

**COST OF GOVERNMENT COMMISSION
MINUTES
Remote Via Microsoft Teams Videoconference
March 27, 2024**

PRESENT: Evan Dust, Chair
Daniel O'Brien, Vice Chair
Cameron Dexter, Member
Paula Heiskell, Member
Steven Knapp, Member
Sarah Simmons, Member

EXCUSED: Gayla Haliniak-Lloyd
Spencer Lau, Member

ABSENT: Poerava Tehiva

ADMIN: None

STAFF: Caleb Rowe, Deputy Corporation Counsel

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Dust called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Chair Dust took roll. Vice-Chair O'Brien and Commissioners Dexter, Heiskell, Knapp, and Simmons were present. Commissioner Lau was excused. The meeting was held remotely via Microsoft Teams.

III. CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA

Chair Dust confirmed the agenda with commissioners.

IV. PUBLIC TESTIMONY

There was no public testimony.

Chair Dust recessed the meeting at 1:13 p.m. to resolve issues with his on-screen visibility. The meeting reconvened at 1:18 p.m.

V. REVIEW AND APPROVE [MARCH 14, 2024 DRAFT COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES](#)

There was no public testimony.

Vice-Chair O'Brien moved to approve the March 14, 2024 meeting minutes, and Commissioner Heiskell seconded the motion. The Commission approved the motion unanimously (6-0, with 2 excused, and 1 absent).

VI. REVIEW AND POSSIBLY APPROVE COST OF GOVERNMENT COMMISSION COST OF GOVERNMENT COMMISSION 2023–2024 ANNUAL REPORT

There was no public testimony.

Vice-Chair O'Brien expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to review the final draft one more time prior to approval. Chair Dust expressed his appreciation to Ms. Pellegrino for her work on the report.

Vice-Chair O'Brien moved to approve the Cost of Government Commission 2023–2024 Annual Report, with the proviso that Chair Dust and Technical Writer Shelley Pellegrino be permitted to make non-substantive changes to finalize and transmit the report. Commissioner Knapp seconded the motion. The Commission approved the motion unanimously (6-0, with 2 excused, and 1 absent).

VII. UPDATE ON COMMISSION TURNOVER AND TRANSITION

There was no public testimony.

A. Update on Appointment of Commissioners for 2024–2025 Commission Term

Ms. Pellegrino explained that the County Council approved the appointment of five new commissioners whose terms will expire in 2029. The Mayor's Office will now send formal welcome packets to new commissioners, who will need to complete their oaths of office and financial disclosure statements. One newly-appointed commissioner was also asked to obtain an advisory opinion from the Board of Ethics.

Ms. Pellegrino noted that for new commissioners to be able to participate and vote at the next scheduled Commission meeting on April 11th, their financial disclosure statements will need to be completed by the April 4, 2024 posting deadline, so that they can be reviewed at the next Board of Ethics meeting on April 10th. Ms. Pellegrino stated that the Commission can plan for an April 11 meeting with the understanding that the meeting may need to be cancelled if it does not have a quorum to conduct business.

Chair Dust stated that he provided written and oral testimony before the County Council about the lack of staggered terms.

Chair Dust asked the Commission for further direction, including possibly issuing a Request for Legal Services (RFLS) to the Department of the Corporation Counsel to assist with drafting either a County Code amendment or Charter amendment so that a quorum of Commission members does not term out in a single year.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Caleb Rowe stated that he believed the staggered term issue could be addressed through legislation rather than through a Charter amendment. He noted that the Charter currently states, "unless otherwise provided," which he interprets as "unless otherwise provided by law." He added that there is nothing currently that legally authorizes staggered terms after the initial creation of a board or commission, but that doing so through legislation would be appropriate. He opined that there should not be a need to amend the Charter, which would be more onerous than amending the County Code. Mr. Rowe asked the Commission to submit an RLFS to Corporation Counsel. Mr. Rowe also suggested that the Commission work with a Council member or the County Auditor to initiate the proposed Code amendment.

Without objection, the Commission authorized Chair Dust and Ms. Pellegrino to work with the County Auditor and the Department of the Corporation Counsel to begin the Code amendment process to provide for staggered terms for the Cost of Government Commission.

B. Election of Interim Chair to Prepare for First Commission Meeting of 2024–2025 Term

Vice-Chair O'Brien moved to nominate Evan Dust as Interim Chair for the Cost of Government Commission, and Commissioner Heiskell seconded the motion. The Commission approved the motion unanimously (6-0, with 2 excused, and 1 absent).

VIII. REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS

Chair Dust identified the following action items: (1) complete Commission annual report; (2) draft letter regarding the Department of Management's use of the SeeClickFix program; and (3) follow up with drafting a RFLS regarding staggered terms.

IX. DETERMINE NEXT MEETING DATE AND AGENDA

The next online-only meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 11, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. Agenda items will include the introduction of new commissioners, election of a new chair, update on the axis deer investigation, and discussion of ideas for new investigations.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:38 p.m.