review Board (ERB) was required by Ordinance but not by the City Charter, term limits prevented trained and effective individuals from continuing to serve on the ERB, the ERB should have the ability to review ethics violations for the entire tenure of elected officials, definitions of conflicts of interest should be expanded and the ERB did not have the ability to reject complaints that had been resolved by others.

The Ethics Officer and Other Revisions Subcommittee did not recommend creating an Ethics Officer position that was higher than the current Ethics Auditor, however, they recommended guaranteed funding for the ERB, removal of term limits for the ERB, to allow the ERB the ability to review ethics violations for the entire tenure of elected officials not just the past two years, to extend the definition of conflict of interest and to increase the discretion of the ERB to determine whether to accept or refuse complaints when the complaints were otherwise resolved.

Co-Chair Zammiello clarified that the City Auditor reported directly to the City Council and the Ethics Auditor reported to the City Auditor and he requested information about the education and training provided by the Ethics Auditor. Frisbie stated that the Ethics Auditor provided Ethics Code training to staff and elected officials.

City Council Compensation and Term Length Subcommittee Chair Luisa Casso introduced members of the Subcommittee, outlined the charge, research and benchmarking conducted of comparison cities. Casso stated that the Subcommittee interviewed four former City Councilmembers: Ana Sandoval, Council District 7 (2017-2021); William “Cruz” Shaw, Council District 2 (2017-2019); Rey Saldana, Council District 4 (2011-2019); and Reed Williams, Council District 8 (2009-2013).

The Subcommittee recommended indexing the salary of Councilmembers to the City of San Antonio median base salary of director level employees, with the mayor at 47 to 72% and the City Council at 39% to 65% according to Casso. Casso reported that the Subcommittee considered term length and limits and the implications of changes and recommended two, four-year terms for the Mayor and City Council starting in 2025, however, implementation of the recommendations was not yet defined which included whether or not to stagger terms.

Potter asked how the comparison cities were selected. Casso stated that the Subcommittee selected peer cities that were commonly used as comparisons. Baugh stated that Texas Cities were usually benchmarked along with San Diego and San Jose, California as they were very similar in size.

Language Modernization Subcommittee Chair Maria Salazar introduced members of the Subcommittee, outlined the charge, research, benchmarking and requested changes from City departments. Salazar stated that the Subcommittee recommended standardizing gender references, removing archaic terms and language superseded by State Law, and replace reference to “wards” with “Council Districts.” Additionally, the Subcommittee recommended that Section 11 Special meetings requested by three Councilmembers in writing, should be clarified so that the subject

should be a municipal question.

Salazar reported that the Subcommittee recommended revising Section 30 to conform with State Law related to recall elections and remove the term “indelible pencil” from Section 36 petitions. The Subcommittee also stated that the appointment of ERB Members should be revised to be the same as other City Boards. Salazar added that City Clerk changes to Sections 16 and 17 would consider that most documents were saved online, and the City Clerk would administer the State of Texas approved Oath of Office.

Salazar stated that in addition, the Language Modernization Subcommittee supported the Finance Department’s recommendation that the Finance Director be bonded, and delinquent taxes conform to State Law. Salazar stated that the Subcommittee supported renaming the Corporation Court to Municipal Court and updating resident requirements for Judges as well as expanding the definition of Police Officers in Section 58. Salazar stated that more recommendations could be forthcoming after more discussion and public comment.

Casso asked how the ballot would be broken down. Assistant City Attorney Camila Kunau explained that the breakdown of all changes would be included in the Ordinance ordering the election and on the draft charter which would be available at the polling sites, but the ballot language would be more general. Baugh asked whether there were any legal implications to using a plural pronoun “they/their” versus the singular “he/she.” Kunau did not see any potential issues but welcomed additional review.

Robinson supported City employees being able to participate in political activities. Co-Chair Zammiello clarified that the discussion on this issue needed to occur after the Subcommittee work on the charges was complete.

#### ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further discussion and no objection to adjournment, the meeting was adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

**Approved**

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***Bonnie Prosser Elder, Co-Chair***  
**Respectfully Submitted**

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***David Zammiello, Co-Chair***

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***Debbie Racca-Sittre, City Clerk***