

**ELK GROVE CHARTER COMMISSION  
SPECIAL MEETING  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, 8400 LAGUNA PALMS WAY  
TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2009**

1. Call to Order / Roll

The Special Charter Commission meeting of March 24, 2009 was called to order by Chair Allen at 6:35 p.m.

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

Absent: None

Also Present: City Attorney Susan Cochran and City Clerk Susan Blackston

2. Presentation

**2.1 Elk Grove City Charter**

A public workshop to discuss the proposed draft City Charter and seek input from residents.

Mayor Hume welcomed attendees and thanked Elk Grove Community Connection for co-sponsoring this special meeting of the Charter Commission. He encouraged citizens to participate in the process of drafting the City Charter and to express their opinions.

With the aid of an overhead presentation (filed), Chair Allen reviewed differences between a general law and charter city, which included the following subjects:

- Form of government
- Elections
- City Council Member qualifications
- Public funds for candidates in municipal elections
- Council Member compensation
- Legislative authority (e.g. specific guidelines on how ordinances can be passed)
- Public contracts
- Financing and taxation
- Campaign finance reform

Chair Allen briefly reviewed the current draft charter language on the topics of council-manager form of government; directly elected mayor voted on at-large for a four year term, and the following alternatives: 1) six districts with an elected mayor with “by” district voting; 2) six districts with an elected mayor with “from” district voting; and 3) five districts with an at-large elected mayor and an at-large elected council member.

A question and answer period was conducted, which was assisted by Wendy Hoyt of HDR/The Hoyt Company. The following questions and comments were raised by members of the public:

- There is no mention of prevailing wages in section 6.1 of the draft charter. Expressed general concern about level of wages, benefits, and apprenticeship standards.
- Council Members should be elected by their districts, rather than at-large. The Mayor should have certain powers; however, a full-time city manager or administrative officer is needed to manage day-to-day responsibilities of the City. Elk Grove is not large enough for a full-time mayor.
- Asked that prevailing wages be addressed in the Public Works section of the charter. As an alternative, if it is not addressed, then a reference should be made to State law, which would govern all issues that are not addressed in the Public Works section.
- Voiced opposition to the City's use of lease leaseback agreements, which affect prevailing wage. Construction workers need prevailing wages to support families and pay taxes.
- The council-manager form of government was created as a reaction against problems of conflicts of interest inherent in the strong mayor form of government. Asked how the charter could limit corruption.
- Apprenticeship programs afford people opportunities to have well paying jobs, the ability to pay taxes, put their children through school, and become homeowners.
- Objected to the suggestion that \$5,000 was too low a threshold amount to require that projects be advertised for bid. Asked what the effects and outcomes would be from the three alternatives posed in the draft charter. The role of the Charter Commission should be to educate the public. Questioned the use of a public relations firm by the Charter Commission.
- Asked if the issue of accountability would be addressed in the charter.
- Voiced support for council members elected "from" districts so that all voters are entitled to vote for all candidates for all council seats.
- Felt that more detail about the charter should be included on the website. Expressed concern about the possibility of abuse and electing a mayor for a four year term.
- Suggested that the issue of electing the mayor be brought forward as a separate measure from the remainder of the charter.
- Asked for full fiscal analysis of impacts that would be caused as a result of the city charter.

Results from live polling exercise with 48 participants:

How long have you lived in Elk Grove?

- 11% – 1 year or less
- 11% – 2 to 5 years
- 22% – 6 to 10 years
- 13% – 11 to 15 years
- 42% – More than 15 years

Do you want a charter?

- 42% – yes
- 58% – no

Do you want an elected mayor?

- 59% – yes
- 41% – no

Do you want a strong mayor or council-manager form of government?

- 36% – strong mayor
- 64% – council-manager

How many council districts do you want?

- 27% – 4 with a mayor
- 46% – 6 with a mayor
- 6% – 8 with a mayor
- 21% – no preference

How do you want to elect City Council Members?

- 28% – Council elected “by” district and the mayor elected at-large
- 34% – Council elected “from” district and the mayor elected at-large
- 6% – Council elected “by” district and the mayor and one Council Member elected at-large
- 32% – current system

What amount of money should the City be able to spend on public works projects before it needs to advertise for bids?

- 62% – current system (\$5,000)
- 16% – \$25,000
- 10% – \$50,000
- 4% – \$100,000
- 6% – more than \$100,000
- 2% – no preference

Would you like to limit special interest campaign contributions by substituting public funds?

- 32% – yes
- 57% – no
- 11% – do not know
- 0% – no preference

Should the City attempt to limit the size of campaign contributions a candidate can receive from any individual source?

69% – yes

29% – no

2% – do not know

1% – no preference

Chair Allen thanked meeting participants and encouraged all to continue to stay involved and express their opinions. He emphasized the importance of the charter and that it must be reflective of how citizens feel the City should operate.

Chair Allen presented a certificate of appreciation to Connie Conley and Linda Ford representing Elk Grove Community Connection in recognition of its efforts to foster community involvement, engage residents, and collaborate with the City of Elk Grove and its advisory bodies to strengthen the community.

3. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

ATTEST:

/s/ Susan J. Blackston  
City Clerk