

CITY OF SACRAMENTO
Charter Review Committee
Town Hall Meetings
Community Input

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

- Mayor/Council Term Limits (2 on – 2 off)
- No term limits
- Instant run-off elections
- Councilmembers should be F/T
- Ok for other sources of income

Thursday, September 24, 2009

Questions (Q) /Answers (A) /Concerns (C)

Q: CRC was reported in the Bee stating that they have recommended no changes

A: FALSE: CRC has recommended slight changes

Q: Question about 9th Council District being created w/Strong Mayor

A: May be changes to Council Districts due to census, but, yes, 9th District would be created w/Strong Mayor (legal point of contention is timing)

Q: Fresno – why did Council/Mayor felt they made a mistake w/their changes?

A: Mayor/Council did not communicate before making decision

Q: Is there a timeline to veto (Mayor) and a timeline for override (Council)?

A: There is a timeline, will follow up w/more information

Questions (Q) /Answers (A) /Concerns (C)

Q: What is the difference between Mayor appointing City Manager and the City Manager appointing exempt employees?

A: 800 people would report to a political figure

Q: Were there any cities of similar population to Sacramento that were studied?

A: Fresno, San Diego (will follow up with list a the end of Town Hall tonight)

Q: Can Council revise budget under Strong Mayor?

A: Yes

Q: Why was the decision made not to include term limits?

A: Decision may have been made based on the State's term limits

Q: Why aren't there term limits in the City when its present in every other level of government?

A: Public financing of elections

Lobbyists, etc. could potentially have a lot of influence

Option of "sitting out" every few years and then run for election again

Q: Why would implementing a Strong Mayor system take so much time?

A: City staff changes, departments reorganized, etc., changes job description of Mayor

Questions (Q) /Answers (A) /Concerns (C)

Q: Why would Strong Mayor proposal if passed, go into effect in 45 days rather than 4 years?

A: Just the way it was written, maybe so existing Mayor could keep position
Wouldn't be time for redistricting (would have both vote and veto powers)

C: Census is in 2010, but takes time to redistrict (2012), would redistrict after Strong Mayor put into place

Q: City Charter is very generic, will it be reinvestigated to be more specific (building requirements, etc.)

A: Will recommend to Council to reinvestigate
As time goes by, more changes may need to be made to the City Charter
More detail can equal less flexibility

Q: Will recommendations be available online?

A: Yes

C: Concerns about public being educated about what is occurring

C: Concerns that the CRC decisions were made too quickly due to the need to address Strong Mayor on ballot

Q: Can Council revise/go deeper into changes?

A: Yes

Thursday, September 24, 2009 (continued)

Questions (Q) /Answers (A) /Concerns (C)

Q: Concerns about date/time of this meeting – many Natomas residents are at another meeting

A: There are seven more meetings – had to schedule these before end of November

C: City Organization Chart would be helpful as a handout

C: Concerns about the other cities that were reviewed not being close in population to Sacramento

Wednesday, September 30, 2009

Questions (Q) /Answers (A) /Concerns (C)

Q: Will the Charter Committee put in their own initiative?

Q: Can the Council place another initiative on the ballot?

A: Yes

Q: What happens to the City Manager if strong mayor initiative passes?

Q: Is it true the majority Council can be over-ruled by the “Strong” Mayor veto?

Q: Is it a 2/3 vote to over-ride or an absolute “6” votes out of 9?

Q: Is removal of staff (Charter Officers) without City Council approval?

Questions (Q) /Answers (A) /Concerns (C)

- Q: What is the special meeting notice requirement?
- A: 24 hours
- Q: Who should appoint or remove City Manager?
- Q: Is there a sound rationale for changing how the City Manager is hired/fired?
- Q: Is there some value in continuity of City Manager's?
- C: Current proposal – Mayor can uni-laterally remove City Manager with Council approval
- C: Political patronage can run city with current initiative proposed
- C: If it ain't broken don't fix it
- Q: Certified initiative – would the Mayor have additional staff to develop budget?
Does it bypass the City Manager?
- A: Mayor is not legally mandated to use City Manager assistance to develop budget
- C: Much more concerned with certified initiative
- C: Adding Term Limits – (4-5 people for; 9-10 against; 2 abstain)
- C: Don't like changing government without 1st electing officials
- C: Typical pattern of implementation at next Mayoral election (4 years)
- C: Pros + Cons analysis of each of the models
- Q: Do most CA Cities have term limits?
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Questions (Q) /Answers (A) /Concerns (C)

- Q: Within the Town Hall meetings, have there been any public comments brought forward on the strong Mayor initiative?
- Q: If a strong mayor is voted upon and approved why couldn't language be written into the charter to requiring the mayor to provide access to the public as currently there is at council meetings?
- A: The public currently has the opportunity to talk directly to the mayor during the public comment period of the meeting but if the strong mayor initiative is passed as currently written no requirements are there for the mayor to participate at council or even be accessible.
- Q: What would happen if the Mayor was not executive member of the council? I.e. if they wanted to remove CM
- Q: Should we search for elected official who will become a chief executive officer?
- Q: What is the turnover/tenure of a CM as related to a both a strong mayor or current structure of mayor?
- Q: There appears to be a lack of teeth for the council members if a strong mayor is approved. How does this impact Sacramento?
- Q: What could be the impact of the mayor setting the priorities of the budget for the City? Has this been part of any of the discussions?
- Q: With the presentations provided related to term limits, has there been any mayor that has come back after serving their two – four year term limits, taking the required four year break in service, then re-running for the mayor seat when again eligible?
- Q: With the current part-time council status, how has this been interjected within the current conversations of the committee recommendations?
- Q: How does full-time vs. part-time impact the current councilmember or elected individuals in the future?
- Q: There needs to be a way to tie full-time councilmember to term limits.
- Q: Will there be another round of Town Hall meetings come November when the report is ready?

Questions (Q) /Answers (A) /Concerns (C)

- Q: Will there be any type of debate set up to discuss the initiative?
- Q: The community in general has concerns that if a strong mayor is approved the residents within the neighborhoods will loose their ability to be represented at a more localized level as they currently are.
- Q: How will you as a committee get this information out to the public on the proposed recommendations?
- Q: Counter ballot measure? Separate ballot measure? Competing ballot measure? Is this a possible step that the council will take upon recommendations being brought forward from the committee?
- Q: If there were two separate initiatives on the ballot and each of them where approved, which initiative would be considered the winner?
- Q: Why is there such a rush for this information to be put together and presented back to the council?
- Q: With no counter imitative on the current June ballot, there is concern that if voters aren't happy with the current structure they will vote to approve the imitative since it is seen as a change to what they perceive isn't working.
- Q: The committee appointees can be seen as just a reflection of the councilmember that appointed them. Has it ever been considered to have an outside agency/group do the research?

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Monday, October 5, 2009

Questions (Q) /Answers (A) /Concerns (C)/Information (I)

- I: Clarified that Committee is making recommendation to Council. The majority of the Council can decide to put an additional initiative on the ballot, do nothing, etc.
- Q: In Strong Mayor Initiative (SMI) who chairs the Council?
- A: A Council President would be selected by the Council to Chair the Council.
- Q: Question about 9th Council District being created w/Strong Mayor
- A: May be changes to Council Districts due to census, but, yes, 9th District would be created w/Strong Mayor (legal point of contention is timing)
- I: Redistricting will need to occur prior to election of 9th Council District Member. From 2010 to some time in 2012 Mayor would fill the 9th Council District seat until redistricting is complete and 9th Council member is elected.
- Q: What does veto mean?
- A: Veto means Mayor can say “no” to a Council action. Then 2/3 of Council can vote to override the veto (similar to federal government)
- C: Agree that City Manager should not be appointed by Mayor and should be the same as other Charter Officers
- C: Don’t change what is not broken.
- Q: Is there anything in the Strong Mayor Initiative (SMI) that requires recruitment of a professional for City Manager?
- A: No but the current charter does not require that either.
- C: What is “cause” for removal of City Manager under Committee recommendation? Would that include be non-responsive to the community? Right now, if I have issues with the City Manager I contact my Council member and get it corrected.
- C: Current City Council has too much power and is ineffective. Need a strong Mayor to get things done.

- C: Consider an alternative to current Committee recommendation – City Council would recommend candidate/s for City Manager and the Mayor would select/appoint the City Manager.
- C: Some of the policy decisions made by the City Manager and their implementation caused problems for poor families (e.g. identifying five Charter Schools in SCUSD)
- Q: Do changes in Mayor under the Strong Mayor Initiative result in changes in key city positions when a new mayor takes office impacting continuity of running the City?
- A: Generally yes.
- C: Clarify that under the SMI the Mayor can veto Council changes to Mayor's Proposed Budget and then Council would need to have 2/3 vote to override.
- C: Term limits are not needed those currently elected represent the majority
- C: Some local politicians use Council/Mayor positions as a stepping stone to higher office. Having local term limits would encourage more of that as they look for next position to hold.
- C: Term limits can work for or against. A lame duck office holder has nothing to lose in not acting on behalf of the community.
- C: There should be a comparison of costs for implementing SMI and Committee recommendations. Voter should know what the cost impacts are.
- C: How are you going to explain impacts and differences to voters in simple terms?
- C: If there is going to be a major change then community should have an opportunity to be part of the process and provide input on developing a proposal.
- C: The current SMI is based on current Mayor and does not transcend personality.
- C: Recommend that an alternative measure be placed on the ballot.

Wednesday, October 7, 2009

Questions (Q) /Answers (A) /Concerns (C)/Information (I)

- C: How long would it take for the redistricting if the strong mayor initiative passes?
- A: Redistricting will occur as part of the census process. If the SMI passes, then a ninth district will be included in the redistricting. The process will likely take until 2012 to complete.
- C: Is Sacramento a small town? Is there a negative connotation?
- C: Do not have a structure that supports special interests.
- C: Term limits are not working.
- C: Have a transition implementation with new election. Don't tie to personality.

Thursday, October 8, 2009

Questions (Q) /Answers (A) /Concerns (C)/Information (I)

- Q: How long do Charter Officers serve?
- A: At will of Council-no specific terms.
- Q: How long have we been a Charter City and what were we before?
- A: Charter Cities have greater control over local affairs – home rule.
- Q: Does Mayor set Council agenda?
- A: Mayor Chairs meeting but any Councilmember can request items be placed on agenda.
- Q: How does it affect me as a Citizen if we have a strong mayor form of government?
- Q: Does Mayor have veto?
- A: Not currently but under SMI yes.

Q: Who runs Council meeting under SMI?

A: Council identifies President to run meetings.

Q: How do you change Charter?

A: Signature initiative or ballot measure by council.

Q: What would Mayor do under SMI?

A: Takes on more of City Manager's role Chief Executive Officer.

Q: What is need to fix/correct 9th district issue?

A: Another Charter change potentially or some other action yet unknown.

C: Consensus was style in "old days" – SMI gives a spark in City.

Q: Does Charter Review Committee appointment recommendation mean new City Manager when new Mayor?

A: Not necessarily – SMI – Likely. Consider requiring 2/3 vote for confirmation or termination of City Manager under recommendation.

C: Under current system encourages citywide "loyalty" alternative would make us go backward to back room.

Q: What is the problem we are trying to solve?

C: When Charter amendment for full time Mayor was approved there were expectations.

Q: Are the Charter Review Committee's recommendations going to be an alternative initiative?

A: Up to Council.

Q: What group is behind SMI? Why needed?

A: Hasn't been explained.

C: If problem is efficiency show where thow will be addressed.

C: Efficiency shouldn't take precedent over representation.

C: Town Halls are not lobbying effort – information about Committee process and tentative recommendations.

C: Make sense to have City Manager continue to make exempt appointments.

C: If Council doesn't get 2/3 vote override veto than Mayors veto budget stands.

C: Consider having Mayor propose budget rather than just priorities polices for inclusion in budget.

Q: Does the SMI require Mayor to submit budget in a reasonable timeframe to Council?

A: Yes

Q: If there are competing initiatives which one wins?

A: One with a majority and most votes.