

**ELK GROVE CHARTER COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, 8400 LAGUNA PALMS WAY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2008**

1. Call to Order / Roll Call / Pledge of Allegiance

The Regular Commission meeting of December 16, 2008 was called to order by Chair Allen at 6:07 p.m.

Present: Commissioners – Allen, Loveland, Orrock, Rambo, and Sendejas-Lopez

Absent: Commissioners – Johnson (arrived at 6:11 p.m.) and Martin

Also Present: Assistant City Attorney Jennifer Alves and Assistant City Clerk Jason Lindgren

Commissioner Rambo led the pledge of allegiance.

2. Public Comment (on non-agenda items)

None.

3. Public Outreach Schedule of Activities

Kristy Day, Community Relations Project Manager of The Hoyt Company, provided an overview of the public outreach schedule of activities planned up to April of 2009. Ms. Day noted that particular outreach materials would need to be completed to start the outreach process including: 1) crafting key messages, 2) choosing formats of production materials for education outreach, and 3) selecting an interim brand and logo. She noted that the finished materials will assist in generating initial interest in the Charter through existing resource mediums such as the website and City newsletter, and continued outreach strategies would then be implemented to coordinate public meetings and build on the stakeholder contact database. Once the primary outreach materials were established, then discussion would move towards outreach strategies for how to identify and conduct outreach to stakeholder groups.

Key Messages

Ms. Day stressed the importance of the initial key messages which provide the base composition for the outreach materials. The key messages should present a clear, consistent message regarding the process and purpose of the Charter. Ms. Day presented an initial draft (filed) for review which provided background on the Charter Commission's origin and history, with explanations of the process of how to get a charter on the ballot. She also presented a chart (filed) from the League of California Cities (LCC) demonstrating differences between Charter and General Law cities, a resource she would seek permission from the LCC to post on the Charter Commission website.

Chair Allen appreciated the clarity of the document capturing the history and required steps to present a Charter. He wanted the opportunity to condense the materials and provide key messages for work done to date, with projections for topics to be discussed for what a Charter would look like for Elk Grove.

Ms. Day responded to Vice Chair Orrock that outreach materials could be put into production and available in approximately one week's time, dependent on the Commission's availability to approve a finalized product. Vice Chair Orrock stated that the materials should be ready by mid-January in order to begin circulating the outreach materials prior to conducting outreach to individual groups.

Commissioner Rambo offered a strategy and timeline for outreach efforts suggesting that initial small group meetings be conducted over the next few months to lead into a large kick-off event targeted for the third Tuesday in March. The smaller, preliminary outreach efforts could be conducted in the place of the regularly scheduled Charter Commission meetings for January 20 and March 3, coordinating the Commissioners to meet with several groups during the proposed alternative schedule. Vice Chair Orrock and Commissioner Loveland agreed that, at minimum, two Commissioners should be present at any proposed small group meeting to stress the importance and commitment of the Charter Commission to present and hear from individual groups.

Vice Chair Orrock noted that the Commission had previously discussed scheduling one large event every month, and potentially having these events held on weekends at alternative locations to reach a wider audience. Ms. Day noted that at this early stage in generating the outreach plan, schedules have not yet been coordinated or sites selected to hold such events.

Ms. Day replied to Commissioner Loveland that The Hoyt Company, with the aid of Chair Allen, would schedule and identify groups available to meet with the Commissioners. Commissioner Loveland stressed the importance of having the outreach materials prepared before such small group outreach was conducted in order to synchronize and unify the message of the Charter Commission.

MOTION/VOTE:

Commissioner Rambo made a motion, Johnson second, to create a subcommittee comprised of Chair Allen and Commissioners Loveland and Rambo, to review, revise and amend the preliminary Key Messages presented by The Hoyt Company, and return with a draft for review by the Commission at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners – Johnson, Loveland, Orrock, Rambo, and Sendejas-Lopez
Noes: Commissioners – None
Abstained: Commissioners – None
Absent: Commissioners – Martin

Education Outreach

Vice Chair Orrock noted that media attention was being generated on the topic of city charters as the City of Sacramento is considering a charter amendment including, among other topics, creating a strong mayor position. He stressed the importance of portraying the difference between events and objectives driving the charter efforts in Sacramento as compared to Elk Grove.

Commissioner Rambo noted that such publicity could be used to the benefit of educating the public on the general nature of a charter. Several of the Commissioners responded that they had received feedback from the public that the terminology used in the draft charter language, and used during the course of the Commission's deliberations, was too complex and at times difficult to understand.

Commissioner Loveland noted that education would be an on-going effort for the Commission, and suggested that a glossary of terms be generated and posted online.

Commissioner Rambo agreed that such a resource would be of value to have accessible to the public during meetings, and to be incorporated into the outreach materials. He brought up a concept raised by Ms. Day to create a mock Voter Guide, such as those distributed during elections, but with the intent to educate voters on topics and terms, and to provide a means to display options or alternatives on charter topics. Mr. Rambo noted the utility of having all outreach materials available during meetings both at regularly scheduled meetings and during off-site outreach, as well as having the material posted online.

Commissioner Loveland entertained the idea of having a "shadow" document to provide a clear language interpretation of the necessary legal language currently used in the draft Charter language. Commissioner Johnson cautioned creating such a secondary document, as it could become evidence used in interpreting the intent of the legal language of the primary document at a future date

To further educational outreach and raise awareness of the Charter, Commissioner Rambo suggested establishing a regular column with the *Elk Grove Citizen*.

Commissioners Johnson and Sendejas-Lopez requested that any feedback or general inquiries received regarding the Charter be forwarded to the entire commission.

Interim Brand and Logo

Ms. Day presented an interim brand and logo (filed) to be used until a logo design contest could be coordinated with the Elk Grove Unified School District with a target date of September 2009 to coincide with Constitution Day. She

stated that the intent behind the design was to use an action oriented phrase, unbiased in terms of being pro- or con- for a charter.

Commissioner Rambo believed that describing a charter as a city's constitution resonated with members of public unfamiliar with the topic. He suggested that the words, "We the People..." be added to the interim brand to elicit a connection to the concept of the Charter with the United States Constitution.

Commissioner Sendejas-Lopez preferred the wording arrangement "...chartering the future of Elk Grove," compared to the current draft, "Charting Elk Grove's Future." She suggested that once the brand and logo were complete that signs and banners positioned at busy intersections and roadways should be utilized for advertising, such as how campaign signs are positioned during an election cycle.

Commissioner Rambo Motioned that a \$600 reward be set aside as an incentive for the logo design contest, the motion died for a lack of a second.

Commissioner Loveland cautioned that there are restrictions on government bodies making gifts of public funds. Assistant City Attorney Alves noted that there are restrictions on making gifts of public funds, but if monies are spent which could be construed as paying for a service, then there may be the opportunity to implement a design contest incentive. She stated that feasibility and parameters on such a contest incentive could be presented before the Commission at the January 6, 2009 meeting.

Ms. Day clarified that The Hoyt Company was still only in a preliminary discussion with the Elk Grove Unified School District (EGUSD) regarding the design contest. Commissioner Sendejas-Lopez noted that in her previous meetings, as the Charter Commission's representative to the EGUSD, that the EGUSD wanted to maintain the focus of the contest as a Civics oriented educational project, and not a political tool. Chair Allen confirmed to Ms. Day that she work with Commissioner Sendejas-Lopez to further discuss the contest with the EGUSD and that the nature of a prize would be examined by the City Attorney's Office for future consideration.

Commissioner Johnson suggested the use of a parchment or scroll imagery, including using an associated font type, to propagate connections with the idea of the United States Constitution.

The Commission proposed that Ms. Day submit to Chair Allen varied layouts for the brand using the words, "We the People... Chartering the Future of Elk Grove" on scroll/parchment imagery using a font type similar to that used for the United States Constitution.

Stakeholder Contact Database

Ms. Day described how The Hoyt Company would maintain a stakeholder meeting database. The current database is based from past data collected by

The Hoyt Company for the City of Elk Grove. The database currently holds 613 contacts comprised of local businesses, city staff, regional government representatives, media, Home Owner Associations, advocacy groups, and interested citizens. The database would serve as a contact master list. She noted that e-mail is a preferred contact method which serves as a quick and inexpensive means to communicate and report updates to interested stakeholders. As outreach events are conducted, sign-in sheets will provide a means to collect data to track individual involvement, recording activity at events and length of involvement of participants. Ms. Day requested that sign-in sheets be used at all meetings in order to maintain the collection of accurate data necessary to track involvement and interest throughout the public outreach process.

In response to the Commission's inquiry, Assistant City Clerk Lindgren noted that comment contact information currently submitted through the website is sent directly to city staff, and that those contacts would be forwarded to The Hoyt Company for inclusion in the database.

Assistant City Attorney Alves stated that sign-in sheets at events are a public record. In the course of collecting contact information from citizens, legal language should be added to all sign-in sheet forms disclosing that any contact information provided is a public record. She stated that the required legal language would be forwarded to The Hoyt Company for inclusion on sign-in sheet forms.

Commissioner Rambo suggested reducing the amount of information collected through the sign-in sheet to ease citizen concerns that the provided information becomes a public record. He suggested only requesting an e-mail contact and also having a check box to give participants the option to not receive any further information using the contact information provided.

Event Scheduling

Chair Allen stated he would be attending meetings of the Elk Grove Chamber of Commerce, the North State Building Industry Association and a local service club in February, and wanted to examine the schedule of outreach meetings in smaller groups to ensure coordination of efforts.

Commissioner Rambo restated his earlier proposal to cancel the regularly scheduled Commission meetings of January 20, March 3, and also included February 3, in order to schedule multiple meetings for each Commissioner with varied groups during the time periods of January 18-31, February 15-28, and March 1-15.

Vice Chair Orrock reiterated that, at minimum, two Commissioners should be present at each scheduled outreach event, with no more than three in order to not necessitate calling a noticed meeting required by the Brown Act for a quorum of Commissioners. He also noted that, to date, only two Home Owner

Associations (HOA) had responded to offers made by members of the Commission to attend and present Charter materials at the HOA meetings.

Chair Allen asked Ms. Day to compile a spreadsheet to display the available groups to meet with during the suggested timeframes of January 18-31, February 15-28, and March 1-15, with the intent that Commissioners could then arrange their schedules to coordinate having two to three members attend each meeting available.

Commissioner Loveland noted that several HOAs produce a newsletter and suggested that an additional element of the outreach materials include a newsletter template that can be provided to organizations with a newsletter to insert into their publication. Commissioner Rambo observed that groups with newsletters should receive the template in January and should be scheduled for a meeting in either February or March to allow adequate time to have the item reviewed by their circulation prior to meeting.

Commissioner Rambo observed that this concentrated outreach opportunity should include other groups as well as the HOAs. He noted that he had scheduled to meet with the Elk Grove Police Officer's Association in January, and wanted to identify additional groups, such as the Elk Grove Educators, to be included on the contact spreadsheet. Ms. Day confirmed that she would coordinate with Chair Allen to identify additional groups to include.

Charter Commission Presence

Ms. Day noted that though no regional events were to occur up to the April 2009 timeframe, she wanted feedback from the Commission in regard to what presence they wanted to have at such future events. Vice Chair Orrock believed the Commission could benefit from utilizing the booths and resources operated by the City to conduct person to person outreach at such events, without the need for investing in individual booth space or advertising.

Commissioner Rambo noted that during the incorporation effort, the incorporation committee hosted a float in local parades which provided an excellent opportunity for outreach, publicity, and leaflet canvassing. Ms. Day noted the interest of the Commission to have a presence at regional events and would keep the Commission apprised of such opportunities as they became available.

Commissioner Rambo observed that the online presence, particularly the website for the Commission, could be improved in regards to appearance, ease of use and content to be presented in a manner that is easier to understand. He also inquired about using new media, in particular using social networking websites, such as Facebook, to create a Charter Commission account.

Chair Allen inquired as to what online presence the Commission currently conducts itself in, particularly if the Elk Grove Online website is being utilized. Commissioners Loveland and Rambo responded that they frequent the Elk

Grove Online website and portray themselves as representatives of the Commission through that medium. Commissioner Loveland noted that although he has received little in the way of feedback, items he has posted online do receive hundreds of views. He also noted that the stated membership on the site is over 12,000, a sizeable number to present the outreach materials and Charter updates. Chair Allen appreciated the efforts and offers of Commissioners Loveland and Rambo to maintain a presence on the site and respond to citizen inquiries and posts. Commissioner Rambo noted that any Commissioners who frequent online sites should readily identify themselves as a Charter Commissioner to raise visibility of the Commission and to fully disclose they represent a local government appointed position.

Ms. Day noted more questions will likely arise as the outreach effort continues and suggested that a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document be generated to address and catalogue questions encountered by the Commission. She stated that to start the document she would request that each Commissioner forward her the questions and inquiries they receive regarding the Charter.

Ms. Day presented a month to month timeline of activities and events scheduled up to April 2009 (filed). She confirmed that the Commission would like to hold the first large event on March 31, and that she would coordinate the event with the Elk Grove Community Connection. She noted an opportunity to invite a representative from the League of California Cities to the event to serve as an impartial information resource.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Dannetta Garcia suggested using initial, subtle outreach strategies to engage the interest of citizens. She believed that using a conventional reference to the United States Constitution was a regular approach that would not ignite curiosity or stir the interest of citizens to get involved. Ms. Garcia noted that presenting any material using a fellow citizen as a conduit to share the message of the Commission was an excellent method to project ideas on the Charter and makes citizens more receptive to the information. She urged the Commission to not wait too long to hold a large event as the opportunity may be missed to start the momentum to acquire the more than 20,000 votes needed to pass a proposed Charter. She observed that large events provide a forum to generate dialogue and interest. Ms. Garcia agreed that the charter discussion in Sacramento could be used to educate the public about charters and the charter creation process.

Constance Conley noted that after the quarterly report presented by Chair Allen at the December 10, 2008 regular City Council meeting, several citizens expressed that the charter language needs to be made easier to understand. She announced the upcoming Civic Center Summit to be held January 7, 2009 as a special City Council meeting in conjunction with the Elk Grove Community Connection. The event would be an opportunity to present information about the Charter and to conduct outreach during the planned reception. Ms. Conley noted that providing 30 days notice to coordinate in advance of an event is appreciated

by the Elk Grove Community Connection. She also noted that opinion editorials are available through the *Elk Grove Citizen* and that guest commentary in the regional *Sacramento Bee* publication is another available news media resource. Ms Conley recognized an opportunity to also work with the newly formed Youth Commission to capitalize on maintaining involvement in the Charter with youth and schools.

Barbara Lemar expressed caution in attempts to simplify the language of the Charter document, noting that a synopsis would be helpful, but that direct revisions should not diminish or compromise the legal strength of the document. She expressed concern on overreliance on e-mail and electronic modes of communication, noting that a large portion of the community still relies on more traditional modes of communication and transmittal of information. She agreed that greater access to materials in general would be appreciated as well as making the existing web site more approachable. Ms. Lemar cautioned the Commission that, during the dates proposed for individual group outreach, attendance may be low due to the holiday weekends coinciding with portions of the proposed timeframes.

Commissioner Johnson suggested extending an invitation to make the Civic Center Outreach a Joint Meeting with the City Council, as more than a majority of the Commission expressed interest in attending the event. Assistant City Attorney Alves stated that the event could be appropriately noticed if all parties concurred to hold a joint meeting.

Commissioner Rambo suggested extending an invitation to the Youth Commission to hold a Joint meeting for the February 3, 2009 regular meeting of the Charter Commission.

4. New Business / General Announcements

Vice Chair Orrock reported that he attended the opening of the new library with Commissioner Rambo. He raised concern that at this event, and at other events in the past, the Charter Commissioners present were not recognized or introduced, missing an opportunity to expand exposure and awareness of the Commission to the community.

Commissioner Rambo observed that in other cities, such as Rancho Cordova, representatives from city staff, to commissioners, to Council Members all wear name badges at events. Commissioner Rambo saw the benefit of such identifiers to raise visibility of the Commissioners and requested staff to examine creating similar identifying badges.

Chair Allen requested that at the next regular meeting that the Pending Report document that has been compiled by the City Clerk be reviewed line by line for feasibility in implementing suggestions, or schedule particular items for future review. He also requested that the next set of charter language topics should be

discussed at the next regular meeting in order to select topics for review in February.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

ATTEST:

/s/ Jason Rolf Lindgren.
Assistant City Clerk