



CITY OF TROUTDALE

Citizens Advisory Committee

MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, July 1, 2020 | 7:00 p.m.

Public comments are welcome at any time during the meeting.

1. **Call to Order, Roll Call, & Pledge of Allegiance**
2. **Public Comment**
3. **Review & Approval of Minutes**
 - i. May 6, 2020 Meeting Minutes
 - ii. June 3, 2020 Meeting Minutes
4. **Discussion Items**
 - i. Town Center Plan
 - a. Presentation from Chris Damgen, Community Development Director
 - ii. Future Discussion Items:
 - a. Public Safety in Troutdale
 - b. Houselessness
5. **Department Report**
 - i. CAC Project Updates: Event Permitting, Public Comment, Community Survey
6. **Committee Comments**
7. **Adjourn**

Next Regular Meeting:

Wednesday, August 5, 2020 | 7:00 p.m. | Troutdale Police Community Center

Due to safety precautions regarding COVID-19, the meeting will be held virtually via zoom, if the public wish to join, please email arini.farrell@troutdaleoregon.gov for a link to the meeting.

This meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. A request for an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodations for persons with disabilities should be made at least 48 hours prior to the meeting to the Planning Division (planning@troutdaleoregon.gov or 503-665-5175)

Citizens Advisory Committee Minutes

Wednesday, May 6, 2020 | 7:00 p.m.

Held virtually via Zoom

Public comments are welcome at any time during the meeting.

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, & Pledge of Allegiance

Present: Will Knight (Chair)
Timothy Erich
Alexander Lumiere
Shelly Reynolds
Kyle Schwab
Chris Barney
Heidi Hinshaw
Diane Castillo-White
Victoria Rizzo
Sam Barnett
David Wheaton
Jon Brown

Excused: None

Staff: Arini Farrell, Associate Planner
Amber Shackelford, Administrative Assistant
Melissa Bocarde, Independent Contractor/Transcriptionist

Members of
the Public: Zach Hudson
Dave Ripma
Paul Wilcox

The Meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. by Vice Chair Schwab and Roll Call was held. The Pledge of Allegiance was tabled since the meeting was being held remotely via Zoom.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Discussion Items

- A. Council Appointed Task - Election Reform
 - i. Presentation by Dr. Jim Moore, Pacific University

Dr. Moore said he would discuss the pluses and minuses of different systems of voting within a power point presentation. Referring to his first slide, he stated that overall, different voting systems our electoral reforms have little long-term impact on how people view politics. Campaign finance reforms, changes in electoral systems, early voting—all of these have no or weak impacts.

For example, next door where they're fighting over you in Portland about campaign finance reform, one of the things that doesn't get covered much is that Ted Wheeler's opponent has raised nearly as much money as him, so they both have a lot of money, and where it comes from turns out not to be that important.

Other things – early voting has a weak impact on what's going on. We saw this by vote by mail in Oregon; it initially raised voter turnout by about 4%, but the overall trend for voting is going down in Oregon just as it is in other places.

In the short term, however, they can change the dynamics in the first couple of elections. Different candidates, new opportunities to move parts of the electorate, possible changes in power that then become entrenched (the incumbency effect) over the years.

He then stated, now, let's look at Plurality Voting itself. Plurality Voting tends to deter minor parties. And the reason for that is since you just need to get more votes than the other it tends to encourage coalitions behind two candidates or two parties.

Mr. Hudson interrupted Dr. Moore to say that he hasn't stated what change is being proposed and what Plurality Voting means. Dr. Moore answered that he did not know what change was being proposed. However, the definition of Plurality Voting is that the winner, regardless of whether they get to 50% plus one, the winner of the election wins outright. So it's very much what we have for State voting in Oregon. For example, Kate Brown in 2018 was the first governor in a while to get more than 50% of the vote. In Oregon, though, the norm is that we have the primary for all the non-partisan elections and then if there are more than 2 candidates, the top 2 go to the November election unless one gets 50% plus one in the May primary. So in Oregon, we do not have plurality voting for those non-partisan races, but we do for the partisan races.

Mr. Hudson said that he apologized but that was not the issue that was referred to this Citizen's advisory committee. Dr. Moore asked him to clarify the question. Mr. Hudson asked Mr. Schwab for guidance, and he asked Mr. Hudson to pose his question to Dr. Moore to hear what he had to say. Mr. Hudson said he would sum it up in two sentences. The current practice in the City of Troutdale is that there are 6 City Council positions, but City Councilors do not represent districts, so all the positions are at large positions. 3 are run for each cycle and candidates declare for a specific position on the Council which are still voted on at large in Troutdale because there are no districts in Troutdale. The proposal is to have a Top 3 system where all candidates run in a pool. Voters vote for 3 and the top 3 vote getters are then elected to the top 3 positions.

Dr. Moore commented that this is what Forest Grove does. He said he could explain in detail what happens in Forest Grove. It does not bring new people in to vote for office. The people who tend to win at the top tend to be the people you would expect to win. They're well known in the community; they're the incumbents; they have connections to groups of voters. For instance, if you teach in a school district, you're pretty well known to voters, those kinds of things. When you get down to the third and fourth, you can get new people into the system. The issue that Forest Grove faces is those people tend to be people who were waiting around for one of the other councilors to retire. And so if you look at that, I think on paper it's a really great idea. In political science when we study this we find what you're doing is creating a multi-member single district. And multi-member single districts tend to be much better at getting other points of view into the system. Oregon had that for all our State legislative seats until 1972. So it has a lot to offer to it but the thing is that when you get into the system itself, it's not clear that it tends to bring new people into the system who would not otherwise run. And this is really common in political science. A study was done of Portland about 13 years ago when they created neighborhood associations. Who got

involved? The people who would have been involved anyway. And so that's the down-side. On paper it's great. In reality it becomes incumbent upon people who want to be part of the system to go recruit candidates who can then get in and in your case by in the top 3 and get elected to the Council. So candidate recruitment becomes a real important thing and that can come from people who are currently in politics, that can come from community groups, otherwise you just have 3 people who would have been there anyway under the old system.

Dave Ripma was recognized by Vice Chair Schwab to speak regarding the issue. Mr. Ripma has been a City Council member since 1993. He explained that Troutdale adopted its current election system in a charter amendment in 1976 and before that, it had used a Top 3 System. He is a staunch advocate for the current election system. He believes that it is under review because some citizens are concerned that sometimes a candidate has no opponent and does not need to spend money and time on an election. However, he does not feel that citizens are being short-changed since it means that the incumbent candidate is seen as doing a good job and no one wants to oppose him or her. Changing this system would require candidates to run expensive campaigns each time. This also attracts big money and outside interests that oppose the incumbent candidate.

He also doesn't think that the councilors are as accountable to the voters if they aren't able to be directly opposed. If someone wants a person to lose office, they can run against that person to try to replace them. As a result, all of the councilors are much more accountable to voters. Top 3 Voting is more of a popularity contest. Therefore, he encouraged the CAC not to move forward with recommending voting reform.

Dr. Moore added that Multnomah County did find that Top 3 elections were as Mr. Ripma described—expensive and competitive. However, when someone was elected, that person had a better sense of who the electorate was as a result of campaigning. It did not tend to attract new people to run for office, so if this is the intent of changing to this system, the City will still need to attract candidates willing to run against the incumbent. He suggested that the CAC consider the end goal of whatever election system they decide to use before making changes. For example, are they seeking better representation of community members or a better council?

Ms. Castillo-White said that the City Council has 5 first-termers so new candidates are being elected. For some reason, the Mayor is not included in this mix.

Mr. Barnett stated that he didn't think it was necessary to fix something that isn't broken. He pointed out that both councilors are firmly supported and will continue to be, and he predicts this will punish someone financially who is forced to run against opponents that are a long shot. He asked if anyone remembered why the City returned to traditional elections in 1976. He understands Mr. Wilcox's viewpoint that no one should run unopposed, but he feels this is because they're doing a good job and the citizens realize it. He suggested not wasting the Council's time with a recommendation for a change.

Vice Chair Schwab recognized Mr. Hudson to present his slide presentation and support for Top 3 Elections.

Mr. Hudson stated that while he did not know why the election system changed in 1976, he feels that implementing Top 3 Voting—also known as Plurality at Large or Block Voting --will provide more choice to voters. Troutdale's City Council has defined seats even though the city isn't divided into districts to be represented. As a result, these separate races limit voter choice and encourage rivalry and negativity.

For example, in Top 3 Voting, a person puts their name forward without choosing who they will run against. In the current election system, the challenger has more control than the incumbent to shape what the future City Council will look like by deciding who to run against rather than allowing voters to select their top candidates.

Also, if multiple challengers can have one unopposed incumbent, it limits choice since more candidates are stacked up for one seat. Conversely, in a second scenario when there are 3 incumbents and 3 challengers, this encourages candidates to build coalitions. There can be 3 different races with pairs of candidates who team up with each other or fall into ideological camps and exacerbate tensions while limiting voter choice. Third, there could be one open seat which everyone lines up for instead of running against Incumbents A and B who are harder to challenge.

In each scenario, the voter isn't able to pick their favorite 3 people to elect since the candidates decide who their opponents are rather than voters deciding who they like most. Also, under the current system, there are only 8 possible combinations of councilors that can be elected rather than 20 different combinations possible as a result of Top 3 Voting.

Finally, if no one runs, the Council would need to appoint someone to fill the vacancy. Top 3 Voting addresses this issue.

Top 3 Voting is used throughout Oregon including in Forest Grove. It is tried and tested. Paul Wilcox collected more than 500 signatures for a ballot to introduce the topic to a vote, so there is definitely community support for it.

Mr. Hudson pointed out that special interests could influence an election however, this is also possible in the current voting model in which big spenders can back candidates. However, Top 3 Voting prevents an opponent from being targeted by someone who wants that person out. As a result, Councilors will not need to worry as much about being voted off when they make an unpopular decision.

Also, he does not believe that an incumbent running unopposed necessarily means that all agree this person is doing a good job. There might be people who need to be replaced, but the voters are never able to get an opportunity to vote to replace them.

In summary, Top 3 Voting offers voters more choices and does not create any problems that don't already exist in the current voting system, which he feels is popular because it protects incumbents, not voters.

Ms. Farrell recognized Mr. Ripma to speak in support of the current voting system. He explained that he felt most of the possible voting scenarios were theoretical and that there is not a problem with voter choice. He disagrees that this system is less negative and less competitive. It's important that someone interested in being on the City Council gets to know the electorate and the issues confronting the community. Also, in reality you do know who you run against, and this means that someone can be specifically targeted by people who disagree with them, which is a good thing.

He also felt that changing to the Top 3 system would favor big financial interests in running a slate. In 2014, he defeated a well-financed opponent by running a hard race, but he would not have been able to compete with the type of funding a slate can offer.

He also feels that letting the 4th choice win if no one else runs is not a good solution. Instead, if the Council needs to appoint someone, that person would still need to run in the next election so they would ultimately be responsible to the electorate. Finally, he commented that the current slate is a very strong Council and he is happy to be part of it.

Dr. Moore commented that accountability is crucial for both models. He feels that Mr. Hudson had a lot of interesting iterations but there would probably never be 20 possible voter choices. He suggested that the CAC members decide what they hope to accomplish. He suggested they ask whether things are working because of or in spite of the voting system.

Mr. Hudson said that candidates don't know who they will run against because they don't know who will declare after they declare. In 2010, he and Rich Allen faced off against each other totally unintentionally and he bowed out of the race to endorse him, but it was too late for Mr. Hudson to run for a different seat. Why shouldn't the voters have been able to vote for them both instead of only one of them?

Mr. Lumiere asked Dr. Moore if in his experience, he has seen changing from one election system to another to be overwhelmingly beneficial. He also pointed out that the voters of 2020 are very different from those voting in 1976. Dr. Moore answered that since people don't personally know the candidates any more, this can be a reason to move to voting by seat. However, in terms of whether it makes any beneficial differences, he feels that while the change is happening it's possible to get someone new elected, but after an election cycle, it all settles down to the same people in the system.

Mr. Allen commented that he can see the truth in Mr. Hudson's presentation but that it misses the bigger picture. People don't tend to be passionate about a single issue in Troutdale. They often run because they benefit from the city in some financial way such as having business with the City. Since there are no campaign funding limits, someone can spend a great deal of money to influence an election, and he feels that introducing this new system would create a popularity contest.

Dr. Moore remarked that Top 3 voting offers a better chance for minority opponents to turn out because they don't need to compete for a single seat. However, he suggested that if inclusivity is the issue, there are better ways to accomplish this goal than changing to Top 3 Voting.

Ms. Castillo-White commented that all of the cities in Multnomah County use the same system as Troutdale except for Maywood Park. She also has attended the League of Cities meetings and asked Happy Valley why they use Top 3 Voting, and she learned that they switched because the population is growing and it seemed like a good idea, but they are thinking of switching back. She feels that negativity and rivalry are going to happen in any type of election, but she agrees with Mr. Allen that since it's no longer a question of campaigning door to door, candidates can use social media to promote a slate of candidates. She feels it's important to continue voting for individuals instead.

Mr. Barnett said that he doesn't feel the benefits of changing the systems outweigh the disruption it would cause.

Mr. Erich asked about candidate psychology. 2 people going against each other seems more confrontational and he wondered if having a top 3 system would encourage people who are more introverted to get involved. Mr. Erich stated that he became involved because he remembered City Council meetings had been very controversial and he wanted to add some peace to the proceedings.

Ms. Hinshaw asked Mr. Hudson his main reason for championing changing voting systems. He answered that unlike Mr. Wilcox, who wants to end having unopposed candidates, it's about allowing voter choice. He sees this would allow people to vote for their top 3 candidates.

Mr. Allen commented that as the City's budget gets larger and there is more money at stake, the campaigns are less about individual personalities and more about what is at stake.

Mr. Erich thanked the presenters. He suggested that since there are good arguments on both sides, why not let the voters decide whether or not to change systems.

Mr. Ripma said that was fine, but Mr. Wilcox wasn't able to get the number of signatures required in order to put it on the ballot. This is why he's taken it directly to the City Council. Mr. Ripma doesn't think that changing processes is a good idea unless it's a very good idea since Top 3 voting is harmful for the reasons he stated earlier. However, if the CAC thinks it's a good idea for the Council to pursue it, he accepts that. He stated again that the fix is worse than having an occasional unopposed councilor.

Ms. Rizzo commented that she does not think changing voting systems is a good idea, particularly if the City is headed towards an economic recession due to Covid. However, she is willing to put it to the voters.

Ms. Castillo-White noticed that this has already been discussed in the Council on 4 occasions and that the minutes document substantive conversations. She does not recommend that the Council consider this change.

Mr. Barney said that this has been brought up many times and shot down which speaks volumes. If people wanted voting to change, it would have happened a long time ago.

Mr. Hudson replied that Top 3 Voting was only voted on 2 years ago as part of a slate of changes. There was never a referendum on Top 3 Voting. This is the first time it has been truly discussed.

Mr. Brown asked what the difference is between it being discussed at the Council and recommended for discussion by the CAC at Council. Mr. Ripma said it hasn't been included because the Councilors didn't think it was a good idea to recommend it to voters. Mr. Hudson replied that it has only been on the agenda twice and that the reason it hasn't moved forward for more discussion is because the Council has suppressed it.

Ms. Reynolds asked if Mr. Wilcox could continue to collect signatures for a ballot initiative. Mr. Hudson said it would be impossible for him to visit enough households during Covid isolation to collect 1100 signatures.

It was agreed that discussion would continue at the June meeting.

B. Review CAC Meeting Minutes from March 4, 2020 meeting.

Heidi Hinshaw's name was spelled incorrectly. Chair Knight clarified that on page 2, the federal definition of broadband is 25 down and 3 up.

Mr. Erich moved to accept the minutes as amended and Ms. Rizzo seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Census Bus Event Planning

The discussion has been tabled and the event is canceled due to Covid.

4. Department Report

Ms. Farrell reported that Staff have been working remotely since Governor Brown declared a State of Emergency due to Covid. However, this has not interfered with their operations, and they have received several building and land use permit applications.

The Parks Advisory committee will be discussing whether to meet next week and move forward with the Master Plan. They will discuss with the architects how to move forward with the URA site since the funding will be different than what was originally budgeted.

The City is not disconnecting or charging late fees on utility payments during the State of Emergency.

Ms. Rizzo said that the Parks Committee would like to hold a joint meeting with the CAC. Ms. Farrell said that this has been postponed. Ms. Rizzo also mentioned that when the Census Outreach event is rescheduled it will not need to be at Sam Cox Elementary since there won't be a bus, and it can be held in the Kellogg Room if that is more convenient.

5. Committee Comments

Mr. Wheaton thanked Mr. Hudson and Mr. Ripma for their discussion and said it clarified some items for him. He also appreciates their service. He personally has issues with how the Council votes but does not think that changing to Top 3 voting would be helpful. Ms. Hinshaw said that she would be happy to brainstorm ideas remotely with other CAC members about future projects. Mr. Brown announced that volunteers are needed to distribute food on Tuesdays from 1-5 p.m. at Reynolds High School. Interested volunteers should arrive wearing a mask and gloves. Ms. Castillo-White reported that she had Covid and it lasted for about 45 days but that she is recovered now. Mr. Lumiere and Mr. Erich thanked Dr. Moore and Mr. Hudson for their presentations. Chair Knight reported that it was good to see everyone and that he appreciated Vice Chair Schwab facilitating the first Zoom meeting. Ms. Rizzo reported that Summerfest had been canceled due to Covid.

6. Adjourn

Ms. Rizzo moved to adjourn the meeting and Chris seconded. The meeting was adjourned.

Next Regular Meeting:

Wednesday, June 3, 2020 | 7:00 p.m. | Troutdale Police Department

Due to safety precautions regarding COVID-19, the meeting will be held virtually via zoom, if the public wish to join, please email arini.farrell@troutdaleoregon.gov for a link to the meeting.

Citizens Advisory Committee Minutes
Wednesday, June 3, 2020 | 7:00 p.m.
Held virtually via Zoom

Public comments are welcome at any time during the meeting.

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, & Pledge of Allegiance

Present: Sam Barnett
Chris Barney
Jon Brown
Diane Castillo-White
Timothy Erich
Heidi Hinshaw
Alexander Lumiere
Shelly Reynolds
David Wheaton
Victoria Rizzo
Kyle Schwab
Will Knight (Chair)

Excused: None

Staff: Arini Farrell, Associate Planner
Amber Shackelford, Administrative Assistant
Melissa Bocarde, Independent Contractor/Transcriptionist

Members of
the Public: Zach Hudson
Jeff Hutchinson
Dave Ripma
Paul Wilcox

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Schwab and the pledge of allegiance was tabled since the meeting was held remotely on Zoom. Mr. Schwab explained that he would be facilitating the discussion for technical/Zoom purposes although Chair Knight was in attendance. He said that tonight's meeting would follow the agenda. Public comment will be allowed for non-agenda items and following each agenda item and before votes. He asked that members of the public confine their remarks to 5 minutes.

2. Public Comment

Mr. Schwab asked for public comment on non-discussion items, and there wasn't any.

3. Discussion Items

A. Review CAC Meeting Minutes from May 6, 2020 meeting

Mr. Schwab asked for review of the May 6th minutes. These changes were made:

- Sam Barnett, David Wheaton, Jon Brown, and Dr. Moore attended.
- Mr. Barnett said that Paul Wilcox emailed comments to Ms. Farrell. She replied that she did not receive these.
- Mr. Wilcox believed that Dr. Moore described both plurality and majority voting systems.
- Mr. Wilcox stated that page 2 should say that “The City Council” asked if the CAC should refer this issue to the voters. He also believed that Dave Ripma said “could submit a slate of candidates to overwhelm the electorate” on page 2
- Mr. Wilcox pointed out that “counselors” should be “councilors” throughout the document. Also, on page 3, it should say that “over 600 signatures” were gathered instead of 500.
- Mr. Erich commented that Dr. Moore was describing majority and not plurality voting when he discussed 50% plus 1 voting.

A motion was made to table the minutes to check their accuracy in a few sections. The motion passed unanimously. Ms. Farrell and Ms. Sillitoe will meet to follow up.

B. Council Appointed Task - Election Reform

Mr. Schwab opened the topic of discussion and suggested that each member speak in turn.

Mr. Barnett stated that his opinion hasn’t changed. He is opposed to changing the voting system or recommending sending it to Council to consider. He feels that would mean fixing something that isn’t broken.

Mr. Erich commented that he researched how many times items have been brought to voters based on petitions, and it is extremely rare. The question is why that is the case. He believes we should all know that this is a problem with many local and state governments, and this is the primary reason why the numbers of signatures needed are so high—because it is following the example of big political parties who try to make it very difficult for changes to be made through the popular process. For example, in California, to run for a statewide office, a member of a major party needed to pay \$2600 and get 60 signatures to ensure their name is automatically placed on the ballot. If someone is not a member of a major party, that person is required to get over 150,000 signatures. Oregon often requires only 100 signatures for someone who is a member of a main party, but otherwise, thousands are required to get on the ballot. Mr. Erich stated that this system has been extended to just about everything in terms of getting signatures to gain access, so we’re dealing with some other issues here, including a system that often is not honestly allowing people to fully participate. This is part of a broader issue as well in terms of ballot access and being responsive to people.

He also commented that he has thought a lot about this issue, and there are pros and cons like there are for most complicated issues. The primary argument he sees for keeping it the way it is now is holding people accountable, and that is important. When a person is running for one seat, it’s easier to hold them accountable. On the flip side, there is a strong argument for changing the system. Dr Moore brought up a number of times the issue of diversity and encouraging more people to participate. He had some questions if in the end it would create more diversity, but the more basic issue is encouraging people to participate both from a variety of social backgrounds and economic backgrounds, and he feels it’s important to think about if this issue of encouraging diversity is something we should take notice of and maybe take some action on. Overwhelmingly, that was the benefit that Dr. Moore presented and that Mr. Erich has personally seen in a Top 3 System. He understands that the City has tried to get more diversity and

involvement and we have all our volunteer positions filled. He asked if the CAC wishes to take it to the next level in terms of encouraging diversity.

Ms. Rizzo commented that many organizations say Top 3 Voting doesn't create diversity. Also, anyone can currently apply to run for office. She questions how many new candidates would be involved. She also had no problem personally in the last election since there were 23 times that she wished to vote for someone who was unopposed, including Zach Hudson. It didn't bother her that no one had wanted to apply to run against him. She thinks that people don't want to become involved since if they do, it's easy to get a spot on the City Council. She also has no problem with requiring a petition in order to change this process since there are no parties involved in this. If the voters want to change how we vote, it should be easy enough to collect enough signatures. She doesn't think City Council should have to decide this. The voters should have to sign a petition and then we can put it to a vote. And if they don't want to sign a petition, this means they feel fine with it.

Chair Knight said he understands Mr. Erich's statement about wanting to increase the diversity. However, Dr. Moore said it would mix it up temporarily and then return to the usual players. He echoes Ms. Rizzo's sentiment that if this involves more than a handful of people wanting election change, then they should sign petitions to get it on the ballot.

Ms. Reynolds asked if anyone knew how many signatures are required on a petition. Mr. Barnett said he thought it was 1100 or 1200. Mr. Ripma commented that he thinks it's 15%. Also, once you begin a petition, you have two years to complete it.

Ms. Hinshaw asked if this election reform change had only been put to petition once. Mr. Hudson answered that it was suggested originally to Council as part of a large packet of proposed reforms that was a hodgepodge of many things. The Council said it didn't want to do all of the items and decided not to refer any of them. Paul Wilcox believed in this issue so much that he decided to circulate the petition himself. He says he was wrong when he said 500 earlier – Mr. Wilcox received 600 signatures. However, getting 1200 proved an impossible task. More recently, Mr. Hudson brought this up to the Council and they referred it to the CAC for consideration, not about what Council should decide but whether it should be referred to the voters.

Mr. Ripma said to please only tell Council to refer it if you think it's a good idea.

Ms. Hinshaw asked if they continue with the petition, and she understands that Mr. Wilcox did this all on his own, her personal opinion is that we have some more time to get more of the word out and gather more signatures and see what people think. She feels that the people of Troutdale should be able to vote on this.

Chair Knight asked if the group wanted to decide tonight whether to continue with a petition or ask the City Council to consider addressing changing election systems. Ms. Hinshaw asked if recommending that the City Council discuss the issue would preclude any possibility of a petition drive. Chair Knight answered that there were two ways to get the proposed voting change on the ballot: the first was the ballot drive attempted by Mr. Wilcox, and the second is for the Council to put the issue before the voters. Mr. Barnett commented that he thought the CAC was supposed to decide whether or not to send it to the City Council for further review. He asked if the CAC was being asked whether we recommend that Council put it on the ballot. Mr. Ripma said that nothing precludes doing a petition and also putting it on the ballot. Chair Knight asked Mr. Ripma to refrain from offering opinions.

Mr. Erich commented that he appreciated all of the perspectives and that he wanted to respond to some of the comments related to the petitions. His earlier comments were not whether this is a partisan matter. It's why do we have a petition process that is so complicated and difficult. He has done a petition drive before and said that someone would need to have funding and hire people in order to do this. This is because of how the process is designed by the 2-party system. He is a professor of government and economics, and sometimes there are issues that involve bigger things than the specific issue.

Ms. Castillo-White said that Dr. Moore had recommended the CAC identify what the problem is, and he thought there were other systems of voting that would solve the issues that some people think need to be solved. With the petition process, in small towns, usually councilors win based on how many doors they knock on. As a result, when someone runs for Council, they go door to door and meet the people. As she's stated before, she has helped candidates for many years, and when she visits residents' doors, she hears about things like broken sidewalks or taxes that are too high. No one has ever told her that the way we vote is an issue for them. She still wonders why Gresham, Portland, and Wood Village like this way of voting. She tried to get Maywood to respond to her questions about why they use this voting system but was unable to get an answer. She understands the need for diversity but feels that's a different issue for another time and isn't sure that's relevant to the question being asked by the Council this time.

Furthermore, regarding incumbents having an advantage, she is not sure what year they changed it, but Tim Scott who is in charge of elections at Multnomah County is a good source. However, when you look at City Councilor positions now, it doesn't say "incumbent" next to their names on the ballot, so you could perceive this as an advantage for them before but not anymore. Also, when going door to door, the residents may not know the person, and the incumbent is only at an advantage if people know who they are. Most residents are also not affiliated as Democrat or Republican in Troutdale and some people in the household may be both.

She thanked Staff for inviting Dr. Moore, an expert, to speak last week. He is a very interesting speaker that they didn't have enough time with.

Mr. Schwab commented that after hearing everyone's opinions and doing some of his own research, the issue that comes to the forefront is accountability and that is important because elected officials make decisions that affect day to day lives of residents. He doesn't think there's a metric that shows if someone is a good elected official and is effective, so for him, the true measure of accountability is voting. Citizens vote based on whether we believe someone is being effective. So the issue is voter turnout and if moving to a new system will increase voter turnout. He reviewed some articles from interesting studies that came out of Harvard, etc. that show changing the system where you are voting can increase voter turnout from 5-7 % in areas where the population didn't feel like they had a say. He doesn't know if Troutdale is that place since he's only lived here for five years. The jurisdictions are a large area. He questions whether this is a city where residents don't think their vote matters in the way that they are able to vote now and if that's the case, then the CAC should perhaps consider moving to a new system. However, his gut instinct is that in a small city like Troutdale, residents think that their vote matters.

Ms. Hinshaw thanked Mr. Schwab for doing that research, but she said she found it very difficult to find information about Top 3 Voting. She asked if he found anything about it increasing diversity or the desire for people to run who belong to groups that haven't felt comfortable doing so.

Mr. Schwab answered that it has been less about diversity in skin color and more within politics, sometimes along racial lines but not always. He suggested that when discussing diversity, they think about the actual makeup of their town. They all know that diversity is not just about race, but there's also diversity of ideas, and he's not saying that one is more important but just to keep that in mind.

Ms. Hinshaw asked what the drawbacks were to putting it on a ballot. Ms. Castillo-White answered that currently it's by petition and anyone can try to get something on the ballot. She wasn't sure if the CAC was being tasked to look at the merit as far as a recommendation. Ms. Hinshaw answered that yes, as Mr. Ripma said, they don't want it sent to them unless it's a good idea, but she still wondered does it cost a lot to put this on the ballot vs. petition. What would the drawbacks be? Mr. Erich answered that he thought Mr. Hudson and Mr. Wilcox might know.

Mr. Schwab opened the floor for public comment.

Mr. Ripma said that he recalled Dr. Moore saying that changing the voting system may cause a temporary spike in diversity but that usually goes back over time to people who are known or familiar or people you feel strongly about and are going to make sure they get elected, and that this happens under any voting system. His concern is that he feels very strongly that you vote for a person, and that person should be able to get 50% of votes or more. For him, it boils down to what we're trying to solve. Mr. Wilcox's objection to running unopposed is not an issue for him. He thinks voting for a candidate boils down to accountability. He always wonders about unintended consequences when a city changes voting systems. When voting for a person, you know that your vote counts. In a community the size of Troutdale, there are many elections where a win is within a few hundred votes. He thinks he heard compassion and reasoned thought from councilors during discussion about it, and it helped shape his own thoughts.

Ms. Hinshaw said that her biggest concern is that you're running for only one position and if two people are running for the same position, and if you have to pick one but you don't want to run against someone you don't agree with, then this other voting system prevents this from happening. She asked if she understood this correctly.

Ms. Rizzo said that if she were unhappy with Dave Ripma and wanted to run against him, she could do so when his position opens up.

Mr. Erich said that in addition to that, it has to do with the type of election Troutdale wants to have. Is it confrontational with someone running against someone else, or more a case of let's see who can work together successfully. A candidate might like all of the councilors, but if they want to join them in office, a Top 3 would allow them to run and if voters think they could do well, then the candidate could work with them instead of running against one of them.

Ms. Rizzo said that she distributed information about why this system is not very well-liked. Ms. Hinshaw said that she admires Ruth Bader-Ginsburg but doesn't feel she was addressing Top 3 Voting. Ms. Rizzo suggested that she read all of the information, and Ms. Hinshaw said she did read everything that Ms. Rizzo distributed. Ms. Rizzo said she wanted to point out that there is currently no problem with anyone wanting to run in Troutdale. She appreciates that she can research just a few of the candidates in each of the positions and not have 20 or 30 people that she has to vote for. She feels that when you have that many people on a ballot, you don't really get who the people wanted because the votes are going to be spread out. She has been a resident for 40 years, and it's easier to research 5 people than to try to choose from 30 people and which Top 3 she should vote for. Also, the vote is going to be so widespread that the candidates elected don't necessarily turn out to be the people she wanted.

Mr. Barnett commented that he used to be friendly with the Mayor of Maywood Park and he was self-appointed. On the subject of diversity, it's not skin tone as much as economic. If you look back at the last election, there were five newbies, and it worked for them. Finally, on the subject of cost comparison, there is obviously no cost to put the issue on the ballot as opposed to going out and collecting many

signatures. He said it's up to them to either decline or ask the Council to add it to the ballot. He said he was ready to call for a vote. Mr. Schwab said he wanted to speak and also to hear public comment.

Mr. Erich said that he wished to comment on Mr. Barnett's statement. If no one on the CAC feels strongly enough to put something to a vote, we don't have to vote. If people believe in this and want to make a motion to ask the CAC to recommend to Council to put it on the ballot, they can do so. But if no one has that desire, no motion needs to be made. Ms. Farrell said that she wanted to clarify does that mean no recommendation or does he mean a recommendation of "no" because she thinks the CAC needs to provide some kind of answer to the Council's request. Chair Knight asked if they needed to send some sort of recommendation. Mr. Erich said that's what the Council has requested, but there isn't a legal requirement. The courteous thing to do is either recommend or not.

Mr. Schwab said that it always surprises him when there are people who run for an office but aren't willing to work for it. Just this last election when he was filling out his ballot, he noticed how many names he came across where he can fill in the oval next to a candidate's name but there is zero information about the person. He doesn't know if moving to a new system would eliminate individuals who run for office but don't seem to work for it. He is sure there are reasons why someone would not want to submit a bio. He then opened the floor to public comment.

Mr. Hudson said he wanted to clear up misconceptions. Top 3 voting is not voting for a group, but voting for individuals, not for various groups of 3. The whole point is that the voter gets to ask which individuals out of the entire group will do the best job. This gives the voter the ability to judge individuals and pick those that are their favorites. He doesn't think this will change the number of 5 or 7 people applying, but it will allow someone to pick the 3 that are strongest without letting the candidates decide who they want to run against. This is about voter choice and not candidate choice. Ms. Rizzo said that anyone can run, and we're not trying to make it easier to run, but we're trying to give voters more control. Hypothetically if you look at this election and see two seats are open and maybe some people in this meeting are considering it, which of these seats will you run for and why? You might as well flip a coin. Why are we separating candidates into silos and besides, they pick these seats at random and don't know who they're running against. We want the voters to say, these are the best candidates.

He said that if they wanted a concrete case to consider, Randy Lauer and Cory Brooks filed and came within 4 votes of each other, so both of them obviously had a lot of community support. In other words, the community wanted both of them to be elected, but the Council structure forced Troutdale to pick only one of them. Why? When someone chooses to run against an incumbent, they take choice away from the voters by saying that you can't have them both, and they are forcing a showdown.

Finally, he feels that this may or may not bring a diverse group of councilors. He hopes it will make them less divisive because they won't feel personally threatened by newcomers. However, his purpose in suggesting this is to empower the voters.

Mr. Wilcox said he wished to speak to what Mr. Erich said about voter access in order to clarify some numbers. For the petition, it's 15% of registered voters needed which is over 10,000 people, so you're looking at 1500+ signatures. The standard for either a State to amend the State Constitution or for the County to amend its charter is 8% and also for votes cast for governors, so if you account for voter turnout, it actually worked out to about 5 ½ % vs. 15%. In other words, a City petition requires 3 times as many signatures as a State or County petition.

He said he is very disappointed in how Staff presented the issue. Staff recruited an expert and did not give him a clue or any information. Staff also failed to provide the text of the actual Council motion which was

“I move that we refer the question of whether top 3 voting should appear on a Troutdale voting for comment”. The motion was made by Mr. Hudson and seconded by Mr. Lauer. (8:22 p.m.) The motion is not whether the CAC thinks this is good or bad but whether voters should be afforded the opportunity to make that decision.

Mr. Wilcox referred to an earlier comment about someone taking issue with running a slate. In the 2016 election, a group mutually endorsed each other and so did Mr. Ripma, and this looks like a slate. Also, Mr. Wilcox said that Mr. Hudson said that someone could be elected to something not on the ballot, but those would be subject to appointment and that Mr. Ripma had said the appointee would still be required to face the voters in two years. This is not the case because Mr. Wilcox knows of two appointees who ran unopposed. Also, on page 3, the key word is “citizens”. The CAC is the liaison between the City government and the rest of the residents. This is why they were at events last year like Summerfest and Halloween. When Mr. Wilcox walked the streets seeking signatures, he described it more as requesting feedback. He can’t think of a more powerful form of public engagement than voting. Representative democracy is not possible when more than 600 voters who expressed an interest in considering a different type of election are disenfranchised. Also, the presidential elections have the highest turnout.

Mr. Schwab said that Mr. Wilcox’s five minutes were up. Mr. Wilcox said that in conclusion, to quote Councilor Ripma in 2010, “Those vocally opposed to the idea right now should not be able to prevent the rest of the citizens from having a say.”

Mr. Ripma said that he hoped they would listen to him, too. First, he checked and this issue has come up eight times since January 2016 at a Council meeting, either by being brought up or discussed or both. He realizes he’s famous for being opposed to it, and it’s not for selfish reasons but because he doesn’t think it’s a good idea, and he has persuaded most of the councilors of his point of view. It would be easy to just refer this to the voters, but when we put an amendment on the ballot, we are recommending it to the voters, it shouldn’t be done because we can’t decide. I thought Dr. Moore was very good; he was directed originally to the wrong question, but he winged it quite well. He acknowledged that the “fix” of changing a system just to avoid what Mr. Hudson and Mr. Wilcox see as a problem of a few uncontested elections can mean that the fix is worse than the problem. No one files to run against people who are doing a good job. That is recognition that people are doing a good job. He thinks changing voting systems would really do harm to Troutdale. Dr. Moore said Multnomah County found that top 3 elections were expensive and competitive, and Mr. Ripma contends that would be a discouragement to volunteer councilors who do a good job and don’t always have an opponent who would need to run expensive races. As for petitions, one person got 600 signatures, and there’s no reason a group couldn’t gather enough signatures and that way Council doesn’t weigh in on it. That’s the way for the citizens to do it.

Regarding the accountability of the councilors, Mr. Wilcox cited a study way back when from the Center of Voting and Democracy. Under Top 3 Voting, the minority is unlikely to win seats; it tends to favor dominant parties and groups. It certainly would also increase the cost. He thinks we shouldn’t recommend to put it on the ballot unless we think it’s a good idea. Finally, you do know who you’re running against by calling the City Recorder since it’s public knowledge. Also, people usually announce their candidacy to the press. In short, the voters changed election systems in 1976 and it’s been a good system ever since.

Mr. Schwab asked if there were other members of the public or any committee members who wished to comment.

Mr. Erich asked if the change to elections in 1976 happened via a petition drive or as a City Council decision. Mr. Ripma answered it was put on the ballot by the City Council. Mr. Erich thanked all those who participated in a wonderful discussion.

Ms. Castillo said that Mr. Wilcox was very dedicated in collecting signatures. From her own experience, she knows that when you ask someone for a signature you are supposed to explain why, and she thinks the signatures were just saying, yes, sure let's put this to a vote, but not that they'd already thought so or could even say necessarily that they completely comprehend the issues. As they know, it takes a lot of research and analysis to understand the voting systems.

Mr. Lumiere said that the more the Council digs into this, the more complex it becomes. He came to the meeting thinking one way but now agrees that collecting signatures would be time-consuming. However, the other issue is that he doesn't feel like he has the information he needs to vote on it. Tomorrow, he might feel differently.

Mr. Schwab asked Staff for a reiteration of what the Council requested the CAC to do tonight. Ms. Farrell answered that the Council-appointed task is for the CAC to discuss this item and provide a recommendation to Council of putting this on the ballot or not. This decision needs to be made at this meeting so that Council can discuss it at their next meeting. The Council will also discuss this further in their meeting and that's why they're asking for input. The decision will ultimately be up to the Council.

Mr. Schwab said he would like to put this to a vote. Mr. Erich responded that he would like to hear the exact wording from the City Council. Mr. Wilcox said the wording was from the January 28th Council meeting: "I move that we refer the question of whether Top 3 Voting should appear on the November ballot for Troutdale to the CAC for comments and recommendations."

Chair Knight said his suggested motion is that we vote on the question of shall Top 3 Voting be referred to the people on the November ballot? A yay vote would mean "yes, I believe it should be on the ballot". A nay vote would be "no, it should not be". Mr. Erich asked Chair Knight to word this as a statement instead of a question and Chair Knight said that was fine, he would let Mr. Erich rephrase it. Mr. Barnett asked if they needed to make a motion to make a motion. Mr. Erich said the current motion must be seconded. Mr. Erich said he would make the motion because he thinks it's courteous for the CAC to respond. **Mr. Erich moved that the CAC recommend that the City Council put Top 3 Voting on the next ballot. Ms. Hinshaw seconded.** Mr. Schwab asked if they needed to have the motion in an affirmative question or a response. Should CAC recommend and people say yes?

Ms. Farrell said they would still need to make a motion to recommend no. **Mr. Barnett said in that case, he wished to make a motion to the City Council to not put the Top 3 Voting system on the next ballot.** Mr. Erich asked if he needed to retract his motion. Mr. Barnett said he didn't need to extract it, just to repeat it. Mr. Erich asked if there was further discussion before he did so. **Ms. Rizzo said that Ms. Hinshaw had seconded it and couldn't do so since she is the alternate, so she would second the motion.**

Roll call vote:

Chair Knight – nay; Wheaton – nay; Erich – yes; Lumiere – yes; Reynolds – yes; Schwab – nay; Brown – nay; Barney – nay; Rizzo – nay; Barnett – nay; Castillo – nay.

Ms. Farrell announced that the motion failed with 3 aye's and 8 no's and because the motion to recommend has failed, someone will need to make a motion to recommend no.

Chair Knight made the motion. Mr. Barnett seconded. Ms. Rizzo asked for the wording. Mr. Erich asked Staff to clarify why they were voting a second time. Ms. Farrell answered they needed to vote a second time because this motion is to vote to put it in on the ballot. If that motion failed, which means it's a nay, you don't have a recommendation because it failed, so you have to provide an alternative recommendation because the nay vote doesn't mean "no" to how you feel about the voting method, but it's a "no" to the motion. Mr. Erich asked if the CAC passed this as it is now if there would be some confusion for the Council. Ms. Farrell replied that no, it meant you didn't have a recommendation. Ms. Castillo-White asked Ms. Farrell to clarify-- if we say yes, we are saying we do not approve? Ms. Farrell said that was correct, they were putting in a recommendation that you don't approve.

Mr. Barney moved to recommend that the City Council not put it on the ballot. Mr. Barnett seconded. Ms. Reynolds said she failed to see the point in this second vote. Ms. Farrell said it would mean that the CAC is not recommending it.

Roll call vote

Wheaton- yes; Knight – yes; Erich – no; Lumiere – no; Reynolds – no; Schwab – yes; Brown -yes; Barney – yes; Castillo – yes; Rizzo – yes; Barnett – yes.

Ms. Farrell stated that the motion passed with 3 no's and 8 aye's.

Mr. Ripma thanked the CAC for their time and consideration regarding the issue and excused himself from the meeting.

4. Department Report

Ms. Farrell commented that the Town Center Committee will be ready to bring a presentation of their work regarding the old easement to the group by August. There might also be a pop-up presentation for interested community members. Her department has talked about re-opening but there are no dates yet. The branding campaign has been completed. Also, Army Corps has funding for Beaver Creek to do a study the confluence between Beaver Creek and Sandy River. They hope that will correct some of the flood plan mapping issues that they noticed when they received the flood plain data.

The proposed budget came through and was approved. There will be additional staffing in the Economic Development part of the department with the addition of a full-time and part-time staff person (1.5 FTE). They will help implement the new branding.

5. Commissioner Comments

Mr. Schwab opened the floor for comments. Mr. Wheaton did not have any. Mr. Barney thanked everyone for the discussion and process. Chair Knight thanked everyone for participating via Zoom. He would like to see discussion about parliamentary rules of order at a future CAC meeting so there can be fewer points of order and questions. He suggested Mr. Erich lead the discussion. He thanked Mr. Schwab for leading the meeting in his place.

Mr. Erich agreed that it would be great to have a parliamentary cheat sheet. Ms. Hinshaw said she appreciated being part of the discussion even though she was unable to vote, and she hopes everyone is doing well. Mr. Brown did not have any comments.

Ms. Castillo-White said she would like to do a flyer to explain how government works and the volunteer opportunities on Council, separate from information in *The Champion*, to help residents understand the opportunities. She also commented that she is unhappy about not having life guards at the river this summer and she is worried about drownings. She will bring this up at a Council meeting. She has needed to call 911 before. She thanked the Staff and Mr. Schwab for their help with tonight's meeting.

Ms. Reynolds thanked everyone for educating her and allowing everyone to have a voice even when we don't necessarily agree with each other. Also, she agrees with Ms. Castillo-White that it's vital to have life guards stationed at the river this summer.

Mr. Erich thanked everyone and acknowledged that it can be frustrating to hear differing perspectives, but he learned some things and hopes everyone else did as well. He also agrees about the life guards and asked if the CAC could do anything at this meeting to move this forward, such as sending a recommendation to Council to pursue it. Ms. Rizzo answered that it will depend on whether AMR can train people in time for the season. Mr. Erich answered that he thought they should find a way, so his question would be if it's worthwhile to send a statement to the Council to say the CAC wishes for them to pursue this. Ms. Castillo-White said she would make that motion. Ms. Farrell said alternatively, she could pass along the recommendation at the Council meeting on June 9. She also encouraged people to attend the meeting and make public comment. Mr. Erich seconded Ms. Rizzo's motion that the Council pursue the possibility of finding life guards as soon as possible. Ms. Farrell stated that the CAC can't tell the City Council to pursue this. They can only express that they feel there is a real need. Chair Knight said he understands but that's our job, and they have done that many times. Ms. Farrell said she didn't disagree. Mr. Erich again asked the group if they could make a motion to recommend that the Council pursue hiring life guards. Ms. Castillo-White asked about instead saying it's important and concerns us. Mr. Lumiere said there's a river where AMR can train people. Ms. Reynolds added that there should be a source of already trained lifeguards, so making a recommendation that we pursue an alternative to the AMR is what needs to happen. Mr. Wheaton said that Ms. Reynolds had answered his question; wanting to find an alternative to AMR which means killing the contract and finding a new vendor. Mr. Erich said no, just to pursue finding lifeguards. Mr. Wheaton asked for clarification of what he is voting for. Ms. Rizzo said it was to send a note to the Council that the CAC feels there is a need for life guards.

Mr. Erich stated that he would like to call for a vote. Mr. Wheaton said that voting on this motion tells him that Mr. Erich doesn't think the City Council is serious about adding life guards, and he thinks that's a weird message to send. Mr. Barnett said that he suggests being at the Council meeting on the 9th and he would be happy to do it. Mr. Schwab said there was a motion and asked for a second. Ms. Rizzo said this was not a proper motion since it is not the CAC's place to instruct the Council. Instead, they can be at the meeting on Tuesday. Mr. Erich replied that they didn't have to instruct the Council but that he thought they should. Chair Knight added that it's only making a recommendation. Ms. Rizzo asked for a voice vote. Chair Knight pointed out that he didn't technically know if they had a consensus. In order for this to be a group recommendation, they needed to vote on it. He asked if there was anyone against it and no one replied. Mr. Erich said that in this case, the motion passes. Mr. Schwab answered that yes, with one "no" from Mr. Wheaton.

Mr. Erich encouraged everyone to attend the next City Council meeting dealing with the budget. He is the alternate at these meetings. He stated that increasing the budget by 10% was proposed before Covid, and there have been no proposed reductions in spending. He hopes that people are right that there will be a quick economic recovery but he doesn't feel he knows that. He also feels that pay increases for City employees while other people are losing pay is questionable.

Ms. Farrell responded that Staff was told that the City has a surplus of about 3-4 years of contingent funding. Also, planning activity has been much busier than it was before Covid unlike in other cities, like Portland. Mr. Erich said that Troutdale is in a good spot fiscally and he would like to keep it that way and not do something that would put it in jeopardy. Mr. Barnett said he would attend the meeting and speak as a citizen. He would bring up life guards and also suggest that the beach be closed until there are life guards since drownings are a very real danger.

Chair Knight said that the Town Center Committee watched a PowerPoint presentation of ideas for the Urban Renewal Confluences project. He requested that Ms. Farrell email it to the CAC members, and she said she would do that.

Ms. Rizzo said that regarding the Census, she wasn't able to attend the meeting and didn't receive responses to her emails. However, 72.4% of residents have responded to the Census. She has also heard there are plans for banners in Wood Village and Fairview but isn't sure since the get-togethers were canceled. She also asked if the CAC would be able to meet in person in July. Mr. Schwab said that no, Multnomah County is not in Phase 1 yet. Also, the chairs of each County have the ability to be more restrictive than the State, and the County Chair is not sanctioning any groups of 25. Ms. Rizzo replied that she doubted 25 people would attend. Mr. Schwab said that yes, it would be possible to meet in person but there would need to be PPE for everyone and physical distancing, and he wasn't sure how many of the CAC members want to return to in person meetings. Mr. Erich said they would need to provide an online version of the meeting at any rate. Mr. Lumiere said this seemed to be working. Ms. Farrell answered that the City Council does have some people meeting in the Kellogg room so if the CAC wants to do that, Staff can explore it and allow others to attend virtually.

Ms. Rizzo said she appreciated Ms. Hinshaw's comments.

Mr. Schwab said he didn't have any further comments except that he is looking forward to returning to other conversations including houselessness and the economic situation in Troutdale and surrounding areas. Ms. Farrell asked to confirm next month's agenda and if houselessness should be added to it. Mr. Barnett asked that when minutes revisions are made, if they could be sent before the meeting.

6. Adjourn

Mr. Erich moved to adjourn the meeting and Ms. Rizzo seconded. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 9:34 p.m.

Next Regular Meeting:

Wednesday, July 1, 2020 | 7:00 p.m. | Troutdale Police Department

Due to safety precautions regarding COVID-19, the meeting will be held virtually via zoom, if the public wish to join, please email arini.farrell@troutdaleoregon.gov for a link to the meeting.