

OSCAR LEESER
MAYOR

TOMMY GONZALEZ
CITY MANAGER



CITY COUNCIL
PETER SVARZBEIN, DISTRICT 1
LARRY ROMERO, DISTRICT 2
EMMA ACOSTA, DISTRICT 3
CARL L. ROBINSON, DISTRICT 4
MICHEL R. NOE, DISTRICT 5
CLAUDIA ORDAZ, DISTRICT 6
LILY LIMÓN, DISTRICT 7
CORTNEY CARLISLE NILAND, DISTRICT 8

SPECIAL WORK SESSION MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM
July 27, 2015

The City Council met at the above place and date. Meeting was called to order at 10:36 a.m. Mayor Oscar Leeser present and presiding and the following Council Members answered roll call: Peter Svarzbein, Larry Romero, Emma Acosta, Carl Robinson, Michiel Noe, Claudia Ordaz, Lilia Limón, and Cortney Niland.

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AGENDA

1. Presentation of, and discussion and action on, the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Charter Advisory Committee and City Charter clean-up items.

Mayor Leeser and Representatives Acosta, Ordaz, Limón, and Niland commented.

The following City staff members commented:

1. Mr. Tommy Gonzalez, City Manager
2. Ms. Nancy Bartlett, Chief Performance Officer
3. Ms. Richarda Momsen, Municipal Clerk
4. Ms. Laura Cruz-Acosta, Assistant to City Manager

Representatives Niland and Ordaz questioned Amendment No. 2.

Former Mayor Joe Wardy, Chair for the Ad Hoc Charter Advisory Committee explained.

Representative Acosta questioned vote on Amendment No. 2.

Mayor Leeser opposes Amendment No. 3.

Representative Ordaz suggested a modification tied to annual El Paso household income.

Representative Acosta questioned Amendment No. 4.

Representative Acosta questioned Amendment No. 5 and the negative connotations tied to the word, "cancellation" of Council meetings. She would prefer "City Council will schedule no less than three Regular Council meetings per month."

Representative Limón questioned Amendment No. 5.

Mayor Leeser commented.

Representative Limón stated she is opposed to Amendment No. 7.

Mayor Leeser questioned Ms. Sylvia Firth, City Attorney.

Ms. Nancy Bartlett, Chief Performance Officer, further explained.

Representative Niland commented on the current lack of Council's involvement in vetting City Attorney candidates.

Representative Acosta would like to remove "with or without cause" in this amendment.

Representative Niland questioned former Mayor Wardy on the reasons for Amendment No. 7.

Representative Acosta questioned Amendment No. 9 and the effective date.

Representative Acosta questioned Amendment No. 10.

Representative Limón asked for the procedure to add additional amendments.

Mayor Leiser explained.

Public comment:

Richard Dayoub, Greater El Paso Chamber of Commerce, commented on Amendment No. 5 and his recommendation that a schedule of meetings be set at the beginning of the year to inform the public.

Mr. David Thackston, Ad Hoc Charter Advisory Committee member, commented on Amendment No. 5. The meeting schedule should be set at the beginning of the year. There is a need for an education of the public to the fact that Council members do work outside of the meetings. On Amendment No. 3, he explained the committee's reasoning. He also stated, "Salary increase would not go into effect until the next election for each office, for the next Council."

Mr. Thackston stated, "On Amendment No. 2. 1. November date will generate an increase in voters. 2. Cost of the elections will be decreased, though not significantly. However, there will be a greater cost to the candidates to run for election in November. And, the attention paid to the municipal races by the public and the media and organizations that hold forums will be reduced, restricting the public's opportunity to be informed on the municipal issues."

Mr. James Montoya, Ad Hoc Charter Advisory Committee member, commented Amendment No. 4 stated he is against the clean-up for public employment clause. He supports salary increase (Amendment No. 3) and supports the May election date. He is concerned about holding run-offs in December, if there is a November election, Amendment No. 2. He is in support of Amendment No. 7, regarding City Attorney. He does not support going back to the strong Mayor form of government.

Mayor Leiser commented on the donation of his salary and the second job he holds in the private sector that he works on each night.

Representative Noe believes City Representatives who are doing their jobs work 24 hours a day, constantly doing something. Points out that City Representatives are not City employees and do not receive a pension. He supports allowing City Representatives to hold another position.

Representative Acosta commented on Amendment No. 4.

Representative Ordaz questioned wording of Amendment No. 4.

Ms. Firth replied, "An alternate is to repeal Section 3.3, Prohibitions, Subsection A. altogether. That would include repealing the provision regarding City Council members from holding City positions within one year.

Representative Niland questioned last Charter election's provision regarding City Council salary.

Representative Acosta explained the previous language.

Ms. Firth also explained the criticisms received regarding the ballot language during the last Charter election.

1st MOTION – Amendment No. 1

Motion by Representative Niland, seconded by Representative Acosta, and unanimously carried to **SEND** Amendment No. 1, Section 1.2 Definitions to the voters in the November 2015 City Charter election.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Romero, Acosta, Robinson, Noe, Ordaz, Limón, and Niland

NAYS: None

2ND MOTION – Amendment No. 2

Motion by Representative Acosta, seconded by Representative Niland, and carried to **SEND** Amendment No. 2, Section 2.1 City Elections to the voters in the November 2015 City Charter election.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Romero, Acosta, Robinson, Noe, Ordaz, and Niland

NAYS: Representative Limón

3RD MOTION – Amendment No. 2

Motion by Representative Robinson, seconded by Representative Limón, and unanimously carried to **RECONSIDER** the item.

4TH MOTION – Amendment No. 2

Motion by Representative Acosta, seconded by Representative Niland, and carried to **SEND** Amendment No. 2, Section 2.1 City Elections to the voters in the November 2015 City Charter election.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Romero, Acosta, Noe, Ordaz, and Niland

NAYS: Representatives Robinson and Limón

5TH MOTION – Amendment No. 3

Motion by Representative Acosta, seconded by Representative Niland, and carried to **SEND** Amendment No. 3, Section 3.2 Salaries to the voters in the November 2015 City Charter election.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Acosta, Noe, Ordaz, and Niland

NAYS: Representatives Romero, Robinson, and Limón

6TH MOTION – Amendment No. 4

Motion by Representative Niland, seconded by Representative Noe, and carried to **SEND** Amendment No. 4, Section 3.3 Prohibitions, Subsection A. to the voters in the November 2015 City Charter election.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Romero, Acosta, Noe, Ordaz, Limón, and Niland

NAYS: Representative Robinson

7TH MOTION – Amendment No. 5

Motion by Representative Acosta, seconded by Representative Ordaz, and carried to **SEND** Amendment No. 5, Section 3.5 City Council Procedures and Rules, Subsection A. to the voters in the November 2015 City Charter election, to say "City Council to hold regular meetings no less than every other week".

YES: Representatives Svarzbein, Romero, Acosta, Noe, Ordaz, and Niland

NAYS: Representatives Robinson, and Limón

8TH MOTION – Amendment No. 6

Motion by Representative Niland, seconded by Representative Noe, and unanimously carried to **SEND** Amendment No. 6, Section 3.5 Subsection D to the voters in the November 2015 City Charter election.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Romero, Acosta, Robinson, Noe, Ordaz, Limón, and Niland

NAYS: None

9TH MOTION – Amendment No. 7

Motion by Representative Acosta, seconded by Representative Niland, and carried to **SEND** Amendment No. 7, Section 3.7 Appointments, Subsection A. to the voters in the November 2015 City Charter election.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Romero, Acosta, Robinson, Noe, Ordaz and Niland

NAYS: Representative Limón

10TH MOTION – Amendment No. 8

Motion by Representative Acosta, seconded by Representative Romero, and unanimously carried to **SEND** Amendment No. 8, Section 3.9 Ordinances in General, Subsection C. to the voters in the November 2015 City Charter election.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Romero, Acosta, Robinson, Noe, Ordaz, Limón, and Niland

NAYS: None

11TH MOTION – Amendment No. 9

Motion by Representative Acosta, seconded by Representative Niland, and unanimously carried to **SEND** Amendment No. 9, Section 7.1 Fiscal Year to the voters in the November 2015 City Charter election.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Romero, Acosta, Robinson, Noe, Ordaz, Limón, and Niland

NAYS: None

12TH MOTION – Amendment No. 10

Motion by Representative Niland, seconded by Representative Acosta, and unanimously carried to **SEND** Amendment No. 10, Section 7.2 Budget to the voters in the November, 2015 City Charter election.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Romero, Acosta, Robinson, Noe, Ordaz, Limón, and Niland

NAYS: None

13TH MOTION – Additional Amendment Proposed by City Council

Motion by Representative Limón, seconded by Representative Robinson, and unanimously carried to **SEND** to the voters in the November, 2015 City Charter election the opportunity to decide if they want a strong Mayor or Council/City Manager form of government. **MOTION FAILED**

AYES: Representatives Robinson and Limón

NAYS: Representatives Svarzbein, Romero, Acosta, Noe, Ordaz, and Niland

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Motion made by Representative Niland, seconded by Representative Acosta, and unanimously carried to adjourn this meeting on July 27, 2015, at 12:50 p.m.

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APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

Richarda Duffy Momsen, City Clerk