

# 2018 Charter Review Commission

JUNE 12, 2018 REPORT TO AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL

BY: JESSICA PALVINO, INGRID WEIGAND, AND KARL-THOMAS MUSSELMAN

# Overview of Presentation

- People and Process
- Outcomes and Recommendations
- Questions Considered

# People and Process

# 11 Commissioners

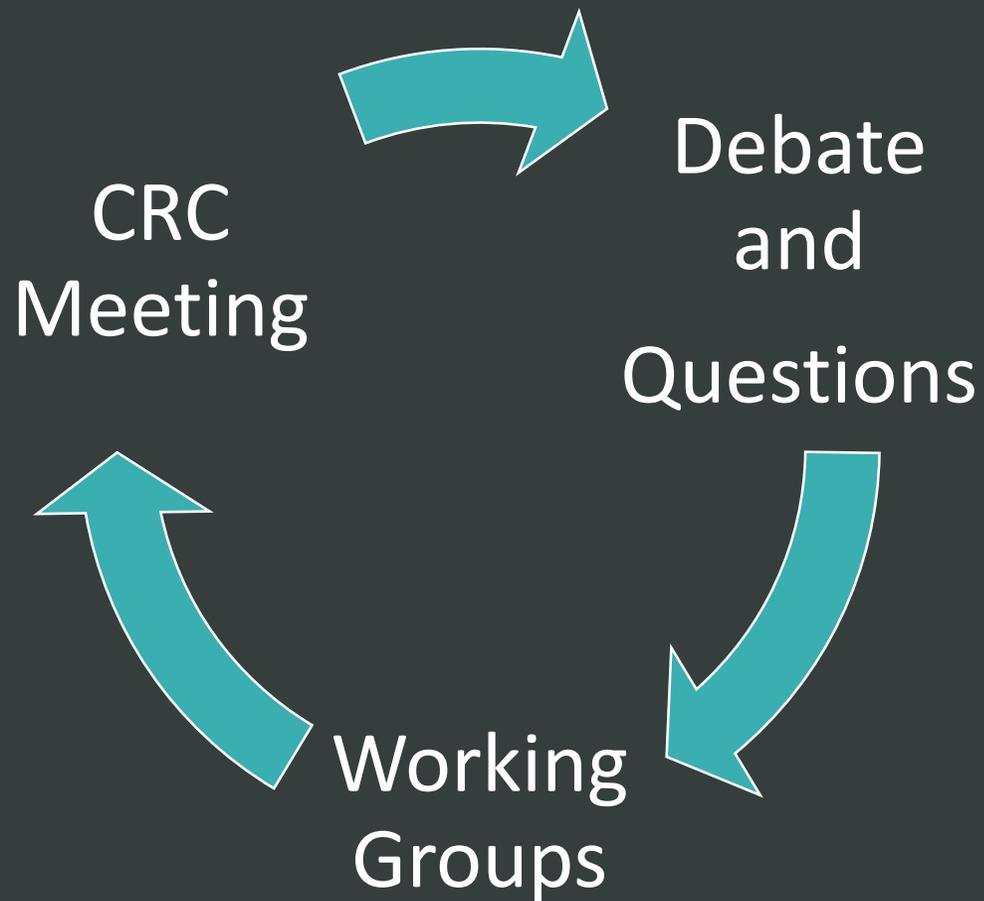
- Joy Authur
- Martha Cotera
- Fred Lewis
- Karl-Thomas Musselman
- Jeff Smith
- Ingrid Weigand
- Roger Borgelt
- Matt Hersh
- Diego Martinez-Moncada
- Jessica Palvino
- Tane Ward

Combined Experience: 2 PhDs, 1 Author/Librarian, 3 Attorneys, 2 Executive Directors, 1 Chief Development and Communications Officer, and 1 Statistician with countless hours of community service and volunteerism.

# Iterative Process

6 Months

17  
CRC Meetings



# WORKING GROUPS

10. The Commission shall consider the following areas:

a. Campaign finance, including consideration of contribution and expenditure limits;

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b. City boards and commissions, including terms of Planning Commission members;

c. Requirements for citizen-initiated petitions, including requirements for percentages and numbers of valid signatures on various types of petitions (initiative, referendum, and recall of a mayor or a council member from a specific geographic district), and reporting and residency requirements for citizen-initiated petitions;

d. Appointment of the City Attorney by the City Council; and

e. Correction of clerical matters, routine harmonizing of provisions, and clarification of verbiage as recommended by the City Clerk and the City Attorney.

10.a

Campaign Finance and Ethics

## CAMPAIGN FINANCE AND ETHICS WORKING GROUP

Establish a Democracy Dollars Program to provide eligible Austin residents up to four (4) \$25 Democracy Dollar Vouchers (“Democracy Dollars”) per election cycle. (Seattle Model)

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10.a

Campaign Finance and Ethics

10.c

Citizen-Initiated Petitions

## CITIZEN INITIATED PETITIONS WORKING GROUP

Require that ...the recall petition contain the grounds on which the removal is sought, and ...be signed by at least 20% of the qualified voters of the district from which the council member is elected, or 10% citywide for the mayor and be subject to the Campaign Finance Ordinance.

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10.a

Campaign Finance and Ethics

10.c

Citizen-Initiated Petitions

10.b &  
10.d

City Attorney/Boards &  
Commissions

## CITY ATTORNEY/BOARDS & COMMISSIONS WORKING GROUP

1. City Council appoints the City Attorney
2. Establish an Independent Ethics Review Commission to impartially and effectively administer and enforce all city laws relating to campaign finance, campaign disclosures ....

## SOME RECOMMENDATIONS WERE PRESENTED OUTSIDE WORKING GROUPS...

- Create a City Budget and Efficiency Officer whose mission is to produce independent analyses of budgetary and fiscal issues to support the Austin City's Council's budget process by issuing reports and reviews of proposed and existing programs.

# Outcomes and Recommendations

## 2018 Charter Review Executive Summary

The 2018 Charter Revisions Commission (CRC) makes the following recommendations to the Austin City Council:

1. Establish a Democracy Dollars Program to provide eligible Austin residents up to four (4) \$25 Democracy Dollar Vouchers ("Democracy Dollars") per election cycle. The Democracy Dollars may be donated to a resident's district city council or mayoral candidate. The purpose of the Democracy Dollars program is to ensure that all the people of Austin have equal opportunity to participate in political campaigns and are heard by candidates, to strengthen democracy, to fulfill the purposes of single-member districts, to enhance candidate competition, and prevent corruption.
2. Establish an Independent Ethics Review Commission to impartially and effectively administer and enforce all city laws relating to campaign finance, campaign disclosures, conflicts of interest, financial statement disclosure, lobbyist regulations, revolving door, disqualification of members of city boards, certain conflict of interest and ethics laws, and other responsibilities.
3. Create a City Budget and Efficiency Officer whose mission is to produce independent analyses of budgetary and fiscal issues to support the Austin City's Council's budget process by issuing reports and reviews of proposed and existing programs.
4. Require that a notice of intent to circulate a referendum petition be filed with the city clerk prior to collecting signatures and that the signed referendum petition be filed with the city clerk within 180 days of passage of an ordinance.
5. Require that a notice of intent to circulate a recall petition be filed with the city clerk prior to collecting signatures, that the recall petition contain the grounds on which the removal is sought, and that the recall petition be signed by at least 20% of the qualified voters of the district from which the council member is elected, or 10% citywide for the mayor.
6. Require that City Council appoints the City Attorney.
7. Clarify that the timing of the Planning and Zoning commission appointments should be determined by ordinance.
8. Require that all revenue bonds issued by the City for projects whose total cost exceeds \$100 million shall not be considered by city council until at least two public hearings are held, and that all electricity and water purchases whose total price for each project exceeds \$200

# 9 Recommendations

1. Democracy Dollars
2. Independent Ethics Commission
3. City Budget and Efficiency Office
4. Referendum Petitions
5. Recall Petitions
6. City Attorney Appointment
7. Planning and Zoning Commission
8. Revenue Bonds
9. Routine Harmonization



## Boards and Commissions Information Center

### View Meeting Documents

Agendas  
Approved Minutes  
Supporting documents  
& back-up

### 2018 CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION

Advise Council on revisions which may be necessary or desirable to align the City Charter with changes to municipal ordinances, and to make recommendations to the Council to improve and enhance transparency and the general functions of city government. See Resolution 20170622-040.

#### Meetings:

- 6:30 p.m.
- Austin City Hall, 301 W. Second St.
- See agendas for meeting location

#### Meeting Documents:

[View Agendas, Approved Minutes and Supporting Documents](#)

#### Audio Recording of Meetings:

- [Play audio - November 6, 2017](#)
- [Play audio - November 13, 2017](#)
- [Play audio - November 27, 2017](#)
- [Play audio - January 11, 2018](#)
- [Play audio - January 22, 2018](#)
- [Play audio - January 30, 2018](#)
- [Play audio - February 5, 2018](#)
- [Play audio - February 12, 2018](#)
- [Play audio - February 26, 2018](#)
- [Play audio - March 5, 2018](#)
- [Play audio - March 12, 2018](#)
- [Play audio - April 16, 2018](#)
- [Play audio - May 7, 2018](#)

#### TOP CONTENT

- ★ [Workbooks](#)
- ★ [Training](#)
- ★ [More About Boards and Commissions](#)
- ★ [Boards and Commissions Transition Taskforce Members](#)
- ★ [Women's Hall of Fame](#)

# Questions Considered

## Democracy Dollars

- Does Austin need a small voucher campaign finance program?
- Is now the right time to propose such a program?
- How will the City pay for the program?
- Why did the Commission rely on data from Seattle?

## Independent Ethics Commission

- Why does Austin need an Independent Ethics Commission when it already has an Ethics Review Commission?
- What is the right selection method for commissioners?

## Recall Petitions

- Why does the recommendation require compliance with campaign finance reporting requirements?

Thank you to City Staff, especially  
Jannette, Myrna, Lynn, and JeriKay!

Questions?