

From: [Tom Watt](#)
To: charter@portlandmaine.gov
Subject: Re
Date: Friday, December 17, 2021 1:41:34 PM

I oppose all five initiatives

Sent from my iPad

From: [Ian Pollis Houseal](#)
To: charter@portlandmaine.gov
Subject: zoom webinar
Date: Friday, December 17, 2021 1:25:17 PM

Dear Charter Commissioners,

I have kept-up on the recordings of the Charter Commission proceedings, and have read most of the public comment published on the City website. I note that your transparency and public engagement is lacking. I can barely understand the divergence of topics and musing.

First and foremost, no municipal public deliberative body should be using a webinar format as sufficient to constituting a public meeting using remote methods. Although you may, and still legally check the due process check-box, because no one cares, and apparently not even you on such a basic democratic issue. As the panelists on your webinars, you don't even seem to perceive this failing of the remote method you have chosen, and you should.

Your capitulation to this webinar format will continue to hamper of your deliberations, and the public's opinion of your transparency and public engagement, until you make a simple change: this lack of transparency and public engagement would be mitigated, by using "Zoom Meeting" instead of "Zoom Webinar."

Make useful practical change by taking a little practical step. Do it for democracy, transparency, and public engagement.

Sincerely,
Ian Houseal
86 Florida Ave
207-272-8610

From: [Cheryl Ann Leeman](#)
To: [Patricia Washburn](#)
Cc: charter@portlandmaine.gov
Subject: RE: Procedures Committee
Date: Friday, December 17, 2021 1:08:08 PM
Attachments: [IMG_1804\[5166\].jpg](#)

Hello, Commissioner Washburn. Now that the your proposal has been tweeted on Twitter and retweeted, can I please get a copy of the proposed language? Thank you, Cheryl

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [Patricia Washburn](#)
Sent: Tuesday, December 14, 2021 7:21 PM
To: [Cheryl Ann Leeman](#)
Subject: Re: Procedures Committee

My apologies. Tonight's meeting was canceled because two of the four committee members could not attend. We will attempt to present better documentation before our next meeting on the 28th.

Pat Washburn

On Mon, Dec 13, 2021 at 6:20 AM Cheryl Ann Leeman <cal4161@yahoo.com> wrote:

Good morning, Commissioner. Could you be so kind as to send me the documents with proposed recommendations to be discussed at your upcoming meeting as they are not in the agenda materials online? Thanks you, Cheryl

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Notice: Under Maine law, documents - including e-mails - in the possession of public officials or city employees about government business may be classified as public records. There are very few exceptions. As a result, please be advised that what is written in an e-mail could be released to the public and/or the media if requested.

From: [Winston Lumpkins](#)
To: charter@portlandmaine.gov
Subject: Portlanders.
Date: Friday, December 17, 2021 11:17:09 AM

Good morning esteemed members of the charter commission.

I'm writing to support resident voting.
I think that everyone who lives in Portland is a Portlander.

It doesn't matter if they just bought a fancy house for 1.2 million dollars and moved here from their shitty condo in Manhattan or if they've been living here for 15 years & moved here from Quebec, Guatemala, South Africa, Jamaica, Norway, or any other country.

If you live here, and pay taxes (through your rent or directly) or have the capacity to pay taxes (like, you are alive) & you receive services from the city (you use roads, are subject to policing, walk places on the sidewalk, use the bus etc.) **you must vote.**

I would go a step further and make it mandatory for everyone living here over the age of 16 to vote in all our municipal elections, except primaries. Maybe by fining anyone who doesn't, as they do in some cities in Europe. My partner's father lives in Belgium, and he has to vote in municipal elections or they will send him a fine, even though he is an American citizen.

Not very much, just like 15 dollars or something. Enough to make sure all the poor folks vote, but not enough that any rich person would ever bother.

We could mail all municipal ballots, which would be a good way of making sure no one accidentally voted in National or State elections. Mail it back on time, or get a bill a month later for \$15 dollars.

Those are my thoughts, as crazy as they are.

Certainly, I think what is being proposed is very rational.

Yours,

~Winston.

~Winston W. Lumpkins IV
72 Waterville Street,
Apt 1
Portland, Maine,
04101
207-408-1508

From: [Josh Haefele](#)
To: charter@portlandmaine.gov
Subject: Voting rights
Date: Friday, December 17, 2021 10:10:22 AM

Voting rights are only for legal residents of the city, state or country. No one else. If non residents can vote what's stopping anyone anywhere voting in our elections. This is unacceptable.

Josh Haefele
Portland resident

From: [Lena Geraghty](#)
To: charter@portlandmaine.gov
Subject: Public comment for 12/22 meeting
Date: Friday, December 17, 2021 9:55:52 AM

Hi Charter Commissioners,

As a resident of Portland, a former Portland city staff member, and a current city innovation researcher and director at the National League of Cities, I care very deeply about city governance and the charter. I've seen firsthand how changes to the Charter can have unintended consequences and not meet the needs they were supposed to address. After hearing you might have scheduled a full Charter Commission meeting for 12/22, I went to the city website to confirm and share my relevant thoughts. I wasn't able to find any information or an agenda, but want to share my thoughts on some of the recent discussions at the subcommittees that I imagine would come up during the next full commission meeting:

- **Retain necessary checks and balances between City/City Council and the School/School Board.** All residents of Portland should have knowledge of and the ability to weigh in on the creation of the school budget, even if they don't have children in Portland Public Schools. Without City Council participation in the school budget, Portlanders would lose the ability to stay informed on process and decisions, and would be less able to participate. The only way to stay up-to-date on the school budget is by listening to City Council finance committee meetings and presentations for the School Board and school leadership. Because the school budget so greatly impacts the property taxes of Portland residents and the future and wellbeing of Portland's youth, it is vital that it is as easy and possible to participate in its development.
- **Consider a regional Police Oversight Board instead of the Portland model proposed by the Departments Committee.** There are so few public safety complaints in Portland. Police Oversight Boards are frequently very political and not as focused on solutions to systemic issues. It can be difficult to objectively consider what's happening in your own community. A regional effort (maybe led by Cumberland County) to assess and address police complaints and misconduct could avoid some of challenges that come along with traditional Police Oversight Board.

Thanks for considering my comments.

Best,
Lena

12 Bancroft

From: [Josh M](#)
To: charter@portlandmaine.gov
Subject: Please retain council oversight over the school budget
Date: Friday, December 17, 2021 9:34:07 AM

Hello,

Writing again on this because it's important and I feel very strongly about this.

Please do not force me to have to attend multiple government meetings to keep up with my housing costs. I do not have the time to do this, and certainly, working class people don't have the time to do this.

Please do not support eliminating checks and balances in government.

Thanks as always,
Josh
12 bancroft

From: [Josh M](#)
To: charter@portlandmaine.gov
Subject: Please do not reduce districts
Date: Friday, December 17, 2021 8:54:36 AM

Please do not reduce the number of districts. If anything, the number of districts needs to be increased. Portland is a diverse community and neighborhoods deserve to be represented by residents. Needs and lifestyle is very different from one end of a current district to the next. Please do not reduce the number of districts.

Josh
12 Bancroft Court

From: [Stevenson Monica](#)
To: charter@portlandmaine.gov
Subject: Cost/benefit analysis for proposals
Date: Thursday, December 16, 2021 4:34:36 PM

I noted that several of the issues you are making recommendations for had no cost analysis and payment info included. How do you expect to pay for the following?

Chief of Staff for council and mayor

Police Oversight Board

Salary for elected officials

Staffed office for voter engagement

Not that I particularly object to these measures, but am wondering where the money will come from

I look forward to your answers. As a once permanent resident and now longtime summer resident the issue seems relevant.

Monica Stevenson
548 Island Avenue
Peaks Island

From: [Kate Sykes](#)
To: rjobrien@portlandmaine.gov; [Ryan Lizanecz](mailto:Ryan.Lizanecz); sstewartbouley@portlandmaine.gov; nsheikhyousef@portlandmaine.gov
Cc: [Charter](#)
Subject: Separation of Powers
Date: Monday, December 13, 2021 6:09:11 PM

Governance Committee Commissioners,

Thank you for your work on behalf of the people of Portland. I recently watched the tape of the last Governance Committee meeting and was very impressed by the thoughtfulness with which you deliberated on your goals.

I feel confident in the work you are doing and believe you are very close to a proposal, but as you did not take a formal vote to move something to the larger commission, I hope that means you are still in the formative stages, and I'm not too late to offer my thoughts.

In my view, not enough committee discussion time was given to a model of governance in which the Mayor is separate from the Council. It was dismissed relatively quickly, and I think that was a mistake. As we have seen in the last ten years, the 'hybrid' Mayor-City Manager model has inherent weaknesses and flaws, and the current proposal to keep the Mayor part of the council would have many of the same flaws.

On the issue of giving the Mayor the authority to draft the budget, I think you are heading in the right direction. A budget is a political document, and this work needs to be in the hands of someone who is elected. However, I know from my own professional experience writing multi-million dollar budgets for hospital departments that the day-to-day execution of a budget is critical to how effectively resources are used to meet the goals set in the fiscal planning process. A Mayor who does not have the official power to both pen *and* execute the budget will be unable to fully realize those goals. Moreover, a Mayor who is powerless to do that is fundamentally unaccountable to the people who elected them. I would therefore urge you to make the Mayor the executor of the budget as well as its author. A direct line of authority from the Mayor to the Manager will ensure that the budget, which is the blueprint for the Council's policy goals, can be effectively carried out. That means, in terms of the "org chart," the Mayor must have hiring and firing authority over the City Manager and, by extension (if not necessarily directly) over the City Staff. This is the accountability keystone that feels missing to me in your present model, and, unless it is in place, keeps us stuck in the same undemocratic structure we have now.

These separate powers invested in the Mayor must then, crucially, be balanced, so that the executive branch (the Mayor) is not given outsized

power. You can give more power to the legislative branch (the Council) by removing the Mayor entirely from the Council. This allows the Council to then have its own autonomy as a policy-making body without the added influence of the Mayor upon it. The Council would then elect its own chair to run the meetings, make committee assignments, etc.

The Council should also be given the power to override the Mayor's budget, to send it back to the Mayor with suggested amendments for revision. This makes the writing of the budget more of a negotiation between the Mayor and the Council. It makes the Council the true policy-setting body of the City, while making the Mayor the executor of the will of the Council and, by extension, the will of the people.

This also solves another issue that is one of your stated concerns, which is increased participation by the people. This structure ups the stakes for voters, who will see very clearly that who we elect as Mayor now truly matters. I believe that people participate in democracy when it actually exists and that citizen participation will increase simply as a result of the structural change.

A question also arose in your meeting about creating a path for City staff to bring policy ideas to the table. This is a small issue in the scope of your work but I feel that some care needs to be taken here. Staff are un-elected, and their expertise is there to support the implementation of programs and policies brought forth by the people through their elected representatives. While it is tempting (and laudable) to want to design a functioning workplace, where employees are appreciated and self-actualized, the Charter Commission's task is not to design a workplace, but rather a government. I think a government that functions with clear lines of authority, and a balance of power provides the best foundation for that.

I hope these suggestions are helpful as you move forward. Thank you again for your hard work, the importance of which cannot be overstated. You have my deep gratitude.

Kate Sykes
Resident, D5

From: [Joey Brunelle](mailto:Joey.Brunelle)
To: rjobrien@portlandmaine.gov; [Nasreen Sheikh-yousef](mailto:Nasreen.Sheikh-yousef); [Shay Stewart-Bouley](mailto:Shay.Stewart-Bouley); rlizanezc@portlandmaine.gov; charter@portlandmaine.gov
Subject: Mayor/City Manager/Council thoughts
Date: Friday, December 10, 2021 12:54:55 PM

Commissioners - I wanted to thank you for your deliberations about the power balance between the mayor, the city manager, and the city council. I am disappointed that your colleague Nasreen Sheikh-Youssef was not there for the deliberations, however - I think her perspective would have been a valuable addition. I hope more care is taken to include her voice in further discussions.

Regarding your recommendation, I think you got to the core of the problem with the city manager role: that too much power was invested in that one position, and that it could be (and has been) weaponized against elected officials. I also appreciate that you tried to avoid creating a similarly powerful position in the Mayor, which I know that some in the community (and one particular former Mayor who's currently having a meltdown in people's DMs) have advocated for.

I believe that too much power vested in a single position is bad, no matter whether that person is the city manager or the mayor.

But I think you did a good job rebalancing the powers to avoid that concentration of power. You moved at least one of the biggest powers from the City Manager to the Mayor: having the Mayor draft the budget instead of the city manager is a huge, and positive, change. Budgets are moral documents, and they should be made by elected officials who are accountable to the public, not unelected bureaucrats.

But you also came up with a creative solution to make sure that staff cannot be weaponized against elected officials by the city manager or the mayor, by creating a new position of Chief of Staff/Public Advocate.

So what is left with the City Manager position? Basically just staffing (hiring/firing) and day-to-day management. The making of policy is now more securely in the realm of elected officials.

If you were to go further and create an "Executive Mayor," you would probably have to start taking powers away from the Council, and I personally do not support that.

But for the sake of argument, what would it have looked like to go further?

- **You could have given the mayor the power to hire and fire department heads and/or staff.** In my experience, this is a double edged sword. Sure, a new Mayor with popular support can hire staff that they know will assist with their agenda. But on the other hand, a Mayor could weaponize city staff and their resources against political enemies in much the same way that former City Manager Jennings did, by hiring people who are loyal to them first-and-foremost.
- **You could have given the Mayor veto power over Council legislation.** I would not have supported this, but I think you could make an argument for it. Personally, I trust elected groups a lot more than elected individuals to reliably make good decisions, but that's just me.
- **You could have given the mayor the power to hire and fire the City**

Manager/Administrator, instead of the Council. This would be an interesting thing to consider, but again you'd be taking power away from the Council, which is not necessarily what we were all going for here.

- **You could have given the Mayor the power to make appointments to boards and commissions, instead of the Council.** Again, you'd be weakening the Council and not the City Manager. I have seen Executive Mayors in NYC and SF abuse the power of appointment, installing their own loyalists on boards, and it's not cute.

What other City Manager powers could you have given to the Mayor that would make a significant difference? Honest question.

I know some called for the City Manager position to be abolished - well, you have more or less done that: you have dramatically reduced the powers of the City Manager so it cannot be used by autocratic city managers like Jon Jennings against elected officials and the will of the public. Would it make sense to now rename the position to City Administrator, to make this change clear, and to break with the racist history of the city manager position?

Those are my thoughts for now. I look forward to further deliberations, and I again urge you to solicit input from your colleague Nasreen.

Thanks,
- Joey

From: [Joey Brunelle](#)
To: charter@portlandmaine.gov
Subject: NYC Council just passed universal resident voting!
Date: Friday, December 10, 2021 12:00:13 AM
Attachments: [Int. No 1867.docx](#)

BREAKING: <https://www.politico.com/states/new-york/city-hall/story/2021/12/09/new-york-becomes-largest-city-to-grant-vote-to-noncitizens-1399231>

I've attached the text of the bill that they passed. It has a level of detail that you would expect from council legislation (too much for a charter provision), but it still might be helpful and could inform your own work. It covers registration for non-citizens, confidentiality, and a lot of the other things that y'all have discussed.

- Joey

From: [Joey Brunelle](#)
To: charter@portlandmaine.gov
Subject: Elections Commission - Story time!
Date: Thursday, December 09, 2021 3:49:34 PM

Hi Commissioners - I'm watching the replay from the recent Elections Committee meeting, and I want to add a bit of historical context that might inform your work on this topic.

Chair Chann made the argument that an elections commission could help make elections "sexier" and more comfortable (with coffee and donuts), and while this is true, and while donuts are delicious, an elections commission will also safeguard our democracy from attempts to curtail it by those with vested interests in how exactly the democracy functions.

Example: Since I started watching Portland city politics in 2014, there have been multiple instances where the City Clerk has proposed closing or reducing polling locations, for a variety of reasons. Obviously, doing this impedes the ability of voters to participate and will itself reduce turnout.

Why can't the City Council handle these issues? Well because the city councilors know damn well who their voters are, and may or may not support the closure of polling locations based on how it affects (or doesn't affect) their own constituencies.

Back in 2015 (or thereabouts) when upstart Brian Batson was challenging incumbent Ed Suslovic for his District 3 council seat, if I recall correctly Ed supported closing polling locations that the clerk had deemed superfluous for some reason. (I forget the details, this is basically ancient history.) There was a giant public outcry that prevented this from happening (and yours truly naturally gave a firey public comment in council chambers), but it was still (IIRC) a split council vote.

Councilors have a vested interest in the functioning of elections, and for that reason they should be managed by folks who are separate from this dynamic.

Thanks!
- Joey

From: [Josh M](#)
To: charter@portlandmaine.gov
Subject: New structure - more complicated - same bottlenecks
Date: Thursday, December 09, 2021 9:49:29 AM

Hello,

I saw the slide for the new structure being floated. It just seems more complicated with the same chance for bottlenecks.

Why don't you guys just write in a simple - "Council has the authority to issue an authoritative request for staff to appear before council, or return a briefing with 5 days of notice" or something like that? Why over complicate things, drive up administrative cost, etc..?

I think the fix here is for council to hold the CM accountable, rather than to shuffle and make things more complicated. Give council a forcing function to override the executive's control of staff when needed. Give council the role of formalizing performance goals and targets for the CM to meet, and if they don't have built in penalties and/or contract termination.

City Managers provide a lot of benefit over mayors in terms of ability to run the day-to-day. The executive shouldn't be a policy center - that's council's role. If we move to this stronger mayor - you are basically just creating another policymaker position.

As always thank you. I imagine your role here isn't easy. I respect your commitment to make our city a better place.

From: [Anna Kellar](#)
To: [Zachary Barowitz](#)
Cc: [Jill Ward](#); [Michael Kebede](#); [Marpheen Chann](#); [Charter](#); [Will Hayward](#); [Deb McDonough](#)
Subject: Re: League of Women Voters of Maine memo re: proportional representation
Date: Tuesday, December 07, 2021 3:45:49 PM

Hi Zack,

Here are some answers to your questions:

1. I am not entirely clear on the penultimate bullet point in the memo. Can you restate it in more lay-person terms?

- At-large districts elected by plurality bloc voting -- the vote-for-N method -- have been challenged in court for producing unrepresentative outcomes: a narrow plurality of voters can easily capture a 100% of the seats. This is still true if conventional standard RCV is used to determine the winners.

'Vote-for-N' (plurality block) elections tend to favor majority candidates at the expense of minority candidates, and a cohesive majority (or plurality) coalition can elect all of their candidates and block the election of any minority candidates at all. A narrow majority (or plurality), say 51% (or even less) can capture 100% of the seats. 'Majority' and 'minority' here refer to constituencies of differing ideology, race, ethnicity, policy position, or any other consideration that results in different segments of the electorate preferring different candidates. Beginning in the 1980s, racial minorities began to challenge this voting method using the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965, and dozens of municipalities have been required to discard this election method. Most have replaced their multi-winner elections with single-winner districts, in which one or more majority-minority districts are drawn to ensure representation. In 2019, Eastpointe, MI, adopted multi-winner Proportional RCV as a remedy, and additional municipalities have preemptively moved in this direction.

The issues with 'Vote-for-N' elections are not resolved through a sequential application of single-winner RCV, as was done in the 4-seat ranked-choice election for at-large representatives to the Charter Commission. A single bloc of voters can still elect all the seats. This would not meet our criteria for majority rule with minority representation. Remember that the Charter Commission election was not a Proportional RCV race. The Clerk was prevented from conducting a proportional tabulation due to language in the existing charter specifying an election threshold of 50% in RCV races. In a Proportional RCV tabulation, the election threshold is a function of the number of available seats.

For a more detailed discussion of 'Vote-for-N' and additional information on Proportional RCV, see our 'Election Methods' memo:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/14_-QLlaVdN09W1ik9NldmGX9ar_0iceGEzWj9P13_c0/edit?usp=sharing

For more information on the legal challenges to 'Vote-for-N' please see:

<https://campaignlegal.org/update/clc-report-encourages-every-state-pass-its-own-voting->

[rights-act](#)

2. In regard to the final bullet point, is it preferable to have multi-seat elections (as opposed to multi-seat districts with staggered terms) or should we just avoid multi-seat elections in the future?

- If Portland does continue to have multi-member districts, whether that be the existing school board at-large seats, future charter commissions, or a more expansive use of multi-member districts, national best practice would guide us to use pRCV to decide those districts.

The League does not yet have a consensus answer to this question.

We do not suggest avoiding multi-winner elections, which can provide proportional representation if conducted using an election method such as Proportional RCV.

On the other hand, multi-seat districts with representatives elected to staggered terms in single-seat elections can restrict minority representation. If we think of a situation with three at-large seats, one elected each year, it is easy to imagine the same majority bloc winning each successive election and holding all three seats. This would not meet our criteria for majority rule with minority representation if all the seats in the legislative body were elected this way. But it may be acceptable in combination with other approaches to achieving diversity.

Single-seat districts can deliver proportional representation when district lines support the election of minority candidates depending on demographics and district boundaries. On the other hand, gerrymandered districts that consolidate majority power would not meet our criteria for majority rule with minority representation.

These considerations are explored more fully in the “Election Methods” memo linked above, and we remain available to answer questions from individual Commissioners or the Commission as a whole.

Anna Kellar (They / Them / Theirs)
Executive Director
League of Women Voters of Maine and Maine Citizens for Clean Elections
Learn more about our collaboration at www.democracymaine.org
207-252-9248

On Sun, Dec 5, 2021 at 6:26 PM Zachary Barowitz <zbarowitz@portlandmaine.gov> wrote:

| Jill,

Thank you for preparing this memo. I have a two questions:

1. I am not entirely clear on the penultimate bullet point in the memo. Can you restate it in more lay-person terms?

- At-large districts elected by plurality bloc voting -- the vote-for-N method -- have been challenged in court for producing unrepresentative outcomes: a narrow plurality of voters can easily capture a 100% of the seats. This is still true if conventional standard RCV is used to determine the winners.

2. In regard to the final bullet point, is it preferable to have multi-seat elections (as opposed to multi-seat districts with staggered terms) or should we just avoid multi-seat elections in the future?

- If Portland does continue to have multi-member districts, whether that be the existing school board at-large seats, future charter commissions, or a more expansive use of multi-member districts, national best practice would guide us to use pRCV to decide those districts.

Best,
Zack

On Fri, Dec 3, 2021 at 4:26 PM Jill Ward <jmward23@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for your work on behalf of the people of Portland.

As proportional ranked choice voting and multi-seat districts have come up in the last few weeks, attached for your consideration is a memo that lays out the League of Women Voters of Maine's position on these issues.

We are grateful for the opportunities we've had to engage with the elections committee and are looking forward to continuing to work with you all!

Jill Ward
Board President
League of Women Voters of Maine

Notice: Under Maine law, documents - including e-mails - in the possession of public officials or city employees about government business may be classified as public records. There are very few exceptions. As a result, please be advised that what is written in an e-mail could be released to the public and/or the media if requested.

From: [STEPHANIE CASTLE](#)
To: charter@portlandmaine.gov
Subject: Non citizen voting
Date: Monday, December 06, 2021 2:15:16 PM

I am firmly against this idea. One of rights of citizenship is voting and should not be given to anyone not a citizen. Certainly when I live/ visit other countries each year I know I cannot vote.

Stephanie Castle
2 Island Ave
Peaks Island Me

Sent from my iPad

From: [Winston Lumpkins](#)
To: charter@portlandmaine.gov
Subject: Commissioner Chann's proposal (as reported by the Phoenix)
Date: Monday, December 06, 2021 12:49:36 PM

Dear Charter Commissioners,

While I appreciate the effort that has certainly gone into it, I am asking you to oppose the plan laid out by Commissioner Chann in this month's Portland Phoenix, page 2.

The Ranked Choice system that Portland enacted through a referendum campaign (with an unprecedented 80% of the vote) is a system that all but guarantees that someone who is unacceptable to more than half the populace cannot legally hold office.

Commissioner Chann states that: "a single winner-take-all election in each district [can] pave... the way for candidates with ideologies that might not represent most people in their district."

This statement by Commissioner Chann makes me think that he fundamentally misunderstands how ranked-choice voting currently works. It is physically impossible to win an election in Portland Maine without more than 50% of the vote. More than 50% is most people. Certainly, 25% is not most people. What is not most people is a situation where you could have someone elected to office when up to 75% of the electorate considers them unfit for service.

It would be more accurate to say: "Ranked-choice voting, as implemented in Portland Maine, prevents those with ideologies that most people disagree with from holding public office"

It does not make sense to change the structure of the council only so that future elections for charter commission would be more "fair" according to one member's interpretation of events.

The "problems" with the 2021 charter commission election were brought about by having separate at large seats open in a single race. Initially, many of us thought that there would have to be 4 separate races, each with a 50% ranked choice threshold, to best mimic the structure of the council. Running those races as proportional ranked choice races would not have been consistent with the manner in which the at large Councilors & Mayor are elected, as is mandated by the existing city charter.

While perhaps not best practice in a stand alone election, the way that race was tallied was the best way to mimic 4 separate ranked-choice elections that typically take place in different years.

Indeed, no one was elected to office who did not receive votes from more than 50% of the electorate, in the end, most voters got what they wanted.

Love it or hate it, most voters were happy with the results.

Furthermore, Commissioner Chann both mentions wanting to separate the Mayor from the Council (a sensible suggestion if the mayor is indeed endowed with more power than she currently holds) & that he would be amenable to 12 councilors. 9, 11, 13 or 15 are probably our best options if we want to avoid ties. We do, I hope, want to avoid ties.

I believe we need more districts, to better represent the needs of Portland's many small and varied neighborhoods, not less.

I am not convinced that we need to do away with the 3 at-large councilors to do this, adding 3 or 5 seats to the council might be the best way to improve neighborhood representation without changing the rules of the game too much, part way through the game.

Yours, Faithfully,

Winston Lumpkins IV.

~Winston W. Lumpkins IV
Portland, Maine.
04101
207-408-1508

From: [Josh M](#)
To: charter@portlandmaine.gov
Subject: Please do not eliminate government checks and balances
Date: Monday, December 06, 2021 11:04:31 AM

Hello,

Thanks for your time and work for the city.

I'd like to urge you to retain Council oversight over the school board. Checks and balances in government are important. It's a good thing to have this check and balance in place.

Practically, the school board has still gotten it's requested budget for the past five cycles so Council is obviously not an impediment. You need to build a system that is resistant to worst-case scenario like we are seeing with these anti-vax, nutso school boards across the country. Not just best case scenario.

Please retain checks and balances in government.

Thank you,
Josh
12 Bancroft

From: [Jill Ward](#)
To: mkebede@portlandmaine.gov; mchann@portlandmaine.gov; charter@portlandmaine.gov
Cc: anna@lwvme.org; will@democracymaine.org; deb@themcdonoughs.org
Subject: League of Women Voters of Maine memo re: proportional representation
Date: Friday, December 03, 2021 4:26:27 PM
Attachments: [LWVME Memo to Charter Commission.pdf](#)

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for your work on behalf of the people of Portland.

As proportional ranked choice voting and multi-seat districts have come up in the last few weeks, attached for your consideration is a memo that lays out the League of Women Voters of Maine's position on these issues.

We are grateful for the opportunities we've had to engage with the elections committee and are looking forward to continuing to work with you all!

Jill Ward
Board President
League of Women Voters of Maine

From: [Anna Kellar](#)
To: Charter@portlandmaine.gov
Subject: Fair Elections Portland priorities for the charter
Date: Thursday, December 02, 2021 4:47:46 PM
Attachments: [Charter proposals Public Funding and Public Advocate\(1\).pdf](#)

Dear charter commissioners,

Thank you for your hard work so far, and your openness to input from community organizations and election reformers. We want to take this opportunity to reaffirm FEP's priorities and offer you more specific proposals for our areas of interest.

These are listed in the attached memo.

We're looking forward to continuing to work with you!

Anna Kellar (chair) and the Fair Elections Portland board
Scott Vonnegut
Maria Testa
Al Cleveland
Meagan Lauer
Steph Walsh

From: [Anthony Emerson](#)
To: charter@portlandmaine.gov
Subject: The current proposal for redistricting
Date: Wednesday, December 01, 2021 7:16:26 PM

Distinguished members of the commission,

I write today to express my complete and total opposition to the reform to the city council outlined in the recent Portland Phoenix article.

While I'm happy to see the abolition of the at-large seats, reducing the districts numbers from five to three is the exact opposite of what the commission should be pursuing.

Many of you were elected on platforms calling for expanded neighborhood and community representation. This proposal seems to do the opposite — in fact, it seems almost intentionally designed to limit neighborhood representation.

I hope this proposal does not make it into the final charter. I would hate to have to vote to retain the current charter.

Yours most sincerely,
Anthony Emerson

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Joey Brunelle](#)
To: [Marpheen Chann](#)
Cc: Charter@portlandmaine.gov
Subject: Re: Question about the Media
Date: Wednesday, December 01, 2021 11:17:12 AM

Hi Marpheen,

Commissioner Buxton in your committee's meeting last night said quite plainly that she had not seen your proposal until a few days ago. At the end of last night's meeting, both Commissioner Buxton and Commission Washburn pointedly requested to be included in further revisions of your proposal, and seemed to suggest that they were not included in the initial drafting. (Cat and Pat, please correct me if I heard incorrectly.)

Also, papers like the Phoenix typically have a deadline for stories a few days (at least) before publication. This makes me wonder: when did you give your interview to Colin at the Phoenix? I would assume it had to have been *before* you had a discussion with your committee colleagues about the proposal last night. Based on the comments last night from Commissioner Buxton, it may have been before at least one of your colleagues had even seen your proposal at all.

This does not feel to me like the "team player" behavior, and seems more like a single commissioner pushing their individual agenda, by using a conveniently timed media plug to generate outside pressure... Some might even call this "divisive."

- Joey

On Wed, Dec 1, 2021 at 3:50 PM Marpheen Chann <mchann@portlandmaine.gov> wrote:

Hi Joey,

Thanks for your email on this.

To your point about the other commissioners on the committee, I had included them on all communications and drafts with folks from RCV and LWV and asked for the input. Not entirely sure where you are getting that idea.

As I've stated multiple times, these are initial ideas to get the conversation started and to get feedback from the public and other commissioners.

Best,
Marpheen Chann
Portland Charter Commissioner, At-Large

On Dec 1, 2021, at 9:59 AM, Joey Brunelle <joey.brunelle@gmail.com> wrote:

Commissioner Chann has an article in the Portland Phoenix today about his proportional RCV proposal, which he drafted without the input of

the other two commissioners on the Governance Committee.

<https://portlandphoenix.me/rodriguez-mazer-look-ahead-after-portland-election-explanation/>

This begs the question: can any commissioner go to the press about their specific proposals, even before bringing them up for discussion with their colleagues?

Commissioner Chann seems to be whipping support for his proposal with the public without first consulting other commissioners or even including them in drafting.

This does not seem particularly democratic, collaborative or transparent to me, personally.

- Joey

Notice: Under Maine law, documents - including e-mails - in the possession of public officials or city employees about government business may be classified as public records. There are very few exceptions. As a result, please be advised that what is written in an e-mail could be released to the public and/or the media if requested.

From: Lawson Condrey
To: charter@portlandmaine.gov
Subject: Fwd: Charter - Elections and Districts
Date: Wednesday, December 01, 2021 10:21:42 AM

Hello! Forwarding my email from Friday to the larger group here. Please see below my concerns around the plan put forth by Commissioner Chan.

Thanks,
Lawson Condrey

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Lawson Condrey** <lawsoncondrey@gmail.com>
Date: Fri, Nov 26, 2021 at 10:40 AM
Subject: Charter - Elections and Districts
To: cbuxton@portlandmaine.gov <cbuxton@portlandmaine.gov>, mchann@portlandmaine.gov <mchann@portlandmaine.gov>, <pwashburn@portlandmaine.com>

Hi Commissioners,

I'm disappointed to learn about the confusing recommendation for 3 districts and 3 councilors therein. If anything we need more districts and more councilors. We need more representation and we need it to be easier for folks to run and campaign. There are a ton of smart people here but most think it's too difficult to run or get involved because who has the time? With smaller districts it would make campaigns easier and cheaper but also make it more reasonable for office holders to reach out to constituents in their neighborhood. The new change would just add confusion to our government model and not actually make it better. Usually when government is made to be harder to be understood or participate in it doesn't end in more people getting involved.

Thanks for serving,
Lawson

From: [Joey Brunelle](#)
To: charter@portlandmaine.gov
Subject: Question about the Media
Date: Wednesday, December 01, 2021 9:59:03 AM

Commissioner Chann has an article in the Portland Phoenix today about his proportional RCV proposal, which he drafted without the input of the other two commissioners on the Governance Committee.

<https://portlandphoenix.me/rodriguez-mazer-look-ahead-after-portland-election-explanation/>

This begs the question: can any commissioner go to the press about their specific proposals, even before bringing them up for discussion with their colleagues?

Commissioner Chann seems to be whipping support for his proposal with the public without first consulting other commissioners or even including them in drafting.

This does not seem particularly democratic, collaborative or transparent to me, personally.

- Joey

From: [Ron Smalley](#)
To: charter@portlandmaine.gov
Date: Wednesday, December 01, 2021 7:54:01 AM

As for ranked choice voice: Do away with it..... repeal it ! NOW

From: [Tess](#)
To: charter@portlandmaine.gov
Cc: [Kate Snyder](#)
Subject: Non citizen voting
Date: Wednesday, December 01, 2021 7:02:51 AM

My family came to America - worked hard and became American citizens. In becoming citizens... they earned the RIGHT to vote!!
No non-citizen should have the right to vote... let them become American citizens and EARN that right. What is wrong with going through the process?
Without the process- anyone in the world can cross the border and vote- it doesn't make sense.
GET A GRIP AND STOP TRYING TO CHANGE AMERICA!!!!!!!
I'm sure this goes on deaf ears- you all seem to have your personal interest above Portland CITIZENS.
Thank you
Tess Nappi

Sent from my iPhone