



CITY OF TROUTDALE

"Gateway to the Columbia River Gorge"

AGENDA

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Troutdale City Hall Council Chambers
219 E. Historic Columbia River Hwy. (lower level, rear entrance)
Troutdale, Oregon 97060

****NEW LOCATION****

Wednesday, February 3, 2016
7:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order
2. Introductions of Members
3. Election of Officers
4. Approval of Minutes – November 19, 2015
5. Discussion Items
 - Public Comment at City Council Meetings (continued)
 - Goals for 2016
 - Neighborhood/HOA engagement
6. Concerns from Committee Chair
7. Adjourn

*This meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities.
A request for an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodations for
persons with disabilities should be made in writing at least 48 hours
prior to the meeting to Chris Damgen at 503-674-7228 or
by email to chris.damgen@troutdaleoregon.gov.*

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

City Conference Building

223 S. Buxton

Troutdale, Oregon 97060

November 19, 2015

Members Present: David Becker
 Charlie Foss
 Zach Hudson
 Jon Lowell
 Victoria Rizzo
 Patricia "Skye" Troy
 Jan White

Members Absent: Mary Burlingame
 Lloyd Champion (resigned)
 Nancy Nichols
 Cynthia Walston

Staff: Steve Winstead, Planning Director/Building Inspector
 Rooney Barker, Transcriptionist

Guests: Tanney Staffenson, Planning Commission Chair
 Paul Wilcox, Troutdale Citizen

1. **Call to Order.** Chair Zach Hudson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Approval of Minutes – February 4, 2015. The following corrections were requested: p. 2, first paragraph, correct "... just *sale* 'manager' since . . ." to read "... just say 'manager' since . . ."; second paragraph, correct "Officer Copeland said it should *so* and she should continue to call when needed," to read "Officer Copeland said it should ~~so~~ and she should continue to call when needed."; p. 3, second full paragraph, first sentence correct "... about the *Personal Responsible* item . . ." to read "... about the Person Responsible item . . ."; in the 10th line down, correct "... a better way to *work* it . . ." to "... a better way to word it . . ."; p. 3, last line in last paragraph, correct "... generally, *that* the first time." to read "... generally, than the first time"; on p. 4, third paragraph, 6th line, correct "... entrance to a post office *of* postal station . . ." to read "entrance to a post office or postal station . . ."; in p. 5, same paragraph, correct "... or is within ten *feel* of a private mailbox . . ." to read "or is within ten feet of a private mailbox . . ."; same paragraph, last sentence, correct "The Committee agreed with this *additional*," to read "The committee agreed with this addition."; on p. 6, second paragraph, correct "... entrance to a post office *of* postal station . . ." to read "entrance to a post office or postal station . . ."; and on p. 6 in the third paragraph, correct "... the fee schedule *is* for violations" to read "... the fee schedule is for violations."

Victoria Rizzo moved, with a second by Charlie Foss, to approve the minutes as amended. The motion passed unanimously and the minutes were approved.

Exhibit A. (Undated) Copy of City of Maywood Park City Charter.

Exhibit B. (Undated) Copy of Troutdale Council and Mayor candidates from 1996 to 2014.

Exhibit C. November 9, 2015 – Copy of e-mail from Jon Lowell regarding CAC.

2. Concerns from City Organization Review Subcommittee Re Charter Changes.

Chair Hudson referred to the document *Citizen Advisory Committee Discussion Items for 11/19/15*, in the agenda packet. The Subcommittee would like to have a product ready to put on the ballot for the citizenry in May 2016. In order to accomplish that, they would like to have all suggestions to them by February.

Primary Item 1) Amending the City Charter to enact term limits: Does the CAC agree with amending the City Charter to enact term limits on City Councilors and, if so, would the CAC prefer a 12-year lifetime cap on Council service, a two-term (eight-year) maximum term with two years of no service, or a two-year term maximum with four years of no service, or another iteration? In discussion, the CAC raised questions on whether this amendment would include the Mayor's term of office or just the City Councilors, when it would take effect, does the term duration start counting upon the election or will it be retroactive, and if it is for new candidates or all candidates. Chair Hudson said he believes the Council is looking at also including the Mayor's service, but we could give our opinion to the Subcommittee and he does not know what they are thinking about the time frame of how term time is 'counted.' He also said, responding to a question from Skye Troy as to why they are looking at term limits, that he thinks it has to do with new ideas, greater citizen involvement and inviting more candidates.

Chair Hudson said he did not like the idea of term limits; if someone is doing their job we won't want them to leave. Tanney Staffenson, a guest and Chair of the Planning Commission, said service is interesting; some are willing to do it and some aren't. The current system of elections is so that only so much change can take place at one time. The voters hold the power in who we elect; would this get more people involved? In any system the strength of the candidate will rise. If we impose term limits, we are actually limiting voters' ability to choose, assuming we get qualified candidates. The committee was asked if they would be interested in proposing an alternate solution. Experience in office is valuable, Skye said, and term limits may hinder citizens' ability of vote for good candidates; we have too few people voting and this wouldn't help. She can also see it from the perspective of the possibility of having a 'monopoly' on elected positions and this may be a possible reason the Council is looking for term limits.

Chair Hudson gave his proposal: Any candidate currently has to choose what position they will run for, which means they will run for an open seat and possibly have to select which candidate (possibly an incumbent) to run against. It could be that only new candidates will run for an open seat and all the incumbents will run unopposed. The difficulty with current procedure is that new candidates have to select which incumbent they will challenge or an open position. Many would not opt to run against an incumbent so we would have limited candidates. Also, running against someone can lead to animosity and the attacks begin. If we had an alternate system where people simply put their names forward and the citizens vote for who they like, then there would be less candidate-to-candidate conflict and also there would be greater opportunity for challengers to put their name in the race, simply saying, "Vote for me." He referred to a copy of the City of Maywood Park's City Charter (see **Exhibit A**) that spelled out their term limits; every voter casts three votes (when there are three open positions) and the top three among the pool are the next three City Councilors. The voters get a much better say in who they want to elect and the incumbents become less complacent.

Paul Walker, guest, said Chair Hudson was describing at-large elections and he had created a document (he will in the future provide a copy to Chair Hudson) based on research he had done in the metropolitan area and discovered that half the jurisdictions elect their Councilors at large and the other half elect them by the position with these positions not necessarily tied to a geographic district. He told the committee he thinks at-large elections are a good idea and he hoped they will consider recommending it. Chair Hudson said Mr. Walker had given him that idea previously and that was why he researched it, as well. He added that the Troutdale Council positions are not based on geographic districts, so why do we have them? Mr. Walker also distributed a document showing the elections years and candidates for Mayor and Council positions from 1996 to 2015 (see **Exhibit B**). Jan White said this is a great idea but it doesn't solve the City's problem of apathy; another committee member said it will take fewer people.

Response to the Subcommittee: **Chair Hudson moved, with a second by Jan White**, that the Citizens Advisory Committee does not recommend term limits, but would suggest that the Organization Review Committee look at plurality at-large voting, or bloc voting, as a solution. There was no further discussion. **The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.**

Primary Item 2) Does the CAC agree with the Organization Review Committee's proposal to relax the Charter language to say that Councilors can discuss any city-related issue with the City manager privately but the City Manager does not have to act on a Council concern regarding staffing, contracts, etc. Chair Hudson explained that in the past previous Councilors became what some considered too involved with how the City Manager was running things, so a change was put in place to create a 'wall' between how the City Manager runs the office and the municipal law the Council makes. The Organization Review Committee said they were concerned that the City Manager and the Councilors were not able to discuss what's going on in the City and if they cannot do this, it hampers information. He said he believes the Council wants to have the ability for Councilors to comment on how things are going with the understanding that they are not the ones who hire and fire staff.

Jan said this change basically would bring things back to the way it used to be, and asked if this includes the Mayor; Chair Hudson said he believes it does although in our previous recommendation on bloc voting (see above paragraph) which does not include the Mayor, we could add that. Jan suggested that they do add that into this committee's recommendation. This was discussed as was the language saying the City Manager could meet 'privately' with the Councilors and if that is against the open meeting law, if this came out of the previous Mayor's asking staff to do work, and the City Manager's ability to effectively run the City. Chair Staffenson participated in this discussion and said there are some things that a Councilor could talk with the City Manager about that would not be an issue at a City Council meeting but could be easily resolved in-house or together. Steve Winstead said the chain of command works; anything that would undermine that would hurt morale and there is a history of this happening. It's taken management two years to try to mend that, and he said he is fully for allowing the City Manager to have conversations with Councilors, and letting the managers to do their jobs. We have very competent employees, he added. The City Manager is open and communicates well with management and the management team works to come up with reasonable solutions.

Charlie again expressed concern with the private meetings proposed and the possibility of private decisions being made. Discussion followed. Chair Hudson said he does not believe, if this proposal goes forward, that it will in any way violate the open meeting law. He likes the suggestion to propose *one* City Councilor or the Mayor being allowed to discuss issues with the City Manager. Paul Wilcox said if a citizen complains to a Councilor, the Councilor, under the current Charter, cannot pass that information on to the City Manager, and all the Council is asking is that they be allowed to meet with the City Manager on a one-on-one basis.

Chair Hudson moved, with a second by Skye Troy, to amend the second sentence in the proposed language to read: “. . . to relax the Charter language to say that a Councilor or the Mayor may discuss any City-related issue with the City Manager privately . . .” There was no further discussion. **The vote was unanimous and the motion was approved.**

- 3. **Concerns from Committee Chair.** Chair Hudson had none and invited comments. Tanney Staffenson told the committee about the Planning Commission’s update of the Troutdale Development Code (TDC), which they have been working on. They are close to having a product for public review and at their last meeting the Commission voted to ask the CAC if they would be willing to review the document and provide comments once the next iteration is put together. Steve Winstead added that this is certainly within the realm and scope of what this committee does.

Steve informed the CAC that the Planning Commission will also be looking at a Comprehensive Plan amendment and a zone change at their December 16th meeting. He will present it at the CAC meeting on December 2nd and asked them to look at it and comment on the merit of the amendment and the zone change.

Jon Lowell distributed a copy of a memo (see **Exhibit C**) from him to Zach Hudson dated November 9, 2015, addressing citizens speaking at Council meetings, whether the CAC should work for a charter amendment that requires that a resolution cannot be voted upon unless it has been publicly discussed in the CAC or publicly discussed in open Council session. He asked that this be placed on an upcoming committee agenda. The next CAC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 2, 2015.

- 4. **Adjourn.** **Victoria Rizzo moved, with a second by Jan White, to adjourn; the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.**

Zach Hudson, Chair

Date

Attest: _____
Rooney Barker, Transcriptionist