City of Portland
Ad Hoc Committee Agenda

Charter Commission Procedures Committee, October 12, 2021 at 6:00 PM

1. Call the Meeting to Order
   a. a.
   Due to the existence of an "emergency or urgent issue", the Charter Commission Committees will conduct this meeting by remote methods/technology at the Zoom link provided below, in accordance with the requirements of 1 M.R.S. section 403 -B and the Charter Commission Remote Participation Policy.

   You are invited to a Zoom webinar.
   When: Oct 12, 2021 06:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
   Topic: Charter Commission Procedures Committee

   Please click the link below to join the webinar:
   https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81929006440?pwd=TFhqZlY5MkpPYnMzUDRjUWFQWmJYUT09
   Passcode: 587020
   Or One tap mobile :
   US: +16465588656,,81929006440#,,,,*587020# or +13017158592,,81929006440#,,,,*587020#
   Or Telephone:
   Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):
   US: +1 646 558 8656 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 720 707 2699 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799
   Webinar ID: 819 2900 6440
   Passcode: 587020
   International numbers available: https://us06web.zoom.us/u/klb7dm8ZN

2. Approval of the prior meeting minutes
   a. Approval of the September 28, 2021 meeting minutes.
3. Discussion of possible land acknowledgment in Preamble to the Charter
   a. Draft of revised Preamble
   Guest Speakers

      - Eamon Dundon
      - Kim Cook
      - Jack o"Brien

4. Discussion of recommendations re compensation for elected officials on the City Council and School Committee

    a. Spreadsheet of City Council salaries, in progress:

5. New Business

6. Adjournment

Charter Commission Procedures Committee, September 28, 2021 at 6:00 PM
Minutes

1. **Call to Order**

Meeting called to order at 6:01pm.

2. **Approval of the prior meeting minutes**

Moved by Dory Waxman
Seconded by Zack Barowitz
Unanimous vote

3. **Guest speaker on topic of compensation for elected/appointed officials**

Chair Washburn couldn't get guest speakers, so she researched salaries for elected officials. Jim K couldn't come due to a medical procedure. Chair Washburn has asked him to tell us whether there are any legal limits to compensation of city officials. Jim K said there wasn't, besides what voters and/or the city council would approve.

Chair Washburn also asked about a revision process for the charter commission. There is a chapter of state law that governs this area: we can amend the charter per state statutory rules, but substantive changes require the creation of a charter commission.

Chair Washburn surveyed city council salaries and collated into a spreadsheet officials' salaries for every states' biggest cities, listing average salaries. Portland ranks among lowest for part-time city councilors, but it's on par with cities with similar populations. Published research on this issue is rare. Chair Washburn noticed an upward trend through time in councillors' salaries. She favors a higher salaries to reduce corruption and to draw councillors from a larger pool.

Commissioner Barowitz: workload is important in determining councilor salaries.

Waxman: size of cities and their economic situation is also important.

Kebede: can we add a column (to the spreadsheet) for tax base and another column for budget?

Waxman: benefits and retirement plan are important to consider as part of the picture of officials' compensation.

4. **Guest speaker on other procedures topics**

Postponed for a future date.

5. **Preamble**

Commissioner Barowitz: change the word “welfare” to “well-being.”

Washburn: I like “welfare” for its more economic, expansive connotation.

Kebede: I like “welfare”.

Waxman: abandon “welfare” and replace it with “wellness.” “Welfare” has a negative connotation.

Washburn: what about “benefit” instead of “welfare”?

Barowitz: What about “commonweal” or “weal”?

Waxman: reads Merriam-Webster's definition of “welfare.” Notes that there is a definition that encompasses financial assistance or government benefits; notes that we don't want our preamble to imply an inherent entitlement to those things.

Washburn: wasn't intending to describe public assistance.

Barowitz: what about a land acknowledgement in the preamble?

Washburn: has asked native American leaders whether it would be meaningful. Waiting to hear back. Preamble will be an open issue until then.

Barowitz: what about “common good” instead of welfare?

Waxman: I will adjourn this discussion for now, but we will continue editing the preamble's language before we pick it up again at a future meeting.

6. **New Business**

    Barowitz: let's review our work plan and priorities.

    Waxman: report out on what she has gathered so far.

Looked at how the city departments do outreach to get citizen input. Researched the city website and her own archives. There are about seventeen departments that the city manager oversees. School department kept out of this.

There are about 75 roads (metaphorically speaking) that make these departments accessible to the Portland resident. We could, as a city, perhaps do a better job informing city residents about how to reach departments. You can write to standing city committees is one way to reach departments. You can your counselor.

Empowering neighborhood association is an important thing we can do as a city.

Barowitz: Governance committee is looking a bit at how the city communicates with residents. Would like for us to talk about conflicts of interest.

Communications between staff and officials: complicates issue that doesn't strike him as very pressing.

7. **Public Comment**

Phil Steele, Public Comment: Portland, Oregon's charter has a provision that says, “there will be a charter commission every ten years.” State law would allow this.

Regarding the preamble, re-insert the word, “effectiveness.” And mention “responsiveness” and terminology about the city government being “representative.” We need those three concepts in the preamble.

Karen Snyder, Public Comment: please include the sources of the data for the spreadsheet in the spreadsheet. City budget and tax base need to be added to spreadsheet. I can't find meeting minutes. City needs to post public comments for past two weeks.

Waxman: I will create a map of departments and how they do outreach to the voters.

Barowitz: city councilors receive some combination of health benefits

8. **Adjourn**

Waxman moves to adjourn. Barowitz seconds. Vote unanimous.

Action Items:

1. Commissioner Washburn to add a column in the document for tax base and another for budget.
2. Commissioner Washburn to get back to the group at the next meeting with clarity about land acknowledgements.
3. Commissioner Kebede to research models for managing communications between staff and elected and appointed officials.
4. Barowitz to bring a charter amendment about conflicts of interest.
5. Barowitz to bring a charter amendment about citizen initiatives.
6. Washburn to look into the precise nature of Portlands' city councillors compensation.

Preamble

Current version (adopted 2010)

We, the People of Portland, Maine, establish this Charter to secure the benefits of local governance and to provide for the general health, safety and welfare of our community. In so doing, we build a government that meets the needs of the people it serves and whose character it reflects. Our government shall further cooperation, encourage leadership, solicit our input and support the active participation of our residents in their governance. Our government shall be effective and accountable and shall promote equal rights and representative democracy. Our government shall provide public education that enables all residents to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to participate fully in Portland's civic, intellectual, cultural and economic life, in order to enrich and strengthen our community and our common future.

Proposed new version

We, the people of Portland, Maine, establish this Charter to secure the benefits of local governance and to provide for the health, safety, and common good of all people in our community. In so doing, we seek to build a representative, responsive, and effective government that encourages leadership and participation from all members of that community, with an emphasis on accountability, equity, and inclusion, and a system of public education that supports Portland's civic, intellectual, cultural, and economic life.

State	Largest city	Population	Median	Number of
Alabama	Huntsville	243,054	$55,305	5
Alaska	Anchorage	291,247	$84,928	11
Arizona	Phoenix	3,331,925	$57,459	8
Arkansas	Little Rock	202,591	$51,485	10
California	Los Angeles	10,014,009	$62,142	15
Colorado	Denver	715,222	$68,592	13
Connecticut	Bridgeport	148,654	$46,662	20
Delaware	Wilmington	70,898	$45,032	12
District of Columbia	Washington	689,545	$86,420	13
Florida	Jacksonville	949,611	$54,701	19
Georgia	Atlanta	498,715	$59,948	16
Hawaii	Honolulu	345,064	$71,645	9
Idaho	Boise	386,541	$60,035	5
Illinois	Chicago	2,746,388	$58,247	50
Indiana	Indianapolis	887,642	$47,873	25
Iowa	Des Moines	214,133	$53,525	6
Kansas	Wichita	397,532	$52,620	6
Kentucky	Louisville	246,161	$53,436	26
Louisiana	New Orleans	383,997	$41,604	7
Maine	Portland	68,408	$60,467	8
Maryland	Baltimore	585,708	$50,379	15
Massachusetts	Boston	675,647	$71,115	13
Michigan	Detroit	639,111	$30,894	9
Minnesota	Minneapolis	429,954	$62,583	13
Mississippi	Jackson	153,701	$51,657	7
Missouri	Kansas City	508,090	$54,194	12
Montana	Billings	114,532	$59,656	11
Nebraska	Omaha	486,051	$60,092	7
Nevada	Las Vegas	641,903	$56,354	7
New Hampshire	Manchester	115,644	$60,711	14
New Jersey	Newark	311,459	$35,199	9
New Mexico	Albuquerque	564,559	$52,911	9
New York	New York	8,804,190	$63,998	51
North Carolina	Charlotte	874,579	$62,817	12
North Dakota	Fargo	125,990	$55,551	5
Ohio	Columbus	905,748	$53,745	7
Oklahoma	Oklahoma City	681,054	$55,557	9
Oregon	The Other Portland	652,503	$71,005	5
Pennsylvania	Philadelphia	1,603,797	$45,927	17
Rhode Island	Providence	660,741	$58,974	15

South Carolina	Charleston	408,235	$68,438	12
South Dakota	Sioux Falls	192,517	$59,912	9
Tennessee	Nashville	689,447	$59,828	40
Texas	Houston	3,464,066	$52,338	16
Utah	Salt Lake City	199,723	$60,676	7
Vermont	Burlington	44,743	$51,394	12
Virginia	Virginia Beach	459,470	$76,610	11
Washington	Seattle	1,139,259	$92,263	9
West Virginia	Charleston	48,864	$43,344	27
Wisconsin	Milwaukee	939,489	$41,838	15
Wyoming	Cheyenne	65,132	$64,598	9

Notes

Population totals are from 2020 US Census estimates

Median household income numbers are from U.S. Census, 2015-2019 American Community

Councilor pay	Councilor pay	Notes
$38,094	68.88%	
$31,096	36.61%	Assembly members also get $250
$61,599	107.21%	
$11,060	21.48%	
$207,000	333.11%	
$94,236	137.39%	
$9,000	19.29%	
$28,205	62.63%	
$140,161	162.19%	
$52,276	95.57%	
$60,300	100.59%	
$64,008	89.34%	
$26,430	44.02%	
$130,238	223.60%	
$11,400	23.81%	plus $112/meeting and
$28,870	53.94%	$13.88/hour
$49,026	93.17%	considered PT job
$9,600	17.97%	councilors also receive expense
$93,054	223.67%	
$6,812	11.27%	
$69,000	136.96%	
$103,500	145.54%	
		council is full-time, meets every
$82,749	267.85%	business day
$106,101	169.54%	
$25,000	48.40%	
$70,718	130.49%	
$12,000	20.12%	
$40,459	67.33%	
$46,681	82.84%	
$5,000	8.24%	
$95,000	269.89%	
		council pay set by independent
$30,600	57.83%	Citizens Salary Commission
$148,500	232.04%	
$19,809	31.53%	
$50,935	91.69%	
$42,414	78.92%	
$12,000	21.60%	
$110,802	156.05%	
$130,000	283.06%	
$18,765	31.82%	

$26,124	38.17%	
$19,612	32.73%	
$23,100	38.61%	
$62,983	120.34%	
$35,925	59.21%	
$5,000	9.73%	
$28,000	36.55%	
$129,686	140.56%	
		$250 per meeting, must attend
$6,000	13.84%	meeting to get paid
$73,222	175.01%	
$12,000	18.58%	

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