

MINUTES
UMATILLA COUNTY CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE
Organizational Meeting of March 6, 2018
5:30 p.m., Room 114, Umatilla County Courthouse
Pendleton, Oregon

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Committee Members Present: Chair Michele Grable; Vice-Chair Don Miller; Sally Anderson Hansell; Jerry Baker; Genna Banica; Dan Dorran; Mark Gomolski; Jennifer McClure Spurgeon

Absent: Kim Puzey

County Counsel: Doug Olsen

Members and Guests Present: None

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CALL TO ORDER

The meeting began at 5:30 p.m.

1. Introductions - The committee members briefly introduced themselves and provided information on their backgrounds and interest in the Charter.

2. Committee Charge - Each of the committee members was provided a notebook, which included a copy of the Home Rule Charter of Umatilla County, a sheet listing the history of the charter, 1992 Charter Study Review Report, 1994 Charter Review Report, 2000 Charter Review Report, 2004 Charter Review Report, and charters from the other 8 Oregon counties under Home Rule. Doug Olsen welcomed the members and thanked them for their participation in the committee. The Board of Commissioners is providing the committee with broad authority in its review of the charter, and the method the committee wants to take in its review. Previous committees have conducted interviews of commissioners, directors, and others, as part of the review process.

3. Review of Charter History - Doug Olsen went over the history of the Umatilla County Home Rule Charter. There had been two previous attempts to adopt a charter, in 1964 and in 1974, which failed to be passed by the voters. After a county long range study recommended a charter, a Charter Study Committee was formed and drafted a Home Rule Charter. It was submitted to the voters and passed November 3, 1992. As required by the study committee, another option was submitted to the voters in 1996 that a county manager be appointed with five volunteer commissioners. This amendment was defeated.

As required by the charter, a committee was appointed in 1994 to review the charter. No changes to the charter were recommended by the committee, but a number of other recommendations were made and implemented. Another review was done in 2000, and again in 2004. The 2004 study recommended some amendments to the charter - elimination of dated language, adding compensation review committee and four year period for reviews. The amendments were passed by the voters in 2005. Another committee was appointed in 2008, but no record of meetings or recommendations can be found. There has not been a review since that time. When questioned why, this was due to changes in

staff and commissioners. It was the consensus that the charter should be reviewed as required, and not have similar delays.

4. Election of Chair and Other positions.

- A. Chair - Sally Anderson Hansell moved that Michele Grable be appointed chair of the committee. Seconded by Jerry Baker. Ms. Grable said that before elected, the others should know of what direction she would be taking. All would be asked why the person is interested in serving on the committee, and if has any agenda. Ms. Grable would envision the review process to include several stages: (1) Education and what the committee is doing; (2) Hearing and gathering of information, by interviews with commissioners, department heads, public and other input; (3) Discussion and making of recommendation. The consensus was in support of this approach with Ms. Grable as Chair. All voted in favor of electing Ms. Grable as committee chair.
- B. Vice-Chair - Mr. Anderson Hansell moved to appoint Don Miller as vice-chair; seconded by Mr. Baker. All voted in favor of electing Mr. Miller as committee vice-char
- C. Other positions. Dan Dorran felt that the minute taker should be independent and not be a committee member, to allow for full participation. County staff should be used. Doug Olsen said that he was present to be of any assistance and would be able to take minutes. The consensus of the committee was that this will be sufficient for now, and that all future meetings should be recorded.

The Chair presided over the remainder of the meeting

5. Member Perspective

The Chair asked each member why the person is interested in serving on the charter review committee. Ms. Anderson Hansell that she was there for learning, about the process and to see what was best for the county now and in the future. She was concerned that commissioner candidates be knowledgeable of what is required of the position. She wanted to see a good caliber of person in the elected office, and in administration, budget and long range planning, to make sure the county can face any catastrophe. Her agenda was to protect citizens from catastrophe.

Mr. Doran stated that he did not have any agenda. His passion is to be involved in the community. He previously had worked on home rule charter in another state. He was open to ideas and input from others, and from other counties. His one concern was that all areas of the county be assured of representation within the Charter. With trends and advances in technology, the county must remain current.

Mr. Miller said that he did not have any agenda. He was there as a volunteer for representation of the Milton-Freewater area. He was there with a blank slate and ready to learn.

Mark Gomoliski was part of the committee to learn about the county and to know more. He had been in the county for a while and wanted to know where county was going. The county needed to operate efficiently for the benefit of all.

Genna Banica agreed with the others. She did not have an agenda at all. With her education, her interest in government is on-going. She was there to learn more and to make a better community.

Mr. Baker has served on a number of county committees, including the budget committee, and had been a candidate for commissioner. He wants to be involved in county issues and to be a part of the process.

Jennifer McClure Spurgeon said that she is currently the mayor of the City of Weston. Her father had been a commissioner in Union County for 30 years. She wants to learn how different agencies work, and if could apply to the City. She is there to learn, and serve the county.

6. Meeting Schedule

The Chair asked how often the committee should meet. The meetings should start at one location. There would be need for public input at some point, in separate committees. Mr. Miller suggested once a month. Discussion about the date for the next meeting ensued, with a potential for another meeting in March. The consensus was to not establish a setting meeting schedule yet, and just set the date for the next meeting at each meeting. The next meeting was set for April 3, 2018, at 5:30 in Room 114 of the Umatilla County Courthouse.

7. Plan of Action

The Chair wanted information on the structure in other counties and the history of home rule in Oregon. The Association of Oregon Counties has an article on the review process. It will be emailed to each member. She had talked with Rob Bovett from AOC and thought he could give a presentation on the process. The Chair wanted each member to review the information in the notebook - the charter and the previous reports - before the next meeting. Mr. Miller indicated that may be quite a bit to cover but each should digest as much as can.

The Chair outlined the plan for action of the committee in three steps - plan for study and learn what should be seeking, including a history of home rule and global approach to county structures; hearings and input, and then decision and recommendations. There must be public comment. We will want to know how other counties operate, and what is the reason to have a charter. The consensus was to have the presentation from AOC as early as possible, to provide for information on county structure and home rule charters for a good framework to start a review.

The time line was discussed and how much time should the first two steps take. The thought was one year may be adequate, but may not leave enough time for discussion and deliberation prior to the July 1 goal, and any amendments to the voters by November. The committee will need to know the deadline date for the November 2019 election.

A list of the email addresses and telephone numbers is to be sent to each member.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 3, 2018, at 5:30 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas R. Olsen

Umatilla County Counsel