

**MINUTES
CITY OF LAKE WORTH BEACH
CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING
REMOTE ZOOM MEETING
MONDAY, JULY 12, 2021 - 5:00 PM**

ROLL CALL: Present were Ramsay Stevens, Chair; Barbara White, Vice Chair and Committee Members Wes Blackman, Joyce Brown, Anthony Gallegos, Sam Goodstein, Daniel Morgan, Debra Robert, Zade Shamsi-Basha and Dave Wilson. Also present was City Attorney Christy L. Goddeau. Jerri LeAnn Clairday and Upendo Shabazz was absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

NEW BUSINESS:

A. All members went around the table and discussed their thoughts on election issues.

Sam Goodstein

Election districts - no change

Term limits - would consider term limits

Wes Blackman

Election districts - four commissioners elected from the district they represent ("single-member districts") Feel that it should be proportional to population, so district boundaries would be adjusted. The district populations should be roughly equal, and based on the census results. He would add two at-large commissioners to be voted on by all LW voters.

Term limits - would like to look at term limits

Joyce Brown

Election districts -

Term limits -

Wants a universal suffrage

Wants candidates to declare party affiliation

Wants two year terms

Debra Robert

Election districts - at large, keep four districts

Term limits - three years, two terms

Daniel Morgan

Election districts - single-member districts

Term limits - pro term-limits

Wants to move the election to November

Dave Wilson

Election districts - I enjoyed being able to vote for all of my representatives, and I liked to think that all of my representatives have my interests at heart. I'm concerned that if commissioners represent a single district that we would see a lot more political fighting as commissioners try to bring home the best deal for their districts.

Term limits - two terms, but with the ability to run after taking one term off

Barbara White

Election districts - pro single-districts.

Term limits - two terms of four years, then sit out one term

Anthony Gallegos

Election districts - would like to discuss redrawing to more proportionally reflect population. Single-member districts.

Term limits - not in favor

Certification of election results - has concerns

William Ross Munro

Term limits - in favor

Zade Shamsi-Basha

Election districts - preferred single-member districts done by population.

Term limits - not in favor

Would like to move election date to November

B. Committee discussion of election issues

Sam Goodstein spoke about the November/March issue. March is lower turnout, easier to flip a seat, while November had greater numbers. Local candidates could be lost in the noise in November.

Wes Blackman spoke against November elections, due to national elections dominating those dates. He also was against staggered terms.

Daniel Morgan felt that local elections should be in November.

Zade Shamsi-Basha felt that elections should be in November.

Barbara White asked if November turnouts had lower turnouts than March elections, and Mr. Blackman replied that there was larger voter turnout on even years when the federal elections were held.

Discussion ensued regarding three-year terms, as it related to moving elections to November, as two- or four-year terms would be needed in order to coincide with federal elections.

Debra Robert agreed that the county as a whole may move to November elections.

Chair Stevens asked that discussion of election dates be tabled until there was more information about what SOE needed to do to move elections to November.

Daniel Morgan volunteered to communicate with the City Clerk and ask her to talk with the SOE about getting a plan to move to November elections.

Wes Blackman offered to go directly to the SOE to find election data.

Discussion of election dates was deferred at this time.

Chair Stevens asked for discussion of term limits and lengths.

Barbara White was not in favor of two-year terms, because it did not give commissioners time to do the job, before they had to run for reelection. She was not in favor of three-year terms due to synchronization problem with November federal elections. She preferred a four-year term, with a two-term limit.

Daniel Morgan agreed that two-year terms were short, but that single-member representatives would have a lighter workload when running for reelection.

Chair Stevens asked for thoughts on reversion to a two-year term, although he pointed out that LWB residents recently voted by a large majority for the current three-year terms. He also pointed out that four-year terms were very long.

Debra Robert pointed out that term limits gave potential candidates encouragement to run for office.

Zade Shamsi-Bashi suggested enlarging the commission with single-member representatives.

Chair Stevens took a poll for definitive term limits (no rerunning ever) and only two people were in favor.

Chair Stevens took a poll for serving two terms in one seat, and then running for another seat, or taking a break and then running again, and the consensus was in favor.

Sam Goodstein asked for clarification on whether a commissioner could move to another district and continue to run, and Chair Stevens felt that was the correct path.

Debra Robert spoke in favor of allowing a move in order to run again, but after a break in service.

Daniel Morgan had concerns about candidates abusing the residency requirement by getting a PO box or similar.

Wes Blackman expressed concerns about residency; residency requirements should be beefed up for a district, particularly if we went to single-member district representation. He spoke against gerrymandered districts. He felt that we should redraw districts every ten years and would look into why WPB returned to at-large commissioners and how to change the geographic allocation of seats.

Joyce Brown asked that whatever data Mr. Morgan or Mr. Blackman found be shared. Chair Stevens said it would be shared through the City Clerk.

Chair Stevens asked if anyone was against single-member districts, and two people were.

Debra Robert said that modifying district boundaries might help improve district voting numbers.

Chair Stevens suggested ending the meeting. He asked that members look at the details of everything discussed, single-member vs at-large, district boundaries and number of commissioners.

Chair Stevens and Daniel Morgan offered to research ranked-choice voting further.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM.