

**Minutes for the January 31, 2019 Meeting of the
New York City Charter Revision Commission 2019**

A duly noticed meeting of the New York City Charter Revision Commission 2019 was held in the Council Chambers at City Hall in Manhattan at 6:00pm on January 31, 2019.

The Chair, Gail Benjamin, presided at the meeting. The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:10pm. Also present were the following members of the Commission:

- Sal Albanese
- James Caras
- Eduardo Cordero, Sr.
- Stephen J. Fiala
- Paula Gavin
- Lindsay Greene
- Alison Hirsh
- Rev. Clinton Miller
- Sateesh Nori
- Dr. Merryl Tisch
- James Vacca
- Carl Weisbrod

The Chair acknowledged the presence of a quorum to conduct the meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Weisbrod to adopt the Minutes of the September December 10, 2018 meeting of the Commission. The motion was seconded and thereafter adopted unanimously by all Commission members present.

Chair Benjamin explained that the Commission staff had developed proposed focus areas for further study by the Commission based on the criteria the Commission had adopted at its December 10, 2018 meeting. The Chair presented these focus areas in four groupings (“buckets”), which were discussed, amended and adopted in turn by the Commission as described below.

The Chair began by describing staff recommendations of the proposed topic areas for further study in Elections bucket. Commissioner Albanese made a motion to add “further study of non-partisan elections” to this bucket. The motion was seconded, and discussion followed. The motion failed by a vote of four in the affirmative (Albanese, Cordero, Fiala, Miller) and nine in the negative (Caras, Gavin, Greene, Hirsh, Nori, Tisch, Vacca, Weisbrod, Benjamin). Following this a vote, a motion was made by Commissioner Benjamin to adopt the Elections bucket. The motion was seconded and adopted unanimously by all Commission members present.

The Chair moved on to describe staff recommendations of the proposed topic areas for further study in the Governance bucket. Commissioner Vacca made a motion to add language to the description of the Public Advocate focus area to clarify the concept of removal of that office will be included within this topic area for further study. The motion was seconded and adopted unanimously by all Commission members present. A motion was made by Commissioner Hirsh to “study the possibility of creating a Chief Diversity Officer in City Hall and every city agency.”

DRAFT SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY COMMISSION

The motion was seconded and, after discussion, was adopted by a vote of 12 commissioners in the affirmative (Albanese, Caras, Cordero, Fiala, Gavin, Greene, Hirsh, Miller, Nori, Tisch, Vacca, Weisbrod) and one in the negative (Benjamin). Following this vote, a motion was made by Chair Benjamin to adopt the Governance bucket as amended. The motion was seconded and adopted unanimously by all Commission members present.

The Chair moved on to a description of the proposed Finance bucket. A motion was made by Chair Benjamin to adopt the Finance bucket. The motion was seconded and adopted unanimously by all Commission members present.

The Chair moved on to describe staff recommendations of the proposed topic areas for further study in the Land Use bucket. Commissioner Caras made a motion to include an additional topic area that would include an examination of the composition and qualifications of, and possibility of remuneration for, members of the Landmarks Preservation Commission. The motion was seconded and, after discussion, was adopted by a vote of 11 commissioners in the affirmative (Albanese, Caras, Cordero, Fiala, Gavin, Hirsh, Miller, Nori, Tisch, Vacca, Weisbrod) and one in the negative (Benjamin). Following this vote, a motion was made by Chair Benjamin to adopt the Land Use bucket as amended. The motion was seconded and adopted unanimously by all Commission members present.

Finally, a motion was made by Commissioner Nori to adjourn. The motion was seconded and adopted unanimously by all Commission members present.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55pm.

DRAFT SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY COMMISSION

The amended, compiled lists of the topic areas for further study by the Commission, as categorized in the Elections, Governance, Finance and Land Use buckets are attached hereto and made a part hereof.

FOCUS AREAS

ELECTIONS

Instant Runoff Voting/Ranked Choice Voting

Proposals for the establishment of an instant runoff voting/ranked choice voting system (or a similar system) and related election process reforms (e.g. elimination of duplicative primary elections).

Redistricting

Proposals relating to how members of the Redistricting Commission are selected, who may serve on such commission, and how district maps are drawn and adopted.

Campaign Finance

Proposals relating to the structure of the Campaign Finance Board (e.g. how members to such board are appointed) and establishing an alternative public campaign financing system, such as a “democracy voucher” system.

GOVERNANCE

Appointment and Removal of Officials

Proposals for establishing an “advice and consent” process for the appointment of certain government officials (e.g. Corporation Counsel, certain commissioners) and for removing such officials.

Borough Presidents and Borough-Level Governance

Proposals to expand and enhance the role of the Borough Presidents and/or borough-level governance.

Corporation Counsel

Evaluate the role and accountability of the Corporation Counsel.

Corruption and Conflicts of Interest

Proposals relating to the structure of the Conflicts of Interest Board (COIB) and lobbying by certain officials after their public service has ended.

Police Accountability

Proposals relating to enhancing systems of police accountability. This will include exploring improvements to the structure, powers, and role of the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) and the manner in which police discipline is handled.

Public Advocate

Examine the role of the Public Advocate and consider proposals modifying, including eliminating, the powers and responsibilities of that office.

Technical Changes to the Charter and Other Laws

Reconstituting the Board of Statutory Consolidation, whose purpose was to periodically review the Charter and other laws with an eye toward reorganizing and simplifying those laws.

Chief Diversity Officer

Proposal to create the position of Chief Diversity Officer in the Office of the Mayor and each city agency.

FINANCE

City Budget

Proposals relating to (1) the structure of the budget, including making budget units of appropriation more detailed or program-based and aligning the capital budget with discrete projects, (2) the authority of the Council to establish terms and conditions on appropriations, (3) the timing of budget modifications concerning the financial plan, (4) impoundment powers, and (5) the timing and manner of making revenue estimates.

Comprehensive Planning (Capital Budget Component)

Proposals relating to the development of a comprehensive city planning framework for capital spending and land use. This would include consideration of proposals to restore the Department of City Planning's role in the capital budget process.

Independent Budgets for Certain Offices

Proposals relating to providing an independent budget (e.g., a guaranteed minimum level of funding or ability to propose their own funding levels) for certain offices, such as the Public Advocate or the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB).

Public Pension System Investments

Proposals relating to how public pension system investment decisions are made and by whom.

Streamlining Procurement Payments

Explore ways to streamline the procurement process in order to ensure timely payments to contractors and grantees (as well as timely access to capital funding), particularly for nonprofit service providers. This would include an examination of the composition of the Procurement Policy Board (PPB).

Contract Registration

Examine the contract registration process, including proposals for a mechanism to resolve disputes between the Mayor and Comptroller with respect to approval/registration of a given contract.

Procurement Policy

Proposals for a mechanism to establish procurement/contracting (and reimbursement) policy objectives, including consideration of allowing or clarifying that such objectives can be established by local law.

LAND USE

Comprehensive Planning (Land Use Component)

Proposals relating to the development of a comprehensive city planning framework for capital spending and land use. This would include consideration of proposals for changes to the composition of the City Planning Commission.

NOTE: This would accompany the “Comprehensive Planning (Capital Budget Component)” topic included in the Finance bucket.

Franchising

Proposals relating to the composition of the Franchise and Concession Review Committee, the manner in which the terms of franchises are established, the manner and frequency of determining what franchises are necessary, and a mechanism for requiring that needed franchises be implemented.

Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP)

Evaluation of ULURP, including consideration of proposals related to (1) establishing a “pre-ULURP” mechanism to allow involvement by communities, Community Boards, Borough Presidents, and other relevant stakeholders earlier in ULURP; (2) allowing a Borough President to include an alternative application to be considered alongside an application originating with the City or City-affiliated entities; (3) exploring ways to ensure that necessary mitigation of development impacts occurs; (4) clarifying ULURP timelines; (5) examining the universe of projects covered by ULURP, and (6) the manner in which ULURP modifications by the City Council and post-ULURP modifications to existing approvals are administered.

Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA)

Examine the composition of the BSA and its review of applications.

Landmarks Preservation Commission

Proposals relating to the composition and qualifications of, and possibility of remuneration for, members of the Landmarks Preservation Commission.