

## **MCCRC Accountable Government Subcommittee**

### **Reflection Questions on the Charter Review Process**

The Office of Community Involvement (OCI) has proposed the following amendments to the County Charter:

- 1. Extending the charter review process by 6 months on the front end, which moves the first meeting from September to the preceding March and removing the specific dates for the application process.**

#### **OCI's rationale:**

The specific dates and deadlines outlined in Charter provide very little flexibility for staff to design a community friendly application process or to provide more time for the MCCRC to conduct its review of the charter. Applicants had to wait up to seven months between submitting their application and learning if they had been selected, and we could not convene the committee any earlier than September 2021.

#### **Reflection questions:**

- Would you prefer to extend the process by 3 months instead of 6 months?
- Would you prefer to extend by 6 months but include a provision that allows for flexibility in the process (the committee COULD but does not have to meet for the entire duration of the process)?
- Will a different timeline be needed if a natural disaster (COVID, earthquake, fires, etc) occurs during the review process?
- Do you support the general gist of this amendment?
- Do you need any additional information to make up your mind? Please identify that information.
- If you oppose this amendment, why?
- Do you have any suggested revisions to the proposed amendment?
- Does this amendment reflect at least one of MCCRC's shared values: Justice, Inclusive Democracy, Access & Belonging, Transparency and Innovation?

- 2. Selecting MCCRC members based on county district, requiring four members who reside in each district for a total of 16 MCCRC members, and task the Office of Community Involvement with application outreach, evaluation and member appointment.**

**OCI's rationale:**

Selecting members by Senate district requires significant staff capacity to engage state legislators, who aren't very familiar with the MCCRC and have limited time to deeply engage in application evaluation. The current approach also results in unequal representation across County districts. Due to the way senate districts overlay our County districts, 7 of our 16 members reside in District 1 (Northwest & Southwest Portland and the inner Eastside), while only 2 live in District 2 (North & Northeast Portland). One Senate District has only 1,600 Multnomah County residents, and identifying a member from that district was challenging. In addition, with applicants evaluated and selected by Senate District, there is no opportunity to consider the makeup of the whole committee in making appointments.

**Reflection questions:**

- Do you support shifting from the current practice of selecting committee members by senate district (senators appoint committee members) to a selection process that is handled by the OCI?
- Do you support selecting MCCRC members based on county districts?
- Do you support the general gist of this amendment?
- Do you need any additional information to make up your mind? Please identify that information.
- If you oppose this amendment, why?
- Do you have any suggested revisions to the proposed amendment?
- Does this amendment reflect at least one of MCCRC's shared values: Justice, Inclusive Democracy, Access & Belonging, Transparency and Innovation?

- 3. If a member moves from their county district after being appointed, allow them to continue serving on the committee as long as they remain a Multnomah County resident.**

**OCI's rationale:**

The current language does not address how to handle vacancies on the committee, or allow for flexibility if an MCCRC member moves between districts during their term, which could disproportionately impact renters and others more likely to move residences.

**Reflection questions:**

- Do you support allowing committee members to serve out their term even if they move out of a district during the process?
  - Do you prefer that there be no residency requirement at all or that only a certain number of committee members need to be residents?
  - Do you support the general gist of this amendment?
  - Do you need any additional information to make up your mind? Please identify that information.
  - If you oppose this amendment, why?
  - Do you have any suggested revisions to the proposed amendment?
  - Does this amendment reflect at least one of MCCRC's shared values: Justice, Inclusive Democracy, Access & Belonging, Transparency and Innovation?
- 4. Provide a general process for filling vacancies, allowing the Office of Community Involvement to fill vacancies from the applicant pool if reasonably given the timing of the vacancy.**

**OCI's rationale:**

The current language does not address how to handle vacancies on the committee.

**Reflection questions:**

- Do you support allowing the OCI to fill vacancies from the applicant pool?
- Do you prefer to open up the application process again?
- Do you support the general gist of this amendment?
- Do you need any additional information to make up your mind? Please identify that information.
- If you oppose this amendment, why?
- Do you have any suggested revisions to the proposed amendment?
- Does this amendment reflect at least one of MCCRC's shared values: Justice, Inclusive Democracy, Access & Belonging, Transparency and Innovation?

**5. Change the language around the committee selecting a “chairperson” to more explicitly allow for different leadership structures such as co-chairs.**

**OCI’s rationale:**

The Charter does not currently include this language.

**Reflection questions:**

- Our charter committee is already doing this. Do you think we need charter language to codify this process or is it reasonable to assume that it can be done anyway?
- Do you support the general gist of this amendment?
- Do you need any additional information to make up your mind? Please identify that information.
- If you oppose this amendment, why?
- Do you have any suggested revisions to the proposed amendment?
- Does this amendment reflect at least one of MCCRC’s shared values: Justice, Inclusive Democracy, Access & Belonging, Transparency and Innovation?

### **Additional suggestions from subcommittee members:**

- 1. Eliminate MCCRC's residency requirement and introduce language along the lines of "anyone who lives, works, plays or worships in Multnomah County" with some sort of stipulation that the committee should represent the diversity of the county in terms of geography, race/ethnicity, income, age, gender/identity and philosophical viewpoints.**

#### **Donovan Scribes' rationale:**

In the era of rapid displacement, people with long ties to the metro area are now living in places like Clark (think Vancouver area) and Washington County (think Beaverton-area) solely because it's cheaper but the bulk of their political lives, whether it's where they work, play, support their families and communities is still tied to Portland & the greater Multnomah County.

The language as is limits who is able to serve. Broadening it to include people with historic and ongoing ties to the County will open up opportunities for more people to serve.

#### **Reflection questions:**

- Do you support language that broadens the criteria for participating in the charter review process to individuals with historic and ongoing ties to Multnomah County?
- Do you prefer to keep the residency requirement for some of the members, say 8 or 12 of the 16 and eliminate it for the remaining members?
- Do you prefer to eliminate the residency requirement altogether and replace it with broader language?
- Do you support the general gist of this amendment?
- Do you need any additional information to make up your mind? Please identify that information.
- If you oppose this amendment, why?
- Do you have any suggested revisions to the proposed amendment?
- Does this amendment reflect at least one of MCCRC's shared values: Justice, Inclusive Democracy, Access & Belonging, Transparency and Innovation?

- 2. Add language to the charter that stipulates that the county must prepare an adequate budget and create a process for public outreach and education that is focused on equitable access to information and includes culturally-specific outreach about the charter review process, and that also stipulates that the outreach and education process should begin immediately upon the first convening of the charter review committee.**

**Maja Harris' rationale:**

The community outreach and education process for our current charter review process is nearly non-existent although we are only two months away from voting on recommendations. We are still waiting to hear if funds will be available for any type of culturally-specific outreach. If the charter required the county to budget for the outreach and education process in advance and required the county to have a process in place for contracting with an appropriate outreach partner and begin outreach immediately, then future charter review committees would be better positioned to reach the community and get more public input.

**Reflection questions:**

- Do you support requiring the OCI to establish a process for outreach and education?
- Do you support adding language that requires the county to budget for the outreach and education process?
- County staff will need to spend time developing this process. Do you think that is an appropriate request?
- The budgeting requirement will be an added cost for the county. Do you think it's a justifiable expense?
- Do you need any additional information to make up your mind? Please identify that information.
- If you oppose this amendment, why?
- Do you have any suggested revisions to the proposed amendment?
- Does this amendment reflect at least one of MCCRC's shared values: Justice, Inclusive Democracy, Access & Belonging, Transparency and Innovation?

## **Multnomah County Charter Review Committee**

### **Shared Values**

#### **Justice:**

- Healing and justice are central to Multnomah County's government
- Justice extends to all people, and especially people who have been historically marginalized.
- Leading with race is important because of the inequities embedded in governance, with the understanding that it will help create an intersectional approach to this work.

#### **Inclusive democracy:**

- Multnomah County's government depends on active participation and representation of the communities people live in.
- People can access and participate in government using their preferred language.
- Outreach is a key value of democracy:
  - Decisions are informed by culturally-specific research and outreach.
  - Relationships should be an authentic, long lasting partnership; they should not be transactional in nature.

#### **Access and belonging:**

- People know how to access their leaders and decision-makers.
- People feel that they (and their communities) are a part of decision-making.
- Government reflects the communities it represents.

#### **Transparency:**

- People understand how their county government works.
- People are able to be heard by their government, and influence decision-making.
- Communication with the public by the government is clear, and communities are sought out for their input.

#### **Innovation:**

- Government is able to change and adapt to address historic and persistent problems.
- Change is embraced as a way to better serve communities.