



**AGENDA
CHARTER STUDY TASK FORCE
APRIL 25, 2024
REGULAR MEETING - 6:00 P.M.**

**PASADENA CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBER
100 NORTH GARFIELD AVENUE, ROOM S249**

Teleconference Locations:

Sunriver Resort, Business Center
17600 Center Drive
Sunriver, OR 97707

Westin Hotel, Business Center
191 N Los Robles Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91101

MEMBERS

Ken Chawkins, Chair, District 6
Marcus Hatcher, Vice Chair, District 3
Vince Farhat, Mayoral
Diana Carbajal Mejia, At Large
Raul Salinas, At Large
Lena Louise Kennedy, District 1
Margaret McAustin, District 2
Paul Novak, District 4
Liberty McCoy, District 5
Andy Wilson, District 7

STAFF

Mark Jomsky, City Clerk
Michele Beal Bagneris, City Attorney/City Prosecutor
Alex Souto, Deputy City Manager

MISSION STATEMENT

The City of Pasadena is dedicated to delivering exemplary municipal services, responsive to our entire community and consistent with our history, culture and unique character.

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Items on the agenda may not be called in order listed. Agendas and supporting documents are available on the Internet at <http://www.cityofpasadena.net/city-clerk/charter-study>

*Materials related to an item on this Agenda submitted to the Charter Study Task Force **after** distribution of the agenda packet are available for public inspection in the City Clerk's Office at 100 N. Garfield Avenue, Room S-228, Pasadena, during normal business hours.*

**PUBLIC COMMENT AT THE CHARTER STUDY TASK FORCE MEETING FOR
APRIL 25, 2024 AT 6:00 P.M. WILL BE ACCEPTED IN-PERSON AND BY
VIDEOCONFERENCE/TELECONFERENCE.**

In order to facilitate public participation at meetings the Task Force will accept public comment in the following manner:

1. **In-person Meeting Participation:** Members of the public may provide public comment in person by submitting a speaker card prior to the start of public comment on that item.

If a public comment speaker wishes to speak on more than one agenda item, please indicate which items on the speaker card. Public comments are limited to 3 minutes each, and the Chair and Task Force may limit this time if reasonable under the circumstances.

2. **Virtual Meeting Participation:** For virtual participants, you may attend by connecting to the meeting using a computer, other electronic device, or by telephone. Please review the agenda to identify the published start time for the meeting and connect to the meeting just prior to, or at the start of the meeting.

To participate in public comment for an item and to be recognized to speak, members of the public may use the “raise hand” feature in the Zoom meeting. This will allow staff to locate and promote the speaker into the meeting when it is time for their public comment. Participants’ calls to the Charter Study Task Force meeting will be recorded as part of the meeting. By staying on the line and making public comment during the meeting by phone or electronic device, you are agreeing to have your call recorded. Following is the connectivity information for virtual participation:

Computer or electronic devices, join the meeting at: <http://cityofpasadena.net/cczoom>

Telephone only dial-in: **Phone: 1-669-900-6833, Meeting ID: 161 482 446**

3. Members of the public may submit correspondence of any length prior to the start of the meeting, at the following email address:

cityclerk@cityofpasadena.net

Correspondence will be forwarded to the Task Force prior to the start of the meeting, posted online, and made part of the legislative record for the item.

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**REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
CHARTER STUDY TASK FORCE
APRIL 25, 2024**

Regular Meeting: 6:00 P.M.

Pasadena City Hall, Council Chamber
100 North Garfield Avenue, Room S249

Teleconference Locations:

Sunriver Resort, Business Center
17600 Center Dr, Sunriver, OR 97707

Westin Hotel, Business Center
191 North Los Robles Ave, Pasadena, CA 91101

NOTE TO PUBLIC: Members of the public may participate in Charter Study Task Force meetings either in-person in the Council Chamber, or by connecting remotely via Zoom. Information regarding in-person and remote/virtual participation, as well as how to provide public comment as part of the meeting, is detailed below and as part of the public comment information pages included with this agenda.

For assistance with any issues or questions related to public participation, please call the City Clerk's Office at (626) 744-4124.

PUBLIC'S VIRTUAL ACCESS TO THE MEETING IS AS FOLLOWS:

Video Conference: <http://cityofpasadena.net/cczoom>

OR

Phone: 1-669-900-6833, Meeting ID: 161 482 446

PUBLIC MEETING – 6:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

*Public comment will be limited to issues within the subject matter of the Charter Study Task Force, for a total of **20 minutes** at the beginning of the meeting, and will continue at the conclusion of the meeting, if necessary. Please limit comments to **3 minutes** each. The Chair and the Task Force may limit this time if reasonable under the circumstances.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. APRIL 11, 2024 - REGULAR MEETING**

OLD BUSINESS

- 2. CONSIDERATION OF CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTION LIMITS FOR MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS**
- 3. STATUS REPORT ON ASSIGNED CHARTER STUDY TOPICS AND CONSIDERATION OF POSSIBLE DIRECTION TO CONSULTANT TEAM AND CITY STAFF ON PREPARATION OF FINAL REPORT**

NEW BUSINESS

PUBLIC COMMENT – CONTINUED IF NECESSARY

FUTURE MEETING SCHEDULE

- 4. CONSIDERATION OF CHANGES TO THE CHARTER STUDY TASK FORCE REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE AND/OR REGULAR MEETING LOCATION

MEETING SCHEDULE FOR CHARTER STUDY TASK FORCE	
Thursday, May 9, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. H&H Jivalagian Youth Center, 2242 E Foothill Blvd, Pasadena, CA 91107	Thursday, May 23, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. City Hall, Council Chamber

ADJOURN

** Attachments

I HEREBY CERTIFY that this notice was posted in its entirety on the Internet at <https://www.cityofpasadena.net/city-clerk/charterstudy/> and on the Council Chamber Bulletin Board, Room S249, City Hall, 100 North Garfield Avenue, and a copy was distributed to Central Library for posting this 22nd day of April, 2024, at 5:30 p.m., and that copies hereof were faxed or delivered to each member of the Charter Study Task Force, and to each local newspaper of general circulation, radio or television station requesting notice in writing, all of which recipients are identified on the distribution list set forth herein below.



Mark Jomsky
City Clerk

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**CHARTER STUDY
TASK FORCE
APRIL 25, 2024**

**ITEM 1
MEETING MINUTES
SUBMITTED FOR
APPROVAL**

**CITY OF PASADENA
CHARTER STUDY TASK FORCE
APRIL 11, 2024 – 6:00 P.M.
ROBINSON PARK RECREATION CENTER, MULTIPURPOSE ROOM
1081 N FAIR OAKS AVE, PASADENA, CA 91103**

REGULAR MEETING

OPENING Chair Chawkins called the regular meeting of the Charter Study Task Force to order at 6:06 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Member Vince Farhat
Member Lena Kennedy
Member Margaret McAustin
Member Liberty McCoy
Member Diana Carbajal Mejia
Member Paul Novak
Member Raul Salinas (absent)
Member Andy Wilson
Vice Chair Marcus Hatcher (absent)
Chair Ken Chawkins

Staff: Michele Bagneris, City Attorney
Mark Jomsky, City Clerk
Alex Souto, Deputy City Manager
Christine Soo, Assistant City Clerk

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MARCH 28, 2024 REGULAR MEETING

It was moved by Member McCoy, seconded by Member McAustin, to approve the meeting minutes, as submitted.

AYES: Members Farhat, Kennedy, McAustin, McCoy, Mejia, Novak, Wilson
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: Chair Chawkins
ABSENT: Member Salinas, Vice Chair Hatcher

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA. Jon Fuhrman, Pasadena resident, advocated for a Pro Tem Mayor position and provided suggestions for the method of selection.

Allen Shay, Pasadena resident, advocated for the topic of use of technology and accountability for the Pasadena Police Department be agendized and discussed by the Task Force.

Olden Denham, Pasadena resident, spoke on the shooting of Anthony McClain and expressed the need for police reform using the Charter Amendment process.

Michelle White, Pasadena resident, requested the Task Force discuss the matter of campaign contributions from labor unions, who represent City employees.

Denise Robb, Pasadena resident, expressed support for term limits for Councilmembers, ranked choice voting, and reasonable campaign contribution limits.

Chair Chawkins clarified that the Charter Study Task Force only has the ability to discuss the topics as directed by City Council.

OLD BUSINESS

CONSIDERATION OF OPTIONS REGARDING THE TIMING OF MAYOR'S ELECTION**

Shauna Clark, Baker Tilly consultant, presented a PowerPoint presentation on cost estimates of off-cycle elections and voter turnout rates based on data from other cities in Los Angeles County. She presented a cost analysis if the City were to conduct off-cycle elections. In response to questions, City Clerk Jomsky clarified that the County of Los Angeles does not conduct elections using ranked choice voting, so the City would be responsible for purchasing equipment and hiring a consultant team to assist in running such an election.

Jonathan Horton, Pasadena resident, expressed concerns for off-cycle elections due to the high costs and low voter turnout, and advocated for a full-time, salaried Mayor.

Member McCoy, Member Salinas, and Member Novak expressed opposition to off-cycle elections due to high costs, low voter turnout, and the ineffectiveness of potentially changing the City Charter to accommodate up to four Councilmembers to run for the Office of Mayor.

Chair Chawkins suggested that one other option that the Task Force might consider would be to conduct the Mayor's Election during the Primary and General elections of the City, and have all other Council District Elections occur during the November General elections as plurality voting elections (highest vote wins, with no run-off), thus allowing Councilmembers to compete for the Mayor's seat without having to forego running for their own District seat.

City Clerk Jomsky presented a PowerPoint presentation detailing the Chair's alternative solution, while also providing additional options for the Task Force to consider, including plurality elections for the Mayor and Councilmembers, plurality elections for only Councilmembers, and an option where the City could conduct a run-off election for any Council District seat that did not achieve a 50%+1 majority in the General election, that would occur eight weeks after the declaration of the General election results.

Members of the Task Force thanked the Chair and City Clerk for considering and presenting these additional options but opposed adjusting the timing of elections to essentially allow four members of the City Council to run for the Mayor's position without having to forego seeking their own elected seats.

Task Force members acknowledged the current advantage for Council Districts 3, 5, and 7, but agreed that the disadvantage to Districts 1, 2, 4, and 6 did not rise to the level of creating such a complicated solution.

Member Novak expressed concerns with the proposed solutions, which may overwhelm voters. Echoing the concerns of other Task Force members, Member Novak advocated for no change to the timing of the mayoral election cycle.

Jon Fuhrman, Pasadena resident, expressed opposition to the proposed solutions, stating that it would create voter fatigue and increase partisanship in City elections.

Allen Shay, Pasadena resident, stated that the proposed solutions would create more difficulty for voters to make decisions and advocated for term limits as a better solution.

MOTION:

Following discussion, it was moved by Member Novak, seconded by Member Wilson, to recommend to the City Council that no changes be made to the timing of the Mayoral election cycle. (Motion unanimously approved.) (Absent: Member Salinas, Vice Chair Hatcher)

NEW BUSINESS

STATUS REPORT ON ASSIGNED CHARTER STUDY TOPICS AND CONSIDERATION OF POSSIBLE DIRECTION TO CONSULTANT TEAM AND CITY STAFF ON PREPARATION OF FINAL REPORT**

City Clerk Jomsky provided introductory remarks on the item; he provided an overview and status updates on the assigned topics that have been discussed by the Task Force thus far, and noted the remaining pending issues that required clarification and/or further discussion by the Task Force.

The following individuals spoke in support of placing the matter of campaign contribution limits on the ballot for voters to decide and/or provided suggestions for contribution limits and term limits.

Sonia Berndt, Pasadena resident
Ellen Finkelppearl, Pasadena resident
Jonathan Horton, Pasadena residents
Ed Washatka, Pasadena resident
Allen Shay, Pasadena resident
Wes Reutimann, Pasadena resident

On the pending issue related to filling a council vacancy and the timing of an election if the City Council is unable to meet the 75-day appointment deadline, Member Farhat and Member Wilson advocated for the item to be discussed at the next meeting with Member Salinas in attendance to ensure a comprehensive discussion.

Member Novak emphasized caution when analyzing election trends that are compared to the City to Los Angeles, stating the City of Pasadena is drastically different in size and resources.

Member Wilson requested the consultant and City staff provide additional data pertaining to campaign contributions and independent expenditures to facilitate the Task Force's discussion and consideration on the issue.

By order of the Chair, and consensus of the Task Force, the information was received and filed, with staff to return with additional information at the next meeting.

CONSIDERATION OF CHANGES TO THE CHARTER STUDY TASK FORCE REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE AND/OR REGULAR MEETING LOCATION

Member Farhat and Member Kennedy announced that they will attend the next Charter Study Task Force meeting remotely, in accordance with Brown Act regulations.

ADJOURNMENT:

On the order of the Chair, the meeting of the Charter Study Task Force was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

KEN CHAWKINS, Chair
Charter Study Task Force

ATTEST:

Mark Jomsky
City Clerk

**CHARTER STUDY
TASK FORCE
APRIL 25, 2024**

**ITEM 2
STAFF REPORT**



To: Pasadena Charter Study Task Force

From: Jay Trevino, Director
Al Zelinka, Director
Shauna Clark, Special Advisor

Subject: Follow up on Campaign Contribution Limits

Date: April 25, 2024

Background

The Task Force considered contribution limits on March 28, 2024. After deliberations, a motion was made and seconded to recommend leaving Pasadena's default limits in place. However, the vote was not concluded because a member of the Task Force asked Baker Tilly for data on the comparison cities to see if there is a causal connection between low limits and independent expenditures.

Advocating for low contribution limits

The topic of lowering contribution limits was initially discussed by the City Council and the Legislative Policy Committee when AB 571 was signed into law. Prior to AB 571, the City of Pasadena had no contribution limits and the City Council sought to maintain the status quo of no limits. However, due to strong opposition by members of the public and representatives of Common Cause, the City Council took no action and allowed statewide campaign contribution limits to take effect. When Charter Study topics were being finalized, the Council asked the Task Force to study the issue and provide a recommendation on whether the City should change its contribution limits.

Common Cause and community advocates have asserted that capping donations would decrease the disparity in campaign funding. There is a common belief that low limits reduce the fundraising advantage of incumbents by forcing them to reach out to a broader pool of smaller donors. It is the position of these groups that the City should adopt even lower limits than those required by AB 571.

Baker Tilly found studies recommending lowering contribution limits in federal and state elections to reduce the influence of large donors with elected officials. We did not find one proving a direct connection between lowering limits and larger candidate pools.

Opposing low limits

The counterpoint is that lowering contribution limits will not level out the financial resources available to candidates because of Independent Expenditure Committees (IECs). The coffers of IECs will expand because they provide a legal avenue for donors to give unlimited funds to support or oppose candidates for local races. Those funds can boost or overwhelm a candidate's presence with voters through the purchase of communications including mailers, advertising, and social media posts. Neither the State of California nor any local government has the power to rein in independent expenditures. As a result, monies from large donors will continue to influence the political landscape.

The importance of Transparency

One argument in favor of higher limits is that they continue the contribution connection between donor and candidate, which makes elections more transparent. In Pasadena, as with other cities that follow default state limits, transactions up to \$5,500 appear on the candidate's financial disclosure reports. The City Clerk makes those reports available online and accessible to the public. In cities with low limits, a \$5,500 donation would be made to an IEC, in which case the names and amounts given by donors can be obscured through a series of legal maneuvers. Many observers would be unaware that an independent group is buying ads and paying for mailers on behalf of a campaign they have been following.

Transparency improves the application of anti-corruption safeguards such as the Taxpayer Protection Act and the Levine Act. Preventing an advantage gained through political contributions relies on knowing who donors and recipients are. Because donors can take cover by contributing to PACs that donate to IECs, the elected official could be unaware and inadvertently vote on a contributor's project. As previously mentioned, IECs operate independently of candidates so there is no campaign "contribution."¹

Methodology for Comparative Analysis before and after Contribution Limits

The first step in finding a causal connection between limits and independent expenditures in the comparison cities was to find the date each comparison city adopted contribution limits. Eight cities had local contribution limits, but six adopted them last century. (see column 4 in table 1). Baker Tilly decided to use Burbank because the adoption of low limits occurred closest to AB 571.

¹ State law forbids coordinating independent expenditures with a campaign or officeholder.

Table 1. Comparison Cities – Contribution Limits and Adoption Dates

City	Population	Contribution Limits	Adoption date
Pasadena	136,988	\$5,500	AB 571
Anaheim	328,580	\$2,500	1999
Berkeley	123,562	\$ 250	1974
Burbank	104,535	\$ 500	2020
Glendale	191,284	\$1,340	2008
Long Beach	458,222	\$ 500	1994
Santa Ana	299,630	\$1,000	1992
Santa Barbara	85,418	\$5,500	AB 571
Santa Monica	91,720	\$ 410	1992
Torrance	143,057	\$1,000	1992

Finding cause and effect requires selecting a control group, identifying an intervention, and choosing a variable group. In this study, the control group is campaign spending in 2017, the intervention is the adoption of contribution limits, and the variable is the campaign expenditures in 2022.

Data collection was consistent for both groups. Baker Tilly researched campaign and independent expenditures of candidates within four months before and one month after each election cycle. We combined independent expenditures attributed to a candidate with campaign expenditures, then inserted colors in the place of names.

Table 2. Burbank election expenditures before and after the adoption of the \$500 contribution limit

Election Year 2017 – Control Group				Election Year 2022 – Variable Group			
Name	Transactions	Spent	Average	Name	Transactions	Spent	Average
Mr. Red	13	\$1,711	\$132	Ms. Violet	235	\$76,110	\$324
Mr. Orange	109	\$23,480	\$215	Ms. Gold	42	\$9,517	\$227
Mr. Yellow	16	\$2,400	\$150	Ms. Black	170	\$71,975	\$423
Mr. Blue	51	\$14,050	\$275	Mr. White	74	\$13,625	\$184
Ms. Green	55	\$11,195	\$204	Ms. Green	96	\$32,582	\$339
Ms. Indigo	34	\$11,101	\$327				
Totals	278	\$63,937	\$230	Totals	617	\$203,809	\$330
Average per campaign		\$10,656		Average per campaign		\$40,762	

Table notes:

1. The table is divided in half. The left side is for election year 2017 and the right side is for year 2022
2. The “Transactions” columns show the number of expenditures made by candidates and by IECs
3. The “Spent” columns show the combination of campaign funds and independent expenditures
4. The “Average” columns show the money spent, divided by the number of transactions for an average
5. The bottom row is the average money spent per candidate—in other words, the average “cost” of a campaign during the 2017 and 2022 election cycles.

There were 278 transactions in 2017. In 2022, with one fewer candidate, transactions more than doubled to 617. The average transaction rose from \$230 to \$330. In 2017,

there were six candidates and each campaign cost \$10,656 on average. In 2022, the average campaign cost was \$40,672. Ms. Green ran twice. In the first race she spent \$11,000 and in the second, \$32,000. In the 2022 election cycle, one IEC spent \$34,000 to support Ms. Black.

Independent Expenditures in the State of California

One case study cannot prove a causal relationship between contribution limits and diversion of donor monies to Independent Expenditure Committees, so we looked for more data. Table 3 presents an overview of independent expenditures on behalf of candidates from 2001 to 2024. To be clear, the data presented here pertains to all races – state, county, and local. The numbers are rounded.

Table 3. Increase in IEC donations for all candidates from 2001 to 2024

	2001-2002	Inflation adjusted	Actual 2023-2024	Actual over adjusted	Percentage increase
Total amount of expenditures made on behalf of candidates	\$9,300,000	\$14,197,000	\$45,000,000	\$30,803,000	217%
Average amount of each transaction	\$5,500	\$8,400	\$28,100	\$19,700	235%

Source: The Secretary of State's CalAccess website

In election cycle 2001-2002, IECs reportedly spent \$9.3 million on behalf of candidates. The average transaction (expenditure) was \$5,500. In 2023-2024, IECs spent \$45.0 million on candidate races for an approximate average of \$28,100 per transaction. How much of that increase was due to inflation? The \$9.3 million of 2001 adjusted for inflation would be \$14,197,000 in 2024. If \$5,500 in 2001 were adjusted by inflation, it would be \$8,400. The table compares 2001, expenditures adjusted for inflation, with 2024 expenditures. Over 23 years, total independent expenditures supporting or opposing candidates grew by 217% and the average transaction increased by 235%.

Why did IEC expenditures grow?

By 2021, the State of California, all 482 cities, and fifty-eight counties had limits either by adoption or default. We think that AB 571 had an impact. Prior to that, many cities and counties had no contribution limits, but contribution limits cannot be the only reason that independent expenditures are increasing. There has been a rise in politically charged issues that have brought in new donors to local campaigns. Issues such as retail cannabis, homelessness, rent control and tenants' rights, as well as public safety, social justice, and union participation have all had an impact on politics and political spending.

Expenditure Limits

The best and perhaps only way to level the playing field is to adopt expenditure limits. The problem is the Buckley v. Valeo decision of 1976. In Buckley, the Supreme Court

found that limits on individuals' independent expenditures violate the First Amendment.

There are jurisdictions that have voluntary spending limits. They provide incentives for agreeing to limits. These may include higher single contribution limits, matching funds, and notification to the voters that the candidate is participating in the program. The City of Santa Clara provides an array of incentives to candidates who agree to curb spending and not to accept large donations.²

Summing up the points and counter points

The following comments are not the opinions of Baker Tilly. They reflect statements by others and studies we read.

Advantages of adopting Low Limits	Advantages of retaining the Default Limit
Low limits give the appearance that a city wants to invite more challengers into local races	Campaign spending caps alone, without public financing, do not significantly impact election competitiveness
Low limits help allay public concerns about the influences of large donors, making voters more confident that elected officials will represent their constituents rather than special interests	Although building a broad base is a worthy goal, a working-class person or a parent who cannot afford the time to go door to door will find it hard to collect enough small donations to be competitive
Low limits encourage candidates to build broader bases of support	The current limits increase transparency by making it easy to see how campaigns are being funded
Low limits are credited for reducing the overall expenditures made in local campaigns	Low limits cannot curtail total spending because IECs are not concerned about the cost of elections
	The adoption of lower limits would require the City to create new policy and process for enforcement of the lower limits and the Political Reform Act, which could lead to politicization of City staff

² <https://www.santaclaraca.gov/our-city/departments-a-f/city-clerk-s-office/voluntary-campaign-expenditure-limit>

Observations:

- Both can be true – low limits bring challengers into local races, and low limits drive donations to Independent Expenditure Committees
- Low limits do not ensure challengers will win their elections
- Given the recent political climate, there may be no contribution limit high enough to discourage donors from funding IECs
- Limits help allay public concerns about the influence of money but have not proven to reduce corruption in cities like Los Angeles
- Big donors and IECs do not always favor incumbents
- The assertion that capping donations would decrease the disparity in campaign funding cannot be true until jurisdictions can cap independent expenditures
- IECs do not always support incumbents. In Los Angeles, the police union spent \$100,000 and a real estate company put in \$400,000 to defeat the same incumbent councilmember.³

Sample Recommendations (copied from the March 28 report)

- A. No action
- B. Recommend retaining the FPPC default limits
- C. Recommend that the Mayor and Council enact an ordinance (or Charter Amendment) adopting campaign contribution limits in the amount of \$_____ for the Mayor's race, and \$_____ for Council races, per election, including provisions for adjusting those limits in odd-numbered years by the regional CPI

³ <https://www.latimes.com/california/newsletter/2024-02-10/la-on-the-record-big-spending-in-los-angeles-elections-l-a-on-the-record>


**CHARTER STUDY
TASK FORCE
APRIL 25, 2024**

**ITEM 3
STAFF REPORT
AND
CORRESPONDENCE
FROM 4/11/24**



OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chair, Vice Chair, and Task Force Members
FROM: Mark Jomsky, City Clerk 
DATE: April 11, 2024 (updated)
RE: Status Report on City Council Assigned Charter Study Topics and Possible Direction to Consultant Team and City Staff on Preparation of Final Report

The Charter Study Task Force, appointed by the City Council in November 2023, has held six meetings since December 9, 2023 to discuss the following list of assigned Council topics comprising the scope of the Task Force's work:

- Vacancy Appointment Process for Mayor and City Council - Consider options for allowing Special Elections, and review the Charter requirements pertaining to a vacancy in the office of the Mayor as it relates to the role of the Vice Mayor position (City Charter Section 404)
- Review Vice Mayor Appointment Process, Timing, and/or Length of Term (City Charter Sections 401 and 407)
- Consider Mayor and City Council Term Limits
- Review Timing of Mayoral Election (City Charter Sections 401 and 406)
- Consider City Council Compensation, broadly, as well as dedicated childcare and eldercare allowances for members of the City Council (City Charter Section 405)
- Consider Campaign Contribution Limits

Each topic has been considered and discussed by the Task Force at least once over the course of the adopted meeting schedule. Provided below is a status report on each topic, the motion and votes taken by the Task Force, and any pending/unresolved issues that should be considered as this effort comes to conclusion.

DISCUSSION ON VACANCY APPOINTMENT PROCESS FOR MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL AND OPTIONS FOR AMENDING THE CITY CHARTER TO ALLOW FOR THE CALLING OF A SPECIAL ELECTION TO FILL A VACANCY

This topic was discussed on January 20, 2024, February 7, 2024, and February 22, 2024.

On February 22, 2024, the Task Force discussion on this matter concluded. Following are adopted motions related to this issue:

MOTION: It was moved by Member Farhat, seconded by Member Salinas, to maintain the 75-day period for a City Council vacancy appointment process, eliminate the Charter provision that stipulates that a Council District vacancy will be filled by lot, and amend Pasadena City Charter, Section 403, to include “death” as a cause of vacancy.

AYES: Members Farhat, McAustin, Mejia, Novak, Salinas, Vice Chair Hatcher, Chair Chawkins
NOES: None
ABSENT: Members Kennedy, McCoy, Wilson
ABSTAIN: None

MOTION: It was moved by Member Salinas, seconded by Vice Chair Hatcher, to recommend the following verbiage for City Charter, Section 404.-Vacancy – Appointment, “...if the City Council fails to timely appoint a person to fill the vacancy, then the office shall be filled at a regular or special municipal election for the time remaining on the unexpired term, upon certification of the candidate that receives a majority of the votes cast for that office, consistent with City Charter Section 1204.

The City Council shall adopt by ordinance the process to fill vacancies on the City Council.”:

AYES: Members Mejia, Salinas, Vice Chair Hatcher, Chair Chawkins
NOES: Members Farhat, McAustin, Novak
ABSENT: Members Kennedy, McCoy, Wilson
ABSTAIN: None

Pending Issue: Member Farhat spoke on the need for City staff to “to tighten up” the amended language in Section 404, and asked staff to bring back the matter at a future Charter Study Task Force meeting, and specifically when more Task Force members are present.

Regarding the matter of when to call a special election, or when to have the City Council make an appointment, the Task Force voted to approve an appointment process if two years or less remained on the unexpired term:

MOTION: It was moved by Member Farhat, seconded by Member Novak, to amend City Charter Section 404. – Vacancy – Appointment, by recommending that the City Council conduct an appointment process if two years or less remained on an unexpired term:

AYES: Members Farhat, McAustin, Mejia, Novak, Salinas, Chair Chawkins
NOES: Vice Chair Hatcher
ABSENT: Members Kennedy, McCoy, Wilson
ABSTAIN: None

Regarding the matter of residency requirement to seek the appointed office, the Task Force approved the following motion:

MOTION: It was moved by Member Salinas, seconded by Member McAustin, to amend City Charter Section 404. – Vacancy – Appointment, to include a residency requirement of at least six months for those seeking to be appointed to the City Council to fill a vacant unexpired term:

- AYES: Members Farhat, McAustin, Mejia, Novak, Salinas, Vice Chair Hatcher, Chair Chawkins
- NOES: None
- ABSENT: Members Kennedy, McCoy, Wilson
- ABSTAIN: None

DISCUSSION ON VICE MAYOR APPOINTMENT PROCESS, TIMING OF VICE MAYOR ELECTION, LENGTH OF TERM TO SERVE AS VICE MAYOR, AND DUTIES RELATED TO VACANCY IN THE MAYOR’S OFFICE

This topic was discussed on January 20, 2024.

Related to the appointment process for Vice Mayor, the timing of City Council’s selection of Vice Mayor, and the length of term of Vice Mayor, the Task Force’s motion was as follows:

MOTION: It was moved by Member Salinas, seconded by Member Wilson, to recommend to the City Council the selection of the Vice Mayor to occur on an annual basis with a term of one year, the Council to consider seniority and rotational participation when making the selection (not making either factor a requirement), and the selection of the Vice Mayor occurring at the City’s annual organizational meeting on the fifth Monday following the statewide General Election in even years, and the fifth Monday following the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of odd years.

- AYES: Members Farhat, Kennedy, McAustin, McCoy, Mejia, Novak, Salinas, Wilson, Vice Chair Hatcher, Chair Chawkins
- NOES: None
- ABSENT: None
- ABSTAIN: None

In terms of the Charter provision which states that in the event of a vacancy in the Mayor’s position, the Vice Mayor shall assume the duties of the Mayor, the Task Force sought to make changes to ensure that the City Council would act deliberatively to select from among the remaining members of the City Council someone to assume the duties of the Mayor. The Task Force also determined that the selected Councilmember would serve in the capacity of Mayor Pro Temp, not having the Vice Mayor automatically assume the role of Mayor, until the vacancy is filled in the next election. Following is the motion and vote of the Task Force:

MOTION: It was moved by Member Salinas, seconded by Member Farhat, to recommend to the City Council that the City Charter be amended to create a Mayor Pro Tem position in the event of a vacancy in the Mayor's position, with the Council to select from among the remaining members a Mayor Pro Tem to serve in the role of Mayor on an interim basis (without having to relinquish their Council District seat) until the vacant position of Mayor is filled at a future election (timing to be determined).

AYES: Members Farhat, Kennedy, McAustin, McCoy, Mejia, Novak, Salinas, Wilson, Vice Chair Hatcher, Chair Chawkins

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Pending Issue: The Task Force did not determine whether the vacancy provisions of the City Council would apply to a vacancy in the Mayor's position, or if the vacancy should be filled at the next regularly scheduled City election (due to cost and turnout considerations).

CONSIDERATION OF TERM LIMITS FOR THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

This matter was discussed on February 7, 2024 and March 14, 2024. The Task Force's motion was as follows:

MOTION: It was moved by Member Farhat, seconded by Member Wilson, to recommend amendment(s) to the City Charter to (a) limit the Mayor's position to three consecutive four-year terms, and limit each member of the City Council to three consecutive four-year terms for each district, with a partial term of less than two years not counting towards a full term, (b) grant the elected official, after a four-year hiatus, or after four years in another City Council elected office, eligibility to hold elected office for two additional four-year terms, and (c) set the effective date of term limits in 2026 for Council Districts, 3, 5, and 7, and in 2028 for the Mayor and Council Districts 1, 2, 4, and 6.

AYES: Members Farhat, McAustin, McCoy, Wilson, Vice Chair Hatcher

NOES: Members Novak, Salinas, Chair Chawkins

ABSENT: Members Kennedy, Mejia

ABSTAIN: None

As part of the discussion on Term Limits, members of the Task Force spoke in favor of adding a Council-driven information process to encourage more residents to run for public office, a formal on-boarding process for new Councilmembers, and robust record of the discussion of the Task Force to be provided to the City Council.

MOTION: It was moved by Member Farhat, seconded by Vice Chair Hatcher, to recommend to the City Council to adopt a formal Council-driven public information process to encourage more residents to run for public office and an onboarding process for new Councilmembers, and direct staff to include a robust description of the Task Force’s discussion regarding term limits, to be included in the Task Force’s Final Report, as well as part of the record provided to the City Council in its de novo review.

Member Salinas mentioned that the League of California Cities offers an onboarding program to educate and help new Councilmembers navigate their new roles.

Chair Chawkins suggested that staff recommend using existing programs, such as the one offered by League of California Cities, as a model for Pasadena to create their own onboarding process.

AYES: Members Farhat, McAustin, McCoy, Novak, Salinas, Wilson, Vice Chair Hatcher, Chair Chawkins
NOES: None
ABSENT: Members Kennedy, Mejia
ABSTAIN: None

CONSIDERATION OF CITY COUNCIL COMPENSATION, BROADLY, AS WELL AS DEDICATED CHILDCARE AND ELDERCARE ALLOWANCES FOR MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL (City Charter Section 405)

This topic was original scheduled for March 14, 2024, but due to time-constraints, the item was rescheduled for March 28, 2024. Following are the adopted motions on this topic:

MOTION: It was moved by Member Farhat, seconded by Member Salinas, to: (1) recommend that the City Council convene the Council Compensation Committee, and do so on a more regular basis; (2) recommend that the Committee discuss the issue of “family care” as a broader category than childcare (or eldercare), and consider CPI increases, other factors to support and promote diversity on the City Council, and revise methods of reimbursement to increase efficiency and transparency; and (3) direct City staff to provide the Committee with copies of the report from Baker Tilly, a brief summary of State Senate Bill 329, and the meeting minutes as background information.

AYES: Members Farhat, Kennedy, McAustin, McCoy, Mejia, Novak, Salinas, Wilson, Vice Chair Hatcher
NOES: None
ABSENT: Chair Chawkins
ABSTAIN: None

MOTION: It was moved by Member Novak, seconded by Member McCoy, to require by charter amendment that the City Council Compensation Committee shall meet not less than once every 5 years.

- AYES: Members Farhat, Kennedy, McAustin, McCoy, Mejia, Novak, Salinas, Wilson, Vice Chair Hatcher
- NOES: None
- ABSENT: Chair Chawkins
- ABSTAIN: None

Pending Issue: Member Farhat requested that at the end of the Task Force’s work, consideration be given to the total number of ballot measures resulting from this process, and possibly “repackage” the timing requirement of convening the Charter Compensation Committee as an ordinance rather than as a Charter Amendment measure.

CONSIDERATION OF OPTIONS REGARDING THE TIMING OF THE MAYOR’S ELECTION

This matter was discussed on February 22, 2024, with a follow-up discussion occurring on April 11, 2024. The Task Force considered the issue of fairness and the political advantage that exists in terms of the timing of the Mayor’s Election for Council Districts 3, 5, and 7 over Districts 1, 2, 4, and 6. As discussed by the Task Force, to compete for the Mayor’s seat, Councilmembers from Districts 1, 2, 4, and 6 (that share the same election cycle with the Mayor) would have to forego seeking re-election to their Council seat if they were to pursue the Mayor’s seat. Whereas, for Council District 3, 5, and 7, those Councilmembers do not face the same circumstances, and can run for the Mayor’s seat without risk to their current elected position. Following discussion, the Task Force unanimously approved the following motion:

Following discussion, it was moved by Member Novak, seconded by Member Wilson, to recommend to the City Council that no changes be made to the timing of the Mayoral election cycle. (Motion unanimously approved.) (Absent: Member Salinas, Vice Chair Hatcher)

CONSIDERATION OF CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTION LIMITS FOR MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS

This matter was discussed on March 28, 2024, and is scheduled for follow up on April 25, 2024.

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: cityclerk
Sent: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 1:00 PM
To: Iraheta, Alba; Jomsky, Mark; Robles, Sandra; Sabha, Tamer; McMillan, Acquanette (Netta); Kenebrew, Jerice; Soo, Christine; Haskett, John
Subject: FW: Comments to be read at the Charter Commission Meeting this Thursday 4/11/2024

From: Denise ·
Sent: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 1:00:09 PM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)
To: cityclerk <cityclerk@cityofpasadena.net>
Subject: Comments to be read at the Charter Commission Meeting this Thursday 4/11/2024

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Hi Mr. Jomsky,

Is it all right if I send my comments for the Charter meeting (this Thursday) directly to you or do I have to send them individually to each member?

Here are my comments:

Gentlepersons:

Thank you for serving on the Charter Commission. This important task is so needed in Pasadena, thank you for your service.

I wanted to make a few comments to help guide your decisions this coming Thursday April 11, 2024.

1. Should Councilmembers have term limits. Yes. The City of Los Angeles adopted term limits and has been all the better for it. Instead of having councilmembers serving for decades, we see fresh faces and some young people who are passionate about making changes in the city. This is not to say that all councilmembers who serve long terms do not serve in the best interest. But rather, the idea stemming from many places including ancient Greek democracy is that everyone should have a chance to serve - nothing could be more democratic. People tend not to run against incumbents and new people don't get a shot at serving the city.

2. How should vacancies on the Council be handled? I recommend a system of Instant Runoff Voting (aka Ranked Choice Voting) such as the system used in New York City since the charter amendment of 2019 for Mayor, Comptroller, Public Advocate, Borough President and City Council. San Francisco and many other cities and some states also use this to **save money, eliminate voter burnout**, and not require voters to come back for a runoff. **It also results in less negative campaigning** as you want to receive the second and third choice votes of those supporting any opponent.

I wrote my doctoral dissertation on ranked choice voting and I am readily available for consultation.

3. Is the current \$5,500 contribution limit too high? Yes, it is.

I request the city council place reasonable per-contributor limits on direct funding of local campaigns the same way sensible cities such as Los Angeles, Alhambra and South Pasadena have. Los Angeles, with a population of almost 4 million people has a limit of \$800 in contrast to Pasadena with a much, much smaller population of fewer than 140,000 people.

Expert Jonathan Mehta Stein, the Executive Director of Common Cause spoke to the City Council a few years back. For approximately 20 minutes he gave an exhaustive account of why we have contribution limits, and what other cities have done, as well as the three reasons why contribution limits are essential. 1) Quid pro quo: you don't want to give someone a \$50,000 check and have the councilmember be beholden to them; 2) legalized corruption: even if it's not officially bribery, there's a "subtle tilt toward the person who donated." Donors are heard more, get more meetings, have more contact with the person to whom they donated; and lastly, 3) Perceived corruption: 77% of all Americans support contribution limits to create more trust in our democracy and credibility among the candidates.

Mr. Mehta Stein mentioned that the average donation for cities our size is \$1,000. Many have limits of \$250. He thought even \$4900 was too high. He discussed the dangers of having too little money (hard to compete) as well as too much. Some argue that Independent Expenditures cause candidates to have a need for large donations. However, a handful of people could decide to donate the maximum and easily make up for the independent expenditure amounts we see in Pasadena.

Additionally, transparency in terms of full disclosure laws will go a long way in restoring faith in our democracy here in Pasadena.

To restore fairness to our political system, the passage and enforcement of strong campaign finance reforms that help guarantee a democracy responsive to the people is urgently needed, including placing reasonable limits on funding of campaigns, complete transparency of campaign spending, and public financing of elections.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Denise Munro Robb, Ph.D.
Professor, Pierce College; and Joshua's Mommy

"Those Who Can Make You Believe Absurdities Can Make You Commit Atrocities" (Possibly Voltaire)

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: cityclerk
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 6:09 AM
To: Iraheta, Alba; Jomsky, Mark; Robles, Sandra; Sabha, Tamer; McMillan, Acquanette (Netta); Kenebrew, Jerice; Soo, Christine; Haskett, John
Subject: FW: [Public Comment] Charter Reform Task Force - Thu 4/11 meeting

From: Wesley Reutimann
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 6:08:08 AM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)
To: cityclerk <cityclerk@cityofpasadena.net>
Subject: [Public Comment] Charter Reform Task Force - Thu 4/11 meeting

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Dear Charter Reform Task Force Members,

As a local household that has voted in Pasadena elections for almost two decades now, we have observed firsthand how the lack of campaign contribution limits has influenced local Council races.

A community the size of Pasadena, with relatively small Council districts, should adopt a reasonable contribution limit of \$250-\$1,000 per election cycle. Communities across California have adopted such standards in recent years. Pasadena can and should do so, too.

According to the most recent CA Common Cause report on the subject, there are at least 109 cities and 15 counties in California that have adopted local campaign contribution limits, with an average (median) city council individual contribution limit of \$500. These include the neighboring cities of Burbank (\$400), Glendale (\$1,000), Los Angeles (\$700), and Alhambra (\$250).

Thank you,

Wesley Reutimann
Pasadena 91103

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: cityclerk
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 1:36 PM
To: Iraheta, Alba; Jomsky, Mark; Robles, Sandra; Sabha, Tamer; McMillan, Acquanette (Netta); Kenebrew, Jerice; Soo, Christine; Haskett, John
Subject: FW: Charter Reform Tax Force comment for April 11

From: Anne Schiller
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 1:36:01 PM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)
To: cityclerk <cityclerk@cityofpasadena.net>
Subject: Charter Reform Tax Force comment for April 11

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I write in favor of a much lower campaign finance limit such as \$1,000.

We have relatively small city council districts in which campaigns can take place on a personal basis. Limiting campaign contributions will reduce the use of uninformative mass mailings and encourage meetings with candidates.

Sincerely,
Anne Schiller

Pasadena 91104

Jomsky, Mark

From: cityclerk
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 2:15 PM
To: Iraheta, Alba; Jomsky, Mark; Robles, Sandra; Sabha, Tamer; McMillan, Acquanette (Netta); Kenebrew, Jerice; Soo, Christine; Haskett, John
Subject: FW: Comments for April 11 Charter Task Force meeting

From: Gloria Newton
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 2:15:03 PM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)
To: cityclerk <cityclerk@cityofpasadena.net>
Subject: Comments for April 11 Charter Task Force meeting

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Dear Charter Task Force,

Thank you for your hard work in addressing the document that governs the way our city operates.

I'd like to make two comments about matters under discussion.

1. Campaign Contribution Limits: In 2021 there was a large public outcry against the Council's proposal that there be no limit to per-person contributions. I'm glad that proposal was dropped, but even going with the state limit of \$5500 is too high and will give an unfair advantage to candidates with ties to wealthy donors. Whether we acknowledge it or not, money equals voice, and in a city like Pasadena, which already has a wide income gap, it's important to set policies that make sure all residents are represented and have their voices heard. Pasadena should choose a limit more in line with other cities of our size, such as Torrance (\$1000 limit) and Berkeley (\$250 limit). In addition, Pasadena voters should set this policy, not the city council, so like Measures R, S, and T, we should be able to vote on the recommendations by the Task Force on the November ballot. Please incorporate these ideas into your recommendations.

2. Term limits: I am in favor of term limits for council members. I understand the value of having experienced council members serving, but the pattern in our city has shown incumbent candidates are far more likely to be elected than their opponents. I've lived in this city for 36 years, and in my time here, no incumbent has been unseated by a challenger in an election. Term limits do not have to be short - 4 terms of 4 years each would allow a council member to serve for 16 years, which is plenty of time to learn the job, take actions that affect change and make a difference in one's district. After 16 years, it seems fair to allow other candidates to fill the offices.

Thank you again for your time and attention to these matters.

Sincerely,
Gloria Newton
District 5 resident

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: cityclerk
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 4:25 PM
To: Iraheta, Alba; Jomsky, Mark; Robles, Sandra; Sabha, Tamer; McMillan, Acquanette (Netta); Kenebrew, Jerice; Soo, Christine; Haskett, John
Subject: FW: Public Comment for Task Force on Charter ReformCC

From:
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 4:24:24 PM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)
To: cityclerk <cityclerk@cityofpasadena.net>
Subject: Public Comment for Task Force on Charter ReformCC

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Dear Mark Jomsky:

Please distribute my comment below to the Task Force on Charter Reform for the April 11 meeting of the Task Force, on campaign finance reform.

Thank you,

Kris Ockershauser

Dear Charter Reform Task Force Members:

I was one of the many citizens of Pasadena who objected to the Council's effort in 2021 to circumvent state limits and continue to impose no limits on campaign finance contributions to the Mayor and City Council Members.

I am one of the many citizens who continue to want only the voters to make any campaign limits, and on the November ballot. It's the Pasadena Way.

Thank you,


Kris Ockershauser
91105

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: cityclerk
Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2024 9:13 AM
To: Iraheta, Alba; Jomsky, Mark; Robles, Sandra; Sabha, Tamer; McMillan, Acquanette (Netta); Kenebrew, Jerice; Soo, Christine; Haskett, John
Subject: FW: April 11, 2024 Charter Reform Task Force Mtg

From: Julie McKune
Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2024 9:12:44 AM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)
To: cityclerk
Subject: April 11, 2024 Charter Reform Task Force Mtg

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Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

Let the voters decide. I strongly support these ideas. We need changes, for example:

- *Yes Term limits
- *Use rank choice voting for vacancies on the council
- *Establish lower campaign contribution limits, current \$5,500 is too high, big money in politics is legal corruption/bribery! Restore trust now
- *Improve democracy, government that represents, less wasteful of taxpayers dollars, less negative campaigns

Thank you for your time and attention.

Respectfully,
Julie Romero McKune
Resident 68 yrs

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: cityclerk
Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2024 9:28 AM
To: Iraheta, Alba; Jomsky, Mark; Robles, Sandra; Sabha, Tamer; McMillan, Acquanette (Netta); Kenebrew, Jerice; Soo, Christine; Haskett, John
Subject: FW: for Task Force re Campaign Finance limits

From: Ellen Finkelpearl
Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2024 9:27:40 AM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)
To: cityclerk <cityclerk@cityofpasadena.net>
Subject: for Task Force re Campaign Finance limits

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Dear members of the Charter Reform Task Force,

I am writing to urge you to recommend that the issue of campaign contribution limits be taken to the voters on the ballot in November. This is an issue that the community feels very strongly about, as demonstrated by the outpouring of outrage when, in 2021, the City Council proposed that, contrary to new limits on California statewide campaign contributions, Pasadena City Council and Mayoral candidates could accept unlimited contributions. I am appending the petition with signatures below, which is also presumably part of the city council archival records.

Although, thankfully, that proposal is no longer being considered, the state limit of \$5500 per contributor (designed for statewide races) is absurdly high and inconsistent with the limits that cities of comparable size in California have instated. When neighboring Alhambra took the issue to voters a few years ago, a limit of \$250 per contributor was set (that is also the limit for Berkeley). While that may well be too low, Torrance, for example, set a limit of \$1000. When Jonathan Mehta Stein of Common Cause spoke to the City Council in 2021 during the controversy mentioned above, he suggested that \$1000 might be a good limit for a city the size of Pasadena. He also stated that the issue of "independent expenditures" is not the problem that some allege. (A recording of that session should also be available in the archives.) I urge you to recommend to the City Council that they send to the voters an initiative that the limit should be set in the Charter at \$1000 (with some clause for adjustment for inflation).

It should be obvious that a) when large contributions are made, the donors have special interests in their candidate being elected. Personally, I do not have \$5500 to donate to anyone! Even if the elected candidate is not swayed by the generosity of the high donor, there may be the appearance of favoritism which creates an ugly political landscape. Also, b) lower limits should allow newer candidates, without connections to wealthy donors to have a chance at gaining a seat. Presumably, we all want new blood on the city council and we would like to see a broader cross-section of the city being represented. Finally, c) there should be no need for vast expenditures in a local city race. Candidates should be able to reach many of their constituents by going door to door and having their supporters do the same. This also gives the candidate a better knowledge of their district. We all dislike the constant flyers that arrive at our

doors (which are not recyclable, by the way) and I will not mention what happened in the last election cycle with some flyers....

This issue is important and needs to be taken to the voters!

Thank you for your attention and thank you for serving on the Task Force.

Ellen Finkelpearl

Pasadena

Here is a link to the petition that was sent around the last time this issue arose. Most of it is still relevant to this case.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1LqBjnhyxAb-uf1UNo5jcUBifiYSG91dZz9HrHaKNu6I/edit>

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: cityclerk
Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2024 4:45 PM
To: Iraheta, Alba; Jomsky, Mark; Robles, Sandra; Sabha, Tamer; McMillan, Acquanette (Netta); Kenebrew, Jerice; Soo, Christine; Haskett, John
Subject: FW: April 11, 2024 Pasadena Charter Study Task Force – Public Comment, Agenda 3 (Let the Voters Decide on Campaign Contribution Limits)
Attachments: 20211021_Open-Letter-re-Campaign-Finance-Reform.pdf; 20211021_PasadenaNow_We-Get-Letters.pdf

From: Una Jost
Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2024 4:41:24 PM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)
To: cityclerk <cityclerk@cityofpasadena.net>
Subject: April 11, 2024 Pasadena Charter Study Task Force – Public Comment, Agenda 3 (Let the Voters Decide on Campaign Contribution Limits)

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Dear members of the Pasadena Charter Study Task Force:

It has been brought to my attention that our City of Pasadena is in the midst of reviewing and amending its Charter, and that a task force appointed by the councilmembers is examining several issues, one of which is possible limits on campaign contributions to city council and mayoral candidates.

It appears in reviewing today's agenda that the Task Force seems unaware that there was a tremendous public outcry in 2021 when the council tried to circumvent state limits and continue to impose NO limits on such contributions.

For your reference, please see attached the October 2021 "*Open Letter to Pasadena Mayor Victor Gordo and City Councilmembers to lead Pasadena's Fight for a Truly Inclusive Government by Implementing Urgently Needed Campaign Finance Reform*" that was submitted ahead of the council's October 18, 2021 meeting urging the councilmembers to

(i) RESCIND the Council's August 16 vote instructing the preparation of an ordinance codifying into law unlimited campaign contributions from donors to city candidates (exploiting a loophole in state law that allows local jurisdictions to circumvent the default state donor limit, which is currently \$4,900 per contributor to city candidates); and

(ii) PLACE reasonable per-contributor limits on direct funding of local campaigns, in keeping with sensible surrounding cities like Los Angeles, Alhambra, and South Pasadena, as well as dozens of local jurisdictions across Southern California. (For example, Los Angeles with a population of almost 4 million has a \$800 limit as of 2020, in contrast to Pasadena with a population of about 140,000.)

Written in strong opposition to the council's then proposed ordinance to codify NO limits on campaign contributions, the coalition of Open Letter signers includes:

- 134 Pasadena residents;
- 52 concerned residents from 15 nearby cities; and
- 10 community groups.

The October 2021 Open Letter was also published in Pasadena Now under the heading "*We Get Letters: Community Leaders, Advocates, and Residents Urge Mayor, Council to Pass Campaign Finance Reform Measure*," available at <https://www.pasadenanow.com/main/we-get-letters-open-letter-to-pasadena-mayor-victor-gordo-and-city-councilmembers-to-lead-pasadenas-fight-for-a-truly-inclusive-government-by-implementing-urgently-needed-campaign-finance-re>, a copy of which is also attached for your reference.

Although the council's then proposed ordinance to codify NO limits on campaign contributions has been dropped, it appears that the Task Force is currently poised to codify the state limit of \$5500 per contributor, which seems excessive for a city council race in a moderately sized city such as ours, with elections run by district rather than citywide. Cities of comparable size have imposed much lower limits, e.g. Torrance with \$1000, Berkeley with \$250.

As the October 2021 Open Letter notes:

"Stricter limits would

- (i) provide incentives to candidates to build a broader base of smaller contributors to be viable;
- (ii) empower smaller donors as well as expand the pool of potential candidates to include those with no ties to big money thus enabling wider representation among the populace; and
- (iii) induce greater candidate-constituent interaction and messaging, as opposed to the current practice of blanketing a district with cookie-cutter political mailers.

It is for this reason that nonprofit public interest government reform organizations working to strengthen democracy, such as Campaign Legal Center, Brennan Center, Public Citizen, Common Cause, and California Clean Money Campaign, are all in consensus that in order to restore fairness to our political system, the passing and enforcing of strong campaign finance reforms is urgently needed to help guarantee a democracy responsive to the people, including:

- placing reasonable limits on funding of campaigns;
- complete transparency of campaign spending; and
- public financing of elections.

I urge the Task Force to recommend to the council that the council take steps to **place** reasonable per-contributor limits on direct funding of local campaigns, in keeping with sensible surrounding cities like Los Angeles, Alhambra, and South Pasadena, as well as dozens of local jurisdictions across Southern California. As you may recall, Pasadenans voted on several Pasadena Charter reforms in the recent March 5, 2024 primary election. I thus urge the Task Force to recommend to the council to allow the voters to decide on campaign finance limits, not the councilmembers, and that such vote should be on this November's ballot.

Doing so would engender trust in Pasadena city leaders and candidates and help create a City that is truly more inclusive of everyone.

Kind regards,

~ Una Lee Jost, Resident of Pasadena, District 4

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: cityclerk
Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2024 4:50 PM
To: Iraheta, Alba; Jomsky, Mark; Robles, Sandra; Sabha, Tamer; McMillan, Acquanette (Netta); Kenebrew, Jerice; Soo, Christine; Haskett, John
Subject: FW: PUBLIC COMMENT: Charter Study Task Force Meeting 4/11/24

From: Tina Fredericks
Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2024 4:49:53 PM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)
To: cityclerk <cityclerk@cityofpasadena.net>
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT: Charter Study Task Force Meeting 4/11/24

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Hi Charter Study Task Force,

Please include this for public record for 4/11/24 Charter Study Task Force Meeting and please send a copy to each member of the Charter Study Task Force:

I'm Tina Fredericks, a mother of two teenage girls. I am a School Board Trustee of Pasadena Unified School District since 2020. My views on contribution limits are mine alone and do not represent the view of the Board as a whole. I make decisions for approximately 14,000 K-12 students, 65% or over 9000 of whom are socio-economically disadvantaged. Many of our families struggle to put a roof over their head and food on the table. Many of our students and families live in Pasadena. Lowering the contribution limit closer to what our families can afford would ensure that a campaign must rely on more small dollar donations. The economic disparity of the families in the City of Pasadena are wide. The voter turnout for the 2024 primaries was 30-40% This low turnout shows that the constituency is not engaged in the political process. Lowering the campaign limit would address voter apathy. It's the responsibility of the candidate to excite the voter, give them a reason to vote by putting forth a campaign platform that represents the needs of the constituents.

The contribution limit for the City of Los Angeles for each city council member donor is \$900. Each district represents 90,000 - 160,000 voters.

Each Pasadena City Council member who represents at most one eighth of the number of voters than a City of Los Angeles district, certainly their contribution limit should not exceed \$900. Reducing the limit would encourage candidates to engage with more constituents. If a campaign needs to raise at least \$50,000, for a campaign limit of \$900, it would take 56 donors at \$900 to raise \$50,000

I suggest a donor limit of no more than \$900 in alignment and commensurate with City of Los Angeles.

Thank you for your consideration.

Tina Fredericks

Mother of two

*Pasadena Unified School District

Board Trustee Area 6

*Los Angeles County School Trustees Association, President 2023-present

*for identification purposes only