

CITY OF PORTLAND CHARTER COMMISSION SUBCOMMITTEE CHARTER – CITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Background and Purpose

The Charter Commission (Commission) was appointed on December 3, 2020, by the Portland City Council in accordance with the Portland Charter's requirement that a Commission be convened at least once every 10 years (Portland Charter 13-301) to review and recommend amendments to the Charter. The Charter Commission has the authority to delegate work to subcommittees, which will be charged with studying priority issues identified by the Charter Commission and drafting proposed Charter amendments for full Charter Commission consideration.

Subcommittee Charge

This subcommittee is charged with developing recommendations for the full Charter Commission on Portland's **city council elections**, specifically:

- What should the constituency of city councilors be, e.g. city-wide, district-based, hybrid?
- How many city councilors should there be?
- What form of voting should we use to elect city council members?
- How should we time city council elections?

With the full Commission's approval, the subcommittee may choose to address additional questions.

Timeline & Scope of Work

The Charter Commission's timeline is built around a November 8, 2022 election. To qualify for the November 2022 ballot, Charter amendments must be done by early July 2022. We anticipate the committee work to align with the below timeline, but nothing prevents the subcommittee completing some or all of its work earlier.

- **Committee inception through December 2021.** Evaluate and synthesize data and information. The committee will study the issue, meet with stakeholders to gather input for Charter amendments, and serve as liaisons to provide stakeholders with information, materials, and tools to engage.
- **January-February 2022.** Draft proposed charter amendments. The committee will develop a position and a Charter amendment proposal for each of the issue items along with a written rationale.
- **March 2022.** Determine final proposals. The Charter Commission will consider proposals and decide which to move forward.
- **April-May 2022.** Gather final input. The Charter Commission will gather additional public input on final proposals. The Charter Commission may request the committee make changes to the proposals based on public input.
- **June 2022.** Report findings to City Council. The Charter Commission will present its final Charter amendments to City Council. The Charter Commission may request the committee assist in the presentation of its findings.

Subcommittee Membership

Charter Commissioners will comprise voting members of the subcommittee. The Commission may engage non-Commissioners in the work of the subcommittee.

Charter Commissioners on the subcommittee will designate at least one member of the subcommittee to serve as chairperson of the committee or may elect to designate two members to serve as co-chairpersons of the committee.

Meeting Frequency

- **Terms of service.** Committee members are appointed for 13-month terms. The committee will be dissolved upon issuance of the Charter Commission's report to City Council.
- **Attendance.** The committee will meet no less than monthly. In the interest of maintaining continuity in discussions, members commit to attending all meetings unless they are prevented from doing so by reasonable excuse. Committee members will notify staff ahead of meetings if they are unable to be present, and will read materials and request briefings from staff on information presented, deliberations and outcomes of the meeting.

Voting and Decision-Making

- Only Charter Commissioners may vote.
- Subcommittees require a simple majority to conduct business. Subcommittees will use modified consensus decision making. If consensus cannot be reached, the affirmative vote of a simple majority of those present – fifty percent (50%) plus one (1) – will prevail.
- The subcommittee will make decisions using modified consensus. If no consensus reached, roll call vote. Minutes will reflect each Commissioner's position.
- In the interest of encouraging robust discussion and full participation, absentee voting and proxy voting is prohibited.

Working Agreements

The subcommittee will utilize the same working agreements as decided by the full Charter Commission. These working agreements are as follows:

As a Commission, we agree to approach this work with honesty, openness and willingness to work together. This includes building trust and assuming good intentions in others and ensuring that our behavior supports a successful process. We will work with each other and the project staff team to address issues as they arise, utilize tools to ensure clear communication and robust participation, and meet the communication needs of members. This set of working agreements will help guide our process and will be a living document that we can revisit as needed (with the agreement of a majority of the group).

Our expectations of each other include:

1. In discussions, challenge ideas rather than individuals
2. Approach different opinions with curiosity, seek to understand

3. Keep the needs and concerns of the local community and the larger region at the forefront of the work
4. Arrive on time and prepared (to the best of your ability). Let the group know if you are unable to attend a meeting
 - a. The facilitator and co-chairs will aim to incorporate tools for ‘breathers’
5. Keep multi-tasking to a minimum
6. Keep focus on the objectives of the meetings, utilize facilitators to note additional topics for discussion
7. Honor the decisions of the group
8. Contribute to the overall success of the group by finding ways to participate that best meets your needs
9. Embrace conflict and work with your fellow Commissioners, staff and the facilitator to find ways to give each other feedback
 - a. The facilitator and co-chairs will aim to incorporate various feedback tools
10. Use “I” statements

Additional Roles and Responsibilities

- **Chair:** A chairperson (or co-chairs) will be selected to provide leadership for the subcommittee. The Chair(s) support the facilitator’s role to lead discussions and keep the committee to time/task, collaborate with staff and facilitator on meeting agendas, and encourage modified consensus decision making.
- **City staff:** Staff will support subcommittee meetings, including scheduling and hosting meetings (expected to be virtual, but potentially moving to in-person meetings). Staff will also provide expertise and information as needed to support subcommittee discussion and deliberation.
- **Facilitator:** A third-party facilitator will assist the subcommittee to ensure that meetings are efficient and meaningful. The facilitator will be responsible for ensuring that meeting protocols are followed, everyone has an opportunity to participate, and setting an agenda for the meetings.

Accountability

- All committee meetings and materials will be available and accessible to the public, and appropriate notice will be given of the time, place and agenda of each meeting. Committee meetings will be recorded.
- Committee members are considered public officials under Oregon law and are responsible for complying with provisions in Oregon law.
- In addition to the public comment received at full Commission meetings, the committee may take written and verbal public comment.