



Minutes

Virtual via Zoom

Thursday, April 15, 6:30 - 8:00 PM

Attendance: 35

- Welcome & Introductions (**6:30-6:40**)
 - Popcorn style: Name, preferred pronouns, “*What has given you hope recently?*”
- Business (**6:40-6:50 PM**)
 - Reports
 - Chair’s Report- Charles Skold
 - Charles thanked everyone for attending and discussed what the Portland Dems do, and what we need to do in 2021
 - One of the ways we will advance our democratic values this year is to bring attention to the Charter Committee election
 - Also want to bring attention to Meg and the Voter Outreach Committee and the important work they are doing
 - Treasurer’s Report
 - March financial report ([here](#))
 - This month PDCC has about 2,700.00
 - Minutes approval
 - Approve minutes of February meeting ([here](#))
 - Motion by Charles, 2nded, passed
 - Approve minutes of March meeting ([here](#))
 - Motion by Charles, 2nded, passed
- Covid Check-In (**6:50-6:55 PM**)
 - Who has been able to schedule a COVID-19 vaccine appointment? Any tips or resources to share with the group? Any frustrations or barriers?
 - Discussion about ages related groups
 - Both Martin’s Point and the FEMA Mobile Vaccination Clinic has openings
 - Encouragement to register with national tracking database
 - “V-Safe” CDC monitoring program



- Charter Commission Discussion (**6:55-7:25 PM**)
 - Charles reminded participants that they need to identify who they are to Kim if they are joining as a group virtually; Charles reminded participants to try the “raise hand” function; Charles introduced both Senator Chipman and Lauren Davis, both previous Charter Commission members
 - History of the 2010 Charter Commission: *Laurie Davis, 2010 Charter Commission member & Sen. Ben Chipman (D-Portland), 2010 Charter Commission member*
 - Discussion led by Laurie & Ben
 - Ben discussed that he served on the Commission in District 1, and at that time there was a lot of discussion regarding an elected mayor (as opposed to one who is appointed by the City Council); Voters later approved this
 - Charter Commission candidates ran normal campaigns, knocking on doors, speaking with voters
 - In regards to the Commission, they first established a timeframe, and leadership of the Commission to start
 - Decided on the issues that should be addressed by the Commission, which would require majority vote
 - Ranked choice voting became another important topic
 - Also discussed pay of the elected mayor, tied to median household income of Portland, also term-limits, and election years (off year vs. presidential race year), non-citizen voting
 - Everything was packaged together, because voters need to ratify the Commissions work
 - They were conscious of the need to put together a package that was sustainable, and would appeal to voters
 - Laurie discussed the previous Charter Commission had been some 25 years earlier
 - Met virtually, week, and sometimes had sub committees that met on a short-term basis; they did all their work on camera as a group of 12 every week
 - There was lots of opinions but relatively little conflict
 - 3 had worked in City government previously, so there was a view from the inner working side, as well as elected officials



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- There was a lot of discussion about good government and what good government should look like
- Charter Commissions can really consider whatever they like; like Ben said, they agreed a majority was needed to consider a topic
- Not everything made it in
 - Discussed council redistricting and at large organization
 - Considered clean elections funding
 - Election wardens and warden clerks
- Much consideration was around about how much to include
- One question was how strong should the Mayor be; and this happened on the heels of Westbrook having a lot of disruption by their Mayor
- They saw the Mayor as not being involved in the day to day activities; they wanted a position that would lead the council but also lead the city forward, engaging the public, and bringing attention to how the city works
- The manager would continue to manage the city
- Questions
 - Question to Ben and Laurie- what was the role of public comment?
 - Ben- we had public comment at every meeting at lots of opportunity for participation
 - Laurie- clearly many people watched, and she was approached by many who were aware of the meetings, public television paid attention
 - Question to Ben and Laurie- including all residents in voting process, where did it come from and do you think that question has sat
 - Ben- we had a lot of debate about it and had someone come speak to us about a model, there was a will to do it, but not a majority
 - Ben- a citizens group brought it forward, and it almost passed
 - Ben- we also gave School Board Members a stipend relative to the City Council Members



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- Laurie- we added a preamble to the Charter
 - Laurie- really brought more respect to the education portion of the School Board
 - Laurie- I wish non-resident voting had made it and is worth looking at again
 - Laurie- we had a broad spectrum with thoughtful, but very conservative and very liberal inclinations- it was very civil- and you did see people change their minds
 - Ben- there was a lot of respect on the Commission for one another
 - Laurie- we all had respect for one another and believe we had done a pretty good job
 - Laurie- we created a product for the City to move it forward
 - Charles- thank you and we are grateful for your service
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- Presentation of PDCC Charter Commission Survey
 - *Charles Skold, PDCC Chair*
 - Discussion - one of the ways to get involved is to endorse candidates, but we can encourage others to vote, share information about candidates and get the message out
 - Other ways for PDCC to be involved
 - Voter Registration & Get Out the Vote
 - Endorsements
 - Candidates
 - Positions
 - Advertising Campaign (digital and print)
 - Candidate Forums



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- Endorsement Vote (7:25-7:45)
 - Vote to Endorse Marcques A. Houston (D) for District 4 Representative to the Portland Charter Commission (the only Dem in that race)
 - Introduction- Candidate Statement
 - Marcques Houston
 - Marcques introduced himself and discussed bringing power back to Portlanders
 - Portlanders are struggling to put food on the table
 - We need to make representatives more accountable
 - The role of City Manager and Mayor confused Portlanders
 - The Mayor needs to have more power and our voices should be heard; now is an opportunity to make systemic change
 - This race is about character and values
 - Questions for the Candidate
 - Can the Charter Commission look at the Police Review Subcommittee?
 - Marcques- we can make new boards and committees
 - The Planning Board has enormous power, what are your thoughts on that?
 - Marcques- we should implement a community benefit agreement to force developers to work with community members with their plans
 - Your opponent is a registered Republican, how will you be different?
 - Marcques- we both care about Portland, but have different perspectives, I am not for the status quo
 - Vote
 - *All Portland residents who are present at the April 15 virtual meeting and currently enrolled in the Democratic Party may partake in the vote. An affirmative vote indicates support for PDCC endorsing Marcques Houston in District 4 at this time. A negatory vote indicates lack of support for PDCC endorsing Marcques Houston in District 4 at this time. Persons may also vote “present” or abstain from voting.*
 - Motion and 2nded.
 - Discussion-
 - Discussion-
 - Comment: Marcques has no democrat challengers



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- Comment: this is a non-partisan race, we should consider larger picture
 - Comment: partisan politics is the rule of the day
 - Comment: we should endorse, that is our role as a party
 - Comment: this meeting doesn't speak to us as older Portlanders
 - Comment: we are very excited about Marcques
 - Comment: enthusiastically endorse Marcques
 - Comment: endorse the view that this is a non-partisan race
 - Comment: we have two candidates and we are political parties
 - Comment: we don't generally endorse in non-partisan races, or in races where there are candidates that align (greens)
 - Comment: Marcques has invested time in understanding how to impact city planning and government
 - Motion to end debate, 2nded, $\frac{2}{3}$ threshold met (23(30))
 - Vote to endorse (23(30))
 - Opposing measure (4)
- **Announcements (7:45-8:00 PM)**
 - Platform and Issues Meeting
 - Voter Outreach
 - We are still hard at work on our postcard campaign
 - We would love to have your help
 - Also consider donating
 - Next Voter Outreach Subcommittee meeting: Sunday 4/18 @ 6:30pm ([link to join](#))
 - Member announcements
- **Adjourn (8:00 PM)**
 - *PDCC exec team will stay on the call after adjournment for any further informal discussion or question from members*