

A PUBLIC MEETING OF THE CAMBRIDGE CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE

September 12, 2023, @ 5:30 p.m.

REMOTE ONLY – VIA ZOOM

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023 adopted by Massachusetts General Court and approved by the Governor, the City is authorized to use remote participation at meetings of the Cambridge Charter Review Committee.

The zoom link is: <https://cambridgema.zoom.us/j/83253118929>

Meeting ID: 832 5311 8929

One tap mobile +13092053325,,83253118929# US

Agenda Items – Tuesday, September 12, 2023

- I. Roll Call 5:30 PM
- II. Introduction by Chair, Kathy Born
- III. Adoption of Meeting Minutes from the meeting of August 15, 2023
- IV. Meeting Materials Submitted to the Committee to be placed on file
 - Communications from Committee Members
 - Communications from Council Members
 - i. A communication was received from Councilor Quinton Zondervan, regarding resident assembly
 - Communications from the Public
 - i. A communication was received from Julia Shepard, regarding proportional representation and distribution of the surplus
 - ii. A communication was received from Jameson Quinn, regarding feasible voting system improvements
 - iii. A communication was received from Jameson Quinn, regarding Cambridge’s voting system
 - Other Meeting Materials
- V. Public Comment
 - Members of the public are invited to share their ideas or comments with the committee.
- VI. Review Revised Drafted Language for City Council Goal Setting, Budget Priorities, and City Manager Annual Review Provisions
 - **Facilitator:** Anna. **Goal:** Review drafted language, discussion, and vote
- VII. Public Engagement Article: Resident Assembly

- **Facilitator:** Anna, Pat, Mike. **Goal:** Review what is a resident assembly/citizen panel, discuss the purpose of a resident assembly, and review drafted language

**MINUTES OF THE CAMBRIDGE
CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, AUGUST 15, 2023**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Kathleen Born, Chair
Kaleb Abebe
Jessica DeJesus Acevedo
Mosammat Faria Afreen
Nikolas Bowie
Kevin Chen
Max Clermont
Jennifer Gilbert
Kai Long
Patrick Magee
Mina Makarios
Lisa Peterson
Ellen Shachter
Susan Shell
Jim Stockard

The Cambridge Charter Review Committee held a meeting on Tuesday, August 15, 2023. The meeting was called to order at approximately 5:30p.m. by the Chair of the Committee, Kathleen Born. Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023 adopted by Massachusetts General Court and approved by the Governor, this meeting was remote via Zoom.

At the request of the Chair, Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Kaleb Abebe – Present
Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Absent
Mosammat Faria Afreen – Present
Nikolas Bowie – Present
Kevin Chen – Present
Max Clermont – Present
Jennifer Gilbert – Present
Kai Long – Absent
Patrick Magee – Present
Mina Makarios – Present
Lisa Peterson – Present
Ellen Shachter – Absent
Susan Shell – Absent
Jim Stockard – Present
Kathleen Born – Present
Present – 11, Absent – 4. Quorum established.

The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized member Lisa Peterson who made a motion to adopt the meeting minutes from July 18, 2023.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Kaleb Abebe – Yes

Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Absent

Mosammat Faria Afreen – Yes

Nikolas Bowie – Yes

Kevin Chen – Yes

Max Clermont – Yes

Jennifer Gilbert – Yes

Kai Long – Absent

Patrick Magee – Yes

Lisa Peterson – Yes

Ellen Shachter – Absent

Susan Shell – Absent

Jim Stockard – Yes

Kathleen Born – Yes

Yes – 11, Absent – 4. Motion passed.

The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized member Jim Stockard who made a motion to adopt the communications received from the public.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Kaleb Abebe – Yes

Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Absent

Mosammat Faria Afreen – Yes

Nikolas Bowie – Yes

Kevin Chen – Yes

Max Clermont – Yes

Jennifer Gilbert – Yes

Kai Long – Absent

Patrick Magee – Yes

Lisa Peterson – Yes

Ellen Shachter – Absent

Susan Shell – Absent

Jim Stockard – Yes

Kathleen Born – Yes

Yes – 11, Absent – 4. Motion passed.

The Chair, Kathleen Born opened public comment.

Suzanne Blier shared concerns about recent items that have passed within the Council and offered comments on ideological and politically driven decisions made by the Council and urged the Charter Review Committee to discuss these matters more.

Marilyn Frankenstein asked why there is no ward or district system where there could be At Large Councillors as well as Councillors for specific areas of the City and shared concerns about why Charter Review Committee members are not discussing this further.

Heather Hoffman offered comments and concerns related to people being selected for Boards and Commissions based on demographics and not expertise.

Anna Corning, Project Manager, reviewed the drafted language for City Council Goal Setting and Budget Priorities provisions, which was provided in advance of the meeting and included in the Agenda Packet. Anna Corning opened the discussion related to City Council Goal Setting and recognized Committee Members to share their comments and suggestions about the proposed language. Michael Ward and Patricia Lloyd from the Collins Center were available to respond. Chair Born noted the importance of making goal setting practical and introducing measurable aspects to it.

Charter Review Committee members along with Anna Corning continued to review the drafted language and focus on the Budget Priorities provision section. Committee members offered suggestions and raised concerns during discussion. Staff from the Collins Center were available to respond and provide feedback.

Anna Corning introduced additional draft language related to the City Manager Review and recognized Committee members for comments, questions, and concerns. Anna Corning noted that language regarding the City Manager Review was just recently added to the Charter and could be found under Section 116(a). Anna Corning shared potential elements that could be added to the Charter and provided examples of language from other municipalities. Michael Ward and Patricia Lloyd were available to respond to comments from Committee members.

Anna Corning shared that she would like to review Article 1 of the Charter with the possibility of approving the proposed language. Michael Ward offered an explanation of why Article 1 is included in modern Charters, noting that the language is there to help lay the foundation for the City and its powers.

Anna Corning recognized member Kevin Chen who offered the suggestion that in Section 1-5 to change ‘municipality’ to ‘city’. Michael Ward shared he does not see any issues with that change and will confirm with other members of the Collins Center.

Anna Corning recognized member Mina Makarious who shared they would like to add at the end of Section 1-3 ‘appointed by the City Council’. Member Makarious proposed additional language be added to Section 1-6 related to the City Manager and the City Council’s intergovernmental relationship.

The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized member Jim Stockard who made a motion to adopt Article 1: Incorporation, Powers, Etc., as amended in Committee (Attachment A), as proposed new Charter language.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Kaleb Abebe – Yes

Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Absent
Mosammat Faria Afreen – Yes
Nikolas Bowie – Absent
Kevin Chen – Yes
Max Clermont – Absent
Jennifer Gilbert – Yes
Kai Long – Absent
Patrick Magee – Yes
Mina Makarios – Yes
Lisa Peterson – Yes
Ellen Shachter – Absent
Susan Shell – Absent
Jim Stockard – Yes
Kathleen Born – Yes
Yes – 9, Absent – 6. Motion passed.

The Chair, Kathleen Born reminded Committee members that due to the number of members that were absent, the previous vote on Article 1 was not a two-thirds vote, which is a requirement of the Charter Review Committee. The Chair noted that the Committee can continue with individual votes and plan to have a two-thirds acceptance vote with the final report.

Anna Corning opened discussion to Committee members on resident relief mechanisms and noted that there is the possibility of making several provisions within the relief mechanisms. Anna Corning shared that the possible provisions could be around free petitions, initiative, referendum, and recall.

The Charter Review Committee adjourned at approximately 7:30p.m.

Attachment A - Article 1: Incorporation, Powers, Etc., as amended in Committee.

Clerk’s Note: The City of Cambridge/22 City View records every City Council meeting and every City Council Committee meeting. This is a permanent record. The video for this meeting can be viewed at:

https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/559?view_id=1&redirect=true&h=98b8698751887a17df347dbd24c4b9e2

Discussion regarding Residents Assembly 9/5/23

Zondervan, Quinton <qzondervan@cambridgema.gov>

Wed 9/6/2023 4:40 PM

To:Cambridge Charter Review Committee <CharterReviewCommittee@Cambridgema.gov>

Dear Charter Review Committee,

I was intrigued by your discussion regarding a potential Residents Assembly as suggested by Niko Bowie. I've long felt this to be an important and missing component of our municipal democracy. In a sense, when we abandoned the Town Meeting form of government for a representative City Council, we lost a lot of public participation. With 9 Councillors representing ~120,000 residents, compared to e.g. 255 elected Town Meeting members in Brookline with a population of ~60,000, that is a 57 times greater level of representation in Brookline's legislative body compared to Cambridge.

While it may be considered impractical to now revert to a legislative body of say 500 members in Cambridge, meeting only once or twice a year, it's not unthinkable to have 100 or more residents come together to discuss important topics and make formal recommendations to the City Council once or twice a year. In fact, I've twice been part of exactly such an effort, namely the [2009/2010](#) and the [2016](#) Cambridge Climate Emergency Congresses.

Of note to the Committee is that such assemblies can be created without changes to the Charter or action by the City Council. Of course formalizing them in the Charter or by Ordinance may be of value. But as long as they are merely making recommendations to the City Council, as opposed to acting as the Legislative Body of the city, it doesn't seem to me that a change to the charter is required to establish such an assembly.

Of course an interesting question is how membership would be established. For both Climate Congresses we went through a laborious but rewarding process through the Mayor's Office (Councillor Simmons happened to be Mayor both times) to recruit and appoint members to the Congress, establishing as much diversity of perspective as possible. For a more standing body, as opposed to an ad-hoc body like the Climate Congress, it would make sense to have members elected in a similar way that we elect e.g. Ward Committee members currently (which is not, to my knowledge, enshrined in the charter either?). The drawback to that approach however is that only registered voters can participate in such elections, whereas one potential benefit of a Residents Assembly is that both membership and appointment power can be made available to non-citizen residents of Cambridge, as well as citizens who are not otherwise eligible to vote, including young people below the age of 18.

It seems possible, though perhaps challenging, to have a special kind of election for this that is otherwise run through our regular electoral system overseen by the Election Commission. The Council has at various times explored allowing e.g. Green Card holders to vote in municipal elections, but one of the many obstacles that has been presented (assuming state approval were granted) is that the voter roles would now be different for municipal vs state elections. Not an insurmountable obstacle, but clearly a challenge. One potential solution for a Residents Assembly would be that citizen members are elected during a regular election, with a separate additional appointment/selection mechanism for a certain number of seats to ensure immigrant & youth participation; we have e.g. (non-voting) youth members on the School Committee even now, who are elected/selected outside the municipal election. Additional opportunities for equitable representation of course would be available to such a body, which could be enshrined in its rules/regulations.

I offer these thoughts for your consideration and thank you for your work and wish you well in your deliberations.

City Of Cambridge - Department Announcement

City of Cambridge Massachusetts

www2.cambridgema.gov

Best,

Q

Quinton Zondervan

[Cambridge City Councillor](#)

617-901-2006

Check out my [TEDx talk](#): Go Solar and Save!

Ranked-Choice Voting: Recommended switch from the "Cambridge Rules" to the Weighted Inclusive Gregory Method

Julia Shephard <jkbshephard@gmail.com>

Wed 9/6/2023 7:08 AM

To: Cambridge Charter Review Committee <CharterReviewCommittee@Cambridgema.gov>

Dear Charter Review Committee Members,

I hope you're doing well.

I am eighteen years old, so this will be my first election voting in Cambridge. I am excited! I have lived here for six years and am just starting my second year as an undergraduate at Harvard. I was grateful to be able to make public comments at your meeting on September 5th and wanted to follow up on the comments that I made. I mainly argued that now is a good time to modify the proportional representation algorithm that we currently use.

I learned the following when I was looking into how to vote in the municipal elections this November: At the moment, Cambridge identifies a "quota" or number of votes that an elected candidate can maintain, based on the number of candidates for school board/city council and the number of ballots cast. If a candidate reaches that quota in any round of voting, they are automatically elected. It would be unfair to subsequently discard *all* ballots cast for that candidate, especially if they won a much larger fraction of the vote than needed to win. Because of this, Cambridge counts the number of "surplus" ballots cast for that candidate, the number of votes cast minus the quota. Like almost all ranked-choice voting systems, we then "transfer" that number of surplus ballots to the second choices of the voters for first choice.

However, Cambridge is unique in **randomly** selecting ballots from the surplus to transfer, rather than attempting to take into account all of the views of the constituents whose candidate won. This method is called the Cincinnati Method. In the vast majority of situations, employing it means that we drop almost all of the preferences of the voters whose candidate won and overweight a select few preferences enormously. A toy (but realistic, given quotas in Cambridge) example: if a candidate is elected in the first round with 2,000 votes but needs only 1,800 to receive election, 200 of their supporters are selected to move on. This means that we completely exhaust the ballots of 90% of this candidate's voters. At the same time, we have arbitrarily chosen a lucky 10% to get an extra vote, where their second-choice preference counts as much as another candidate's supporter's first vote. The Law of Large Numbers indicates that this random selection should represent the mean opinion of voters who voted for this candidate, though we should remember that the number of ballots transferred is low. But even if the outcome will be similar with high probability each time, this seems to effectively discount votes for no good reason.

Luckily, a much more sensible alternative is in use in other cities (e.g. Amherst). It gets rid of this problem while maintaining all the other properties of the system we currently use, and it's already programmed into our election machines, entailing a frictionless switch. This alternative is known as the **Weighted Inclusive Gregory Method**, a fractional transfer system. In the above example, rather than choosing 10% of voters to move to the second round, we would take every ballot cast for the winning candidate and multiply the weight of its vote by 0.10. Now all of these voters will be represented equally, but the total number of votes moving forward remains the same.

It seems to me that this method maintains the spirit of ranked choice voting while executing it much more fairly. Since we are actively looking into revising the charter, this seems like a

particularly good time to update our methodology. I can understand why we might have used the Cincinnati Method in 1938, when it was first adopted—this was before the invention of the pocket calculator, and in a time of much greater reliance on integers—but I don't see a compelling reason to continue it now, besides perhaps tradition. And I haven't met anyone wedded to the principle of picking votes randomly; indeed, the details of how we randomly transfer the surplus appear to be footnoted in Cambridge's description of election processes.

Most importantly, however, a move to the Weighted Inclusive Gregory Method improves the case to Cambridge voters that their votes count equally. I was disappointed, when reading up before my first election, to realize that mine might not.

Thank you for your hard work this commission is doing, and all the best,
Julia Shephard

A few sources I found useful on WIGM and our current rules:

<http://rwinters.com/elections/supplement.htm>

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/Departments/electioncommission/cambridgemunicipalelections>

<https://northamptonma.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/ArchivedAgenda/01122022-5064?packet=true> (final page; comparison chart)

Re: Feasible voting system improvements

Jameson Quinn <jameson.quinn@gmail.com>

Tue 9/5/2023 5:44 PM

To: Cambridge Charter Review Committee <CharterReviewCommittee@Cambridgema.gov>

To be clear, in the above, "fractional transfers" refers to the Weighted Inclusive Gregory Method, as mentioned by somebody else in the public comments for last meeting.

On Wed, 30 Aug 2023 at 08:34, Jameson Quinn <jameson.quinn@gmail.com> wrote:

I've realized that my earlier suggestion of adding an optionally-delegated element to Cambridge's STV system is too ambitious to fit into the committee's current schedule. So I'm writing this to focus on my other two (simpler and less-controversial) suggestions: fractional transfers and allowing tied rankings.

Fractional Transfers

There's really not that much to say here. Pretty much any relevant expert would agree that, given today's technology, fractional transfers are a better system than Cambridge's current practice of randomly choosing an offset for each precinct. Yes, it would require software updates to the tallying software, but not to the voting hardware; and since open-source software would almost certainly be usable with only minor adjustments, the cost would be trivial.

Allowing Tied (and skipped) Rankings

The suggestion here is to allow voters to give the same ranking to more than one candidate. For instance, I might give candidates A, B, and C all a "1", candidate D a "2", and candidates E and F a "4" (skipping "3", perhaps by mistake).

When tallying such a ballot, it would be split equally among all the candidates at the best (lowest-numbered) rank which has any non-eliminated candidates. So my ballot in the example above would start out giving $\frac{1}{3}$ of a vote each to A, B, and C. If A were eliminated, their portion would transfer to B and C, leaving each with $\frac{1}{2}$ of my vote. If B, C, and D were eliminated, my vote would go past the skipped rank "3", so would count $\frac{1}{2}$ each for E and F.

Note that this rule would *not* change how any currently-fully-valid ballot would be counted; so a voter who was unaware of or confused about the new rule could still vote in the old way and get exactly the same voting power as before.

Advantages

This would simplify the task of voting, because voters wouldn't always have to choose between candidates they view as similar. It's far easier to group candidates into "good, better, best" than to sort them strictly into order. As a result, it's possible that this would increase turnout/engagement.

This would make it easier and more effective for candidates to campaign as a group. It's possible that doing so would help them more clearly articulate a common platform, helping to clarify voter choices.

Disadvantages/Costs

This would require voter education, to make voters understand that they can give tied rankings.

This would require software updates both for vote-tallying and for electronic voting machines. This level of update has been done before with the current machines, but it's more than the ordinary year-to-year updates.

This rule might differ from some hypothetical future statewide ranked choice voting (RCV) law, which could lead to voter confusion. (Of course, this would turn from a disadvantage into an advantage if Cambridge showed the way and caused this hypothetical statewide system to allow ties as well. Note that this tie rule is equally applicable to any form of RCV — not just multi-winner STV as in Cambridge, but single-winner IRV as might be used in a statewide system.)

Re: Improving Cambridge Voting System

Jameson Quinn <jameson.quinn@gmail.com>

Fri 8/18/2023 11:31 AM

To: Cambridge Charter Review Committee <CharterReviewCommittee@Cambridgema.gov>

I'm becoming increasingly concerned that leaving consideration of voting systems to the last minute is unhealthy.

I have (twice) submitted suggestions for updates to the voting system (the first time, last year). Of course, I think that my ideas are good. But while some of them are merely technical fixes that should be uncontroversial, the key suggestion of including optional delegation is something that should have time for public discussion *beyond* just the charter committee before adoption. The current schedule barely leaves time for the committee itself to properly consider this idea, and seems to leave no time for airing it to the public and getting feedback.

I don't know how to deal with this timing issue, but I think you should be open to considering all possibilities, including:

- creating a subcommittee or new committee with the capacity to devote more focused time to voting systems,
- changing the overall schedule
- and/or adding public meetings (after the committee has clearly laid out options).

Again, thanks for your dedicated work,
Jameson Quinn

On Wed, 9 Aug 2023 at 11:10, Cambridge Charter Review Committee
<CharterReviewCommittee@cambridgema.gov> wrote:

Thanks so much, Jameson, really appreciate all this info! I'll keep you updated.

Anna

From: Jameson Quinn <jameson.quinn@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, August 4, 2023 11:40 AM

To: Cambridge Charter Review Committee <CharterReviewCommittee@Cambridgema.gov>

Subject: Re: Improving Cambridge Voting System

I want to be a little bit more explicit about my offer, in my previous email, to "talk with" the elections subcommittee.

* I'd like to be notified about any meetings they have, and to get any correspondence they have that's covered by open records rules.

* As a Cambridge voter with relevant expertise, I'd love to be able to speak in order to answer any questions they have about voting systems. This applies whether or not they are interested in my own suggestions.

* When/if they do resolve the basic outlines of the voting system they want, I'd be happy to help draft language that covers edge cases.

Any of the above apply separately or together.

Dr. Jameson Quinn

On Wed, 2 Aug 2023 at 16:43, Jameson Quinn <jameson.quinn@gmail.com> wrote:

In my previous written comments, I suggested certain changes to Cambridge's voting system. I realize now, however, that those comments got too deep in the technical weeds too quickly. So now I've written another document on the same idea, starting from WHY it's needed.

[Here's the new link.](#)

I'd also love to talk with the elections subcommittee that was discussed in the last meeting. Let me know anything I can do to help.

Sincerely,
Dr. Jameson Quinn
Cambridge voter: 412 Norfolk St #2.

Improving Cambridge's Voting System

First question: what needs improving?

Cambridge's voting system (STV) is one of the best in the country. As a proportional system, it has various important advantages:

1. Minimizes wasted votes
 - Electing 9 city councillors, it essentially guarantees that under 10% of votes will be wasted. Another way of saying this is that over 90% of voters will be represented. ("Essentially", because in theory if enough people ranked few enough candidates, over 10% of votes could become exhausted; but in practice, this does not typically happen.)
2. Reduces threshold (and thus cost) to win
 - Since it only takes 10% of votes to win, it's possible to gain a seat by focusing your campaign on only some of the voters, reducing campaigning costs.
3. Diversity of winners
 - If voters care about some aspect of diversity (say, gender), they can ensure that the council will reflect that diversity. Proportional systems have been shown to lead to more diverse outcomes than single-winner ones.

However, that doesn't mean it doesn't have any disadvantages. These include:

1. Complexity for voters
 - To ensure casting an effective vote, you need to carefully rank at least several candidates out of a list of frequently dozens. Though some voters enjoy this, it is burdensome for others; and this burden tends to increase other societal inequities.
2. Possible divisive winners
 - This goes hand-in-hand with advantages #2 and #3 above. That is, if it only takes support from 10% of voters to win, a winner might be actively despised by over 80% of voters. It's not possible to entirely eliminate this possibility without losing the corresponding advantages; but it may be possible to minimize the problem while still keeping most of the advantages.
3. Little incentive candidates to cooperate and/or form (and communicate) common agendas
 - Candidates quickly realize that first-choice rankings are so much more important than second-choice ones, that forming explicit alliances may not be worth it.
4. Complexity for election administrators
 - The vote transfer process requires ballots to be centralized before counting.
 - It is generally not feasible to perform audits or to give even preliminary outcomes at the precinct level.

A single change — optional limited delegation (using pre-declared tiers) — would help with problems #1, #3, and #4. As for problem #2, it may be possible to improve the system using

quotas and/or a way to explicitly vote *against* a candidate; but in my experience, such ideas lead quickly to such complexity that they end up not worth it.

What is optional declared-ally delegation?

1. Before the election, each candidate could declare which other candidates were “allies”. For example, if the candidates were the letters of the alphabet, then A might declare B-F as their allies, while F might declare D-H as theirs. Note that these declarations would not need to be mutual.
2. Declarations would be made public, and in particular would be available to look at when voting.
3. Ballots would include a “Do not delegate” checkbox. If this checkbox was NOT marked, then when a voter’s explicit choices were exhausted, the vote would transfer to the allies declared by the voter’s favorite (top-ranked) candidate(s).

In order for this to work, we’d have to use a slightly different version of STV that allowed fractional transfers in the case of equal rankings. This is well-understood to still be a proportional STV system.

Example:

Suppose:

- *There were a total of 9,999 votes (so that one quota is $\text{floor}(10\%+1)$, or 1,000 votes).*
- *I voted for candidate A first, candidate E second, and candidate I third; and did not check “do not delegate”.*
- *As above, A declared B-F as their allies.*
- *Candidates were eliminated in the following order: A, C, I, E, B; then D was elected with exactly 1 quota.*

To begin with, my vote would be tallied for my favorite, A. When A was eliminated, it would go to my explicit second choice, E. Eliminating C and I wouldn’t immediately affect my vote; but eliminating E would.

Since my third choice, I, had already been eliminated, the current STV system would discard my vote as exhausted; but with optional declared-ally delegation, it would go to my favorite candidate’s pre-designated allies. A declared B-F as allies, but of these, there are 3 remaining (B,D, and F), so my vote would be split equally between these, counting as $\frac{1}{3}$ of a vote for each. When B was then eliminated, only 2 allies remain (D and F), so my vote counts as $\frac{1}{2}$ a vote for each. When D was elected with exactly 1000 votes, that would consume the half of my vote that was counting for D, leaving just half a vote with F.

How would this help with the problems noted above?

- Reduces complexity for voters.
 - Less-engaged voters can simply choose one favorite and leave the rest of the ranks blank. As long as the favorite had at least one viable ally, that voter would still get represented by one of those allies.

- Note that merely allowing tied rankings also reduces complexity, as you don't have to draw fine distinctions between each candidate. It also reduces the chance of accidentally-spoiled ballots.
- Increases incentives for candidates to cooperate and/or communicate shared agendas
 - Both tied rankings and the option to delegate increase the importance of other-than-first rankings, and make it easier for a group of candidates to run as a slate. It's reasonable to imagine that slate candidates might work together more efficiently on the issues that were part of their shared campaign agenda.
 - (Essentially, this brings the upsides of political parties, including that such agendas could make voting choices clearer for voters.)
 - (As Jack Santucci has shown in *More Parties or No Parties*, his investigation of 20th-century municipal voting reform in the US, STV survives and thrives better in the presence of such party-like groups.)
- Enables election administrators to better use some precinct-level results
 - Fully ranked ballots would still need to be centralized to be counted. But a preliminary tally of first choices could be completed at the precinct level, and it would be easy to project provisional winners by assuming that all votes were delegated. This would also help enable risk-limiting audits — essentially impossible with the current STV system.

Note: I'm sending this document to the Charter Review Committee. Once I send it, I will refrain from further edits to the document itself; but feel free to use the Comment function to ask questions, which I'll reply to in comments. If needed, I'd be happy to propose statutory language to implement this.

Revised Draft: City Council Goals, City Council Budget Priorities & City Manager Review

A. City Council Goals

SECTION 2-3 PRESIDENT/CHAIR MAYOR AND VICE PRESIDENT/VICE CHAIR/VICE MAYOR, ELECTION; TERM; POWERS

iv. Goal-Setting – The council president/chair/mayor shall coordinate, with the council, the development and prioritization of both short- and long-term council goals to support a strategic vision for the city, as provided for in section [2-12] at the beginning of each council term.

SECTION. 2-12 GOAL SETTING

- (a) At the beginning of each council term, withing the first six months, the council shall develop council goals for the upcoming term, in consideration previous council goals, and the strategic needs and vision of the city.
- (b) The council shall seek input from the city manager, department heads, multi-member bodies and the public in the development of council goals.
- (c) The council shall consider intercity and regional issues in development and prioritization of council goals and strategic vision.
- (d) The council may develop both short- and long-term goals. To the extent practicable, goals shall be measurable, include timelines for implementation, and *relevant budget requirements*.
- (e) The council shall establish a broad public engagement process to incorporate public input into development of council goals. This shall include at least two public hearings at which public comment is accepted and such additional outreach efforts as the councils deems appropriate. The goal-setting and public engagement process under this section shall be publicized via multiple media avenues available to the city, including on its website, social media pages, and through direct electronic communications. The council shall also review the results of any city-wide surveys or other public engagement tools undertaken in the prior term.
- (f) The council shall publish its goals for the term in multiple media avenues available to the city, including on its website, social media pages, council newsletters and through direct electronic communications.
- (g) The council shall establish a public method of tracking progress in meeting the established goals.

SECTION 3-1 CITY MANAGER APPOINTMENT; QUALIFICATIONS AND ELIGIBILILY; TERM OF OFFICE; COMPENSATION; EVALUTATION; GOAL-SETTING

(f) Goal-setting – The city council and city manager shall collaboratively develop and prioritize goals for the city manager that shall be used to measure the city manager’s performance during the evaluation process and to provide guidance to the city manager. These city manager goals shall take into account the council’s goal set pursuant to Section [2-12].

B. Budget Priorities

ARTICLE 5 SECTION __: BUDGETARY PRIORITIES

The president/chair/mayor of the council shall call a meeting of the council prior to the commencement of the budget process, but not later than October 30, to review the financial condition of the city, revenue and expenditure forecasts, and other information relevant to the budget process. The president/chair/mayor also shall invite the city's state legislative delegation, representatives of the school committee and other relevant stakeholders to attend this meeting.

Prior to the end of the calendar year, the city council shall develop and publish budgetary priorities that take into consideration the council goals created pursuant to Section 2-12, with input from the city manager and the community. There shall be broad public engagement in diverse formats with opportunities for the public to provide input, including at least one public hearing. The budget developed by the city manager will outline how the proposed budget is consistent with the council's budgetary priorities.

C. City Manager Annual Review

SECTION 3-1 CITY MANAGER APPOINTMENT; QUALIFICATIONS AND ELIGIBILITY; TERM OF OFFICE; COMPENSATION; EVALUATION; GOAL-SETTING

(e) Evaluation – Annually the city council shall prepare and deliver to the city manager a written review of the city manager's performance in a manner provided by ordinance. This review shall include specific metrics related to council goals outlined in Section [2-12]. The council shall provide opportunities for public participation throughout the review process.

Draft Resident Assembly Text for CRC Discussion

Revised 09.08.23

I. OPTION ONE – More general approach

ARTICLE 10: PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

SECTION 10-1 RESIDENT ASSEMBLY

In order to expand access to city government to include voices not typically heard, the city council shall have the authority to establish and maintain a resident assembly that shall serve in an advisory role to city government. The assembly shall consist of ___ members selected via a sortition process to be provided by ordinance.

The resident assembly shall discuss and, where appropriate, make recommendations on any items presented to it by the city council, as well as any items put forward by at least five assembly members. These items can include, but are not limited to, the implementation of council goals, the consideration of proposed policies, and items raised via the initiative petition process provided in Section 10-2.

Commented [CA1]: prev: "at least four times annually and may meet more at its discretion or"

The assembly shall meet ___ as provided by ordinance. The assembly may create subcommittees or charge individual members with drafting recommendations for approval by the full assembly. The assembly shall provide a report of its activities to the city council and the city manager.

To ensure that participation is not a financial burden, assembly members shall be offered a stipend to be provided by ordinance, subject to appropriation. The stipend should be sufficient to compensate members for their time and for reasonable costs incurred by participation, including transportation to the meeting, dependent care, or similar expenses.

Commented [CA2]: Add language around technology support and interpretation

Subject to appropriation, the city shall provide resources for staff support to the resident assembly.

SECTION 10: TRANSITION

SECTION 10-1 RESIDENT ASSEMBLY

The establishment of a resident assembly is intended to create an inclusive and representative group of voices that are not traditionally heard in city government. The resident assembly shall be selected by sortition from the general population, with effort made to reach residents of all backgrounds and experiences. Within 12 months of the effective date of this charter, the city council, in consultation with the city manager, city clerk, and relevant experts in the field, will complete a study on the best method for implementing the resident assembly as provided in Section 10-2. Within 18 months of the effective date of this charter, the city council shall enact ordinances establishing the resident assembly and commence the process of selecting members.

OPTION TWO – More targeted approach focusing solely on initiative petition

ARTICLE __ RESIDENT PARTICIPATION MEASURES

SECTION __ RESIDENT ASSEMBLY

In order to expand access to city government to include voices not typically heard, the city council have the authority to establish and maintain a resident assembly that shall deliberate on resident initiative petitions commenced under Section [redacted] but signed by fewer than [redacted] percent of voters. The resident assembly shall determine whether the initiative petition shall be subject to the resident initiative petition procedures available pursuant to [redacted] despite the failure to meet the required signature thresholds of Section [redacted]. The assembly shall consist of __ members selected via a sortition process to be provided by ordinance.

The assembly shall deliberate at a time and place fixed by ordinance. The assembly shall provide an report of its activities to the city council and the city manager.

To ensure that participation is not a financial burden, assembly members shall be offered a stipend to be provided by ordinance, subject to appropriation. The stipend should be sufficient to compensate members for their time and for reasonable costs incurred by participation, including transportation to the meeting, dependent care, or similar expenses.

Subject to appropriation, the city shall provide resources for staff support to the resident assembly.

SECTION 10: TRANSITION

SECTION 10-__ RESIDENT ASSEMBLY

The establishment of a resident assembly is intended to create an inclusive and representative group of voices that are not traditionally heard in city government. The resident assembly shall be selected by sortition from the general population, with effort made to reach residents of all backgrounds and experiences. Within 12 months of the effective date of this charter, the city council, in consultation with the city manager, city clerk, and relevant experts in the field, will complete a study on the best method for implementing the resident assembly as provided in Section [redacted]. Within 18 months of the effective date of this charter, the city council shall enact ordinances establishing the resident assembly and commence the process of selecting members.