AGENDA

Elections Commission Meeting

Wednesday, April 19, 2023
6:00 p.m.
Hybrid Meeting
Aurora Municipal Center
15151 E Alameda Pkwy, 2nd Floor
Aurora, CO 80012

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Approval of Minutes
   3.a 04-05-2023 Election Commission Minutes

4. Approval of Agenda

5. General Business
   5.a Election of Vice Chair
   5.b Discussion on Official Statement from Election Commission

6. Miscellaneous Matters for Consideration

7. Adjournment
Call to Order: Scott Irvin called the meeting to order at 6:14 p.m.

Roll Call: City Clerk Kadee Rodriguez called roll.

Members Present: Scott Irvin, Bill McCartin, Molly Barrett, Lori Gimelshteyn and Mike Seufert

Staff Present: Kadee Rodriguez, City Clerk; Dave Lathers, Assistant Senior Attorney; Council Member Marcano

Approval of Agenda: Molly Barrett motions to approve the agenda, Lori Gimelshteyn seconds. Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes: Scott Irvin motioned to approve the 3-15-2023 minutes, Bill McCartin seconds. Motion passed.

General Business:

Discussion on Official Statement from Election Commission: Council Member (CM) Marcano discusses two of the amendments brought forward through the Charter Review Committee including the timing of elections and making elections partisan. CM Marcano explained that the three main reasons for these amendments are to provide more information to the electorate, increase transparency and to increase voter turnout. He explained that moving elections to even years has dramatically increased voter turnouts.

Kadee explained the cost implications of moving elections to even numbered years. Bill McCartin expressed that making ballots too long may lead to ballot fatigue. CM Marcano explained that in his research and in observing Castle Rock and Parker, that ballot fatigue was not a problem. Bill McCartin expressed further concern with voter fatigue when it comes to judges.

Molly Barrett questioned how partisan voting would decrease negativity. CM Marcano explained that negative mailers are much more effective when there’s no party affiliation. Molly asked if there were political parties, would there be primary elections. CM Marcano answered that he would not want primary elections. Molly explained that school board elections and other smaller elections are not automatically put into the even years, and would that still be the case? CM Marcano answered that the City of Aurora can’t control when school board elections are, but that the state legislature is also discussing moving school board elections to even years.

CM Marcano and Kadee explained what the timing process would look like if approved. Lori Gimelshteyn asked for clarification on the expenses of moving the election to even years. Kadee sent out and explained the exact expenses to the Commission. Lori agreed that decision fatigue is a real problem that needs to be considered, and that
moving to even years would be more difficult for voters to get to know candidates. Lori recommended that rather than moving the election year that a study should be done on why voter turnout is lower in municipality races and solve the problem through education to the voters. CM Marcano explained that voting fatigue is a problem as well and that more elections can lead to this.

Bill expressed two other concerns including the noise of campaigning and that it could be a misconception to declare. He stated that just because someone declares their party that you know where they stand. Molly expressed that one of her biggest hesitations is that the whole process seems very rushed. Scott agreed with CM Marcano’s point of voter fatigue and how having an election every year can lead to that. Lori stated that we are failing to educate the citizens on the importance of municipal elections.

The Commission discussed how they should compose their recommendation and began assembling a pros and cons list based on everything that was discussed previously. They agreed that the quality of voters is important to consider along with the quantity of voters. Kadee confirmed that the proposal can be provided to both the charter committee and the citizens review committee. The Commission agreed that they would work on a draft and review it during their next meeting.

Miscellaneous Items: Bill asked when information on candidates will be released and when they can do campaign finance training. Kadee explained that by the end of April updated training sessions and packets will be provided to all candidates on the new system. The Commission discussed possible meeting formats for future meetings. They agreed that the next meeting will be an in-person meeting on April 19th.

Adjournment: Motion by Scott Irvin to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Lori Gimelshteyn. The meeting is adjourned at 7:39 p.m.