

Snohomish County Charter Review Commission

January 14, 2026

6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Commissioner Chair Brett Gailey
Commissioner Vice-Chair Mark James
Commissioner Rob Toyer
Commissioner Don Vanney
Commissioner Jenniver Gregerson
Commissioner Demi Chatters
Commissioner Shawn O'Donnell
Commissioner Janelle Cass
Commissioner Patrick Decker
Commissioner David Preston
Commissioner Amanda Dodd (*not present*)
Commissioner Ben Mahnkey
Commissioner Dale Kaemingk
Commissioner Robin McGee
Commissioner Carolyn Eslick (*remote*)
Snohomish County Council Chair Megan Dunn
Garth Fell, Auditor
Heidi Beazizo, Council Chief of Staff
Debbie Eco, Ex Officio Clerk

1. Call to Order

Acting Chair Robin McGee called the meeting to order and called the roll. She noted Commissioner Amanda Dodd who was not present. The rest of the (14) commissioners were all present.

2. Opening Remarks

Snohomish County Council Chair Dunn provided opening remarks

3. Administer Oaths of Office

Auditor Garth Fell administered oaths of office to all present commissioners.

4. Introduction of Charter Review Commissioners

Each commissioner provided an introduction.

5. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Commissioner Rob Toyer nominated Commissioner Brett Gailey for Commission Chair. Commissioner Gailey accepted the nomination. Commissioner Mark James seconded the nomination.

Commissioner Demi Chatters nominated Commissioner Jennifer Gregerson for Commission Chair. Commissioner Gregerson accepted the nomination. Commissioner Robin McGee seconded the nomination.

The question was called for the nomination of Commissioner Gailey for Commission Chair and a vote by show of hands was taken with 10 in favor and 4 against.

The question was called for the nomination of Commissioner Gregerson for Commission Chair and a vote by show of hands was taken with 4 in favor and 10 against.

APPROVE: Commissioner Brett Gailey as Charter Review Commission Chair 10-4

Newly elected Chair Gailey continued the meeting and opened nominations for vice-chair.

Commissioner Rob Toyer nominated Commissioner Mark James for Commission Vice-Chair. Commissioner James accepted the nomination. Commissioner Don Vanney seconded the nomination.

Commissioner Demi Chatters nominated Commissioner Jennifer Gregerson for Commission Vice-Chair. Commissioner Gregerson accepted the nomination. Commissioner Robin McGee seconded the nomination.

The question was called for the nomination of Commissioner James for Commission Vice-Chair and a vote by show of hands was taken with 11 in favor and 3 against.

The question was called for the nomination of Commissioner Gregerson for Commission Vice-Chair and a vote by show of hands was taken with 3 in favor and 11 against.

APPROVE: Commissioner Mark James as Charter Review Commission Vice-Chair 11-3

6. Topic of Discussion

a. Resource Binder

Clerk Debbie Eco noted that a resource binder is available and has been e-mailed to all commissioners, she is available if there are any questions.

b. Charter Commission Website & SharePoint

Heidi Beazizo, Council Chief of Staff, provided a high-level overview related to Charter Commission website and SharePoint for the Commission to use as a tool and primary repository throughout the Charter process.

c. Hiring Staff

- i. Clerk**
- ii. Legal**

Chair Gailey inquired about the experience with staff from the previous Charter Commission. Commissioners Gregerson and O'Donnell spoke briefly about job descriptions of the previous clerk and legal staff.

Ms. Beazizo responded to questions from Chair Gailey about the hiring process.

Chair Gailey distributed and discussed proposed job descriptions (attached). The Commission reviewed and discussion ensued regarding budget, descriptions, responsibilities, and timelines.

The proposed Clerk's Job Description, under Administrative Support, Commission added "Policy Research and Briefing". There were no changes for the Legal Job Description.

d. Schedule of Commission Meetings

- i. In-Person Locations and Zoom**

Commissioners discussed potential meeting dates, times, and after-hours security costs. Commission decided to hold the next meeting on January 28th at 5:30 p.m., with future meetings on the second and fourth Wednesdays thereafter.

Chair Gailey said he would send out his proposed Procedures for consideration at the January 28th meeting.

e. Hiring Committee

Commissioners Gregerson, Decker, James, Cass, and Mahnkey, volunteered to staff the Hiring Committee.

7. Other Business

Commissioner McGee explained that Clerk Eco alerted her prior to the meeting that the County IT Department currently holds all commissioners' personal phone numbers. Only county employees have access to them and with commissioners' permission, they will stay as is. Commissioners had no objection.

8. OPMA and PRA Training

Clerk Eco spoke to OPMA and PRA training and stated it needs be completed in 90 days.

9. Adjourn

7:02 p.m. Commissioner Decker made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Vanney seconded the motion and it carried unanimously by the 14 members present.

Snohomish County Charter Review Commission

Commission Coordinator – Job Description (DRAFT)

Position Title: Charter Review Commission Coordinator

Reports To: Commission Chair (and Vice Chairs, as delegated)

Employment Type: Temporary, Part-Time Contract (Approximately 12 months)

Compensation: TBD – Based on budgeted allocation and scope

Position Summary

The Commission Coordinator provides administrative, logistical, and communications support to the 2026 Snohomish County Charter Review Commission. This role is central to organizing and documenting Commission meetings, facilitating public engagement, ensuring transparency, and maintaining timely coordination with County staff, legal counsel, and Commissioners.

Key Responsibilities

Meeting Coordination

- Schedule and publish meeting agendas in coordination with the Chair.
- Reserve meeting rooms, manage Zoom/Teams links, and ensure AV/recording readiness.
- Prepare and distribute materials (agendas, minutes, draft proposals, etc.).
- Record and maintain official minutes and summaries of all Commission meetings and public hearings.
- Track attendance and maintain quorum documentation.

Proposal Management

- Log and organize submitted proposals and public suggestions.
- Assist in maintaining proposal status (Pending → Under Consideration → Final List).
- Prepare briefing packets and calendars for deliberations.

Public Engagement & Communication

- Manage the Commission's public-facing webpage (updates, notices, draft proposals).
- Serve as point of contact for the public; coordinate receipt and distribution of written comments.

- Publicize hearing schedules and proposal summaries across available County channels.
- Ensure OPMA and public records compliance for communications and meeting documentation.

Administrative Support

- Assist in onboarding new Commissioners and distributing procedural documents.
- Maintain an internal tracking system for deadlines, deliverables, and milestones.
- Support documentation for County Council submission and voter pamphlet filings.

Liaison Functions

- Coordinate with the County Elections Office and the County Executive's Office as needed.
- Support communications with the Legal Review Firm and ensure access to working documents.

Qualifications

- Strong organizational and communication skills.
- Experience in public administration, legislative affairs, or commission support preferred.
- Familiarity with the Washington Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) and public records law.
- Proficient with Microsoft Office, Zoom/Teams, and shared document platforms.
- Able to work flexible hours, including evenings.

Term & Evaluation

This position is expected to begin in January 2026 and conclude after final submission of approved proposals to the County Council (approx. July 2026). Continuation beyond that may be extended depending on needs. The position reports to the Commission Chair and will be evaluated based on timeliness, accuracy, professionalism, and support effectiveness.

Snohomish County Charter Review Commission

Legal Review Firm – Scope of Work (DRAFT)

Project Title

Legal Support for the 2026 Snohomish County Charter Review Commission

Project Overview

The Snohomish County Charter Review Commission seeks to retain a qualified legal firm to serve as independent counsel throughout the charter review process. This firm will provide comprehensive legal analysis, guidance on proposed amendments, and ensure compliance with applicable laws including the Washington State Constitution, Revised Code of Washington (RCW), and Snohomish County Charter provisions. The engagement period is expected to run from January through July 2026, aligned with the Commission's official term.

Scope of Services

The selected firm shall:

Attend Commission meetings and public hearings (in person or remotely).

Review and analyze proposed charter amendments for legality and clarity.

Offer verbal and written legal opinions on topics raised by the Commission.

Interpret applicable state and federal laws, including relevant constitutional and statutory provisions.

Ensure proposed ballot language meets legal standards.

Advise on compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) and Public Records Act (PRA).

Draft or review legal memoranda, legal summaries, or briefing materials as requested.

Serve as a nonpartisan, neutral legal advisor to the entire Commission.

Deliverables

Legal memoranda addressing key questions or proposals.

Review and final legal approval of charter amendment language before submission.

Real-time legal feedback during Commission meetings, particularly on motions and deliberations.

Recommendations on legal process, timeline adherence, and public communication obligations.

Term & Compensation

The engagement will run from the execution of a contract through July 2026, with the potential for extension if needed (e.g., for legal defense or post-election questions). The contract will be budgeted within existing Commission allocations, and may be structured as:

Hourly (with rate cap)

Flat-fee for attendance at regular meetings

Project-based compensation for written deliverables

Desired Qualifications

Expertise in Washington municipal, administrative, and constitutional law.

Experience with county home rule charters and ballot measure drafting.

Familiarity with election law and public meeting statutes.

Strong legal writing skills for both technical and layperson audiences.

Prior experience advising public commissions, elected bodies, or ballot committees.

Selection Process

The Chair and Vice Chairs of the Commission will identify and interview qualified legal service providers, then submit a recommendation to the full Commission for approval. Firms will be evaluated on:

Qualifications and relevant public-sector experience.

Demonstrated neutrality and clarity in legal communication.

Availability for meeting attendance and short-turnaround tasks.

Cost and responsiveness.