

DEPARTMENT OF CITY CLERK

CITY HALL

APRIL 2, 2012

(DRAFT)

The Open Providence Commission for Transparency & Accountability meets this day at 5:30 o'clock P.M., in Committee Room "A", Third Floor, City Hall.

PRESENT: Chairman John Marion; Vice-Chairwoman Karina Wood; Mr. Nelson Rocha; Ms. Pamelee Murphy; Mr. Allan Tear; Ms. Anna M. Stetson; Mr. Jeffrey Padwa; Mr. James Silveria; Mr. Paul DiCecco and Ms. Pamela Cardillo – 10.

ABSENT: Ms. Elaine Collins; Mr. John F. Speck; Mr. Andrew Law; Mr. Jim Lucht and Ms. Felicia Ingram – 5.

Also present are Council President Michael A. Solomon; Councilwoman Sabina A. Matos; Matthew Jerzyk, Director of Policy and Municipal Affairs and Senior Counsel to the Mayor; Jake Bissaillon, Chief of Staff, City Council Office; Yvonne Graf, Manager of Policy and Research, City Council Office and Tina L. Mastroianni, Assistant Clerk.

CALL ROLL/CALL TO ORDER

CHAIRMAN MARION: I guess we'll call this to order and Clerk, call the roll. Okay, thank you. I want to start by recognizing that Council Chairman Solomon is here and thank him for coming and listening in.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SOLOMON: I would just like to thank you all for taking time out of your busy schedule to serve on this Committee, it means a lot to us.

COMMITTEE: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MARION: We hope we can produce a product that will be useful to the Council going forward. And Councilwoman Matos is here, I'm John Marion, thank you for coming.

COUNCILWOMAN MATOS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MARION: If we might I thought we'd since last time we allowed everybody to introduce themselves, Pam Murphy is here, she wasn't able to be here at the last meeting I thought we'd let her introduce herself.

MS. MURPHY: I'm Pam Murphy. I'm an attorney, I live in Providence and have for over twenty years. I've represented the Ethics Commission, I've been a consumer fraud attorney in the AG's office, I've represented the Office of Child Advocate and I've done management labor law for the State of Rhode Island and private entities. And I've also done appellate work. And I've been involved in a lot of non profit arts organizations and a lot of political campaigns. And I'm presently on the board of Common Cause. And I don't know if you want to know anything else but that's a bit about my background.

CHAIRMAN MARION: And if you have any thoughts at all about what we can accomplish here that you want to share.

MS. MURPHY: Well –

CHAIRMAN MARION: I don't want to put you on the spot.

MS. MURPHY: -- I'm not – I wasn't able to catch up on what you all talked about last time. But, at some point I think one of the objectives of having a more transparent government is getting people more involved in government. And I would say that for me that's a priority of getting people to feel more powerful about having a voice in how their tax dollars are spent, decisions that are being made, contracts that are being entered into where they have no idea what they're giving away or getting. So, that would be one of my priorities.

**THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUAL HAS BEEN INVITED TO
ATTEND:**

**MATTHEW JERZYK, DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND MUNICIPAL
AFFAIRS AND SENIOR COUNSEL TO THE MAYOR**

CHAIRMAN MARION: Thank you very much. If I may, I would like to move item five up next on the agenda. I invited Matt Jerzyk from the Mayor's Office to come largely because he's the one who initiated this for me and in doing that he and I talked a little bit about his vision for what openness and transparency can be brought to city government. So, I thought it would be good to have him come and share some of his thoughts with us. Matt.

MR. JERZYK: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Hi everyone. The Mayor's Office has been really encouraged in our dealings with the City Council. That both branches of government are eager and interested in finding ways to increase citizen access to government, improve citizen access to government and to digitize citizen access to government. And I think we have a really strategic opportunity in the city's history right now where a lot of our systems aren't as advanced as some other cities are. And so while they may be stuck in an older position, because they're there we can all move, we can push the systems forward breaking down information silos that exist between departments and expand opportunity and expand access to government. So, that's like a really convoluted way of saying the city may be in 1996 in terms of what other cities have done but we can skip ahead to 2016 I think pretty easily. With an amazing group of people like you all around the table; we have city employees, we have city leaders and we have private sector leaders. One of the things that I wanted, I'm going to – I have like just a few documents I wanted to submit to the chair for circulation of the group is, the city applied to Code for America, they're a California based non profit think tank whose goal it is to use technology to increase democracy and to increase citizen

engagement. And they've funded some pretty amazing initiatives in other cities, you hear about the Boston Office of New Urban Mechanics where they have a really cool innovation space where they've developed a platform where citizens of Boston can have their iPhone out or their iPad out in their car and every time it does this (makes an up and down motion with arm) the iPad does that it logs it for DPW to know there's a pothole there. And then there's a relationship between that customer or that citizen and the Department of Public Works. So, how do you – so, the city actually applied for consideration in the first part of this grant project and I wanted to pass out our grant application so you have a sense of some ideas we have. But, I really think a lot of, and you'll read it in here, a lot of the ideas that the city has, the Mayor's Office with the Council Office, is going to, I think, percolate here. I mean, you guys are going to have a lot of great ideas and push us as staff to view what you want and how you see it implemented. And so I have that, I have some exemplars in municipal transparency with Kent County, essentially Seattle did, D.C., Baltimore and Chicago. What San Diego's doing in terms of – they have this thing called the AT&T San Diego Apps Challenge to develop mobile apps for citizens. And then just this morning I printed out some, from Governing Magazine, some interesting local and state projects using – dealing with this issue of the digital divide and technology. And so I'm going to submit all those for your consideration. But, when John and I talked the way that I think about these issues is largely in three buckets; the first is what I call the common cause issues which are the our votes online, our votes, our minutes and meeting notices online, does the citizen have access to the basic, you know, levers of government. And, the second issue is more the government 2.0 bucket where we talk about how we create the city's website, how we create the iPhone app that the city just rolled out, the Android App the city rolled out. How do we put real

time crime stats in a user friendly way? How can we register – how can parents interact better with the School Department via their phone or their computer? You know, we have a real middle class to low income city, a lot of parents are working two jobs, they don't all the time have the time or the opportunity to come to meetings of Council or the School Board or a Commission meeting like this. But are there ways we can create opportunities for them to engage via websites, the internet, social media. And then the third I think is really something that's important to the Mayor's Office, Policy Department, which is metrics. How do we measure whether these systems are working? How do we measure citizen engagement in government? How do we know if the changes we want are working? So, how do we think about what the answers are to the first two buckets in ways that can be measured? And so for example, if right now we have forty people coming to School Board meetings and you start to stream them live is there a way to capture how many more people are watching on the internet? How do you capture, you know, the number of people who make public comment? Thinking about ways to measure and the improvement of the systems. So, I wanted to thank the Chair for the opportunity to speak. The Mayor's Policy Office is ready and excited to work with you all as members of the Commission to think about how we transform government. I really think with the Mayor and the Council we have an amazing moment here to do some really interesting things. We have one of the hippest, coolest, most entrepreneurial class of up and comers in the city lead by beta spring and the great work they've been doing over there. We have a lot of people who are interested in these issues and who can be tapped to work on these issues and you have a government who wants to work on them as well. So, anything you need from us in terms of policy research or other research don't hesitate to ask. And thank you again for your service.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Thank you, Matt. Does anybody have any questions?

MR. TEAR: Yeah, I have a quick question, a few questions for you. The Code for America application, is it in the current cycle?

MR. JERZYK: Yes.

MR. TEAR: Do you know what the status is right now?

MR. JERZYK: It's for the 2013 cycle the deadline was March 31st.

MR. TEAR: Right.

MR. JERZYK: So, we just put it in last week.

MR. TEAR: Okay. And have we found the matching funding for it?

MR. JERZYK: You'll, as you'll see in the application we talk about the ambitious effort we will make to find the funding.

MR. TEAR: Okay. And, so one of the things that we've seen happening in other cities is the passing of an open government resolution followed by a, sort of, open government directive inside the administration. How far do you think we are down that path right now? There was a resolution passed to create this committee did it – do we have more general statements past the resolution level around open government right now?

MR. JERZYK: You mean, has the Council weighed in on their opinions on this matter?

MR. TEAR: Just like created – there's actually templated stuff at open government initiative that cities are –

MR. JERZYK: Right.

MR. TEAR: -- are putting through in a resolution and a directive level which would be more like an administration statement to the departments, I guess. I didn't know whether we'd started going down that path.

MR. JERZYK: Yeah, I mean I think to date what we've done is, you know, in terms of at least from the Mayor's side thinking about increasing access to government. We've done the apps, we've opened City Hall twice a month at night and we worked with the Council on creating the Commission. And we really see this as a launching pad to doing the kinds of initiatives that other cities are doing. So, we don't want to do things sort of parallel to what you guys are working on, we really want you all to be the center of it.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: So, when we put the findings out in three months then directives could potentially come from there. I mean, it sounds like a logical way to do it.

MR. JERZYK: Absolutely.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah. So, it's percolated up.

MR. JERZYK: Yeah.

MR. TEAR: So, I'll circulate this then to the group.

MR. JERZYK: Great.

MR. TEAR: Cool, thank you.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Any other questions for Mr. Jerzyk?

MR. JERZYK: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Get you out of here on time.

MR. JERZYK: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Thank you. And I hope we can put, if members of the City Council want to come before us, you know, we're happy to put people on the agenda to hear anyone's input, so in addition to the public testimony we'll be taking. Thank you for coming.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SOLOMON: Take care. Thank you everyone.

COMMISSION: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MARION: And I assume to circulate these, Anna –

MS. STETSON: I'll – can I –

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- can your office do that?

MS. STETSON: Yes.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Okay.

MS. STETSON: I'll email them out tomorrow.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Great.

MS. STETSON: To everybody.

CHAIRMAN MARION: And also, Pam –

MS. CARDILLO: Pamela.

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- circulated this to me and a couple of other people.

MS. CARDILLO: Karina. I didn't have everyone's email address.

CHAIRMAN MARION: And so I can put this in there too maybe you could –

MS. STETSON: Okay. And that's from Pamela?

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- send this around. This is an IBM report on opening up government. It's not the one I talked about last time which is the Smarter Cities Challenge one but hopefully everybody was able to find access to that if you wanted to see it. I think they're complimentary because this is Providence centric and –

MS. CARDILLO: Mmm hmm, right.

DISCUSSION OF COMMISSION MANDATE/FUTURE SCHEDULE

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- and Pamela's is a more general statement about how to go about these things. Thank you for indulging me and taking things out of order. The next item then would be discussion of the mandate of the Commission

and future schedule. Karina and Elaine and I were supposed to discuss the future schedule and we did not.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: No, we did not.

CHAIRMAN MARION: But I know you have some ideas. I have a few ideas that I thought I could share. And then we can make a promise that next time we'll absolutely have something in writing.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Is this one on the agenda, number two, is this about the schedule just of setting these meetings for us, for the Commission? Because I thought that we made a proposal on that at the last meeting.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Well, I – but we –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: I had some suggestions on the public hearing and the kind of involving the public in that schedule.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, I was thinking the two were inter-related. So, if there's a week when we're doing the public hearing at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon we might not have one of these meetings.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Oh, I get what you're saying, yeah, yeah, that makes, yeah.

CHAIRMAN MARION: So, it doesn't become too burdensome to –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Sure.

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- meeting after meeting after meeting. Did you have anything you wanted to –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Well, I was thinking – I think we're required to have one public hearing which doesn't mean that we only have to have one. That's the minimum that we have to have. And I know we're on a three month schedule. My first inclination was to have one really good, sort of, public hearing where it's like a public forum where you don't have it in City Hall, you

have it out in the community, like a big public meeting style, you have it very well organized. But, it encourages as many people from different parts of the city to come at one time and all communicate with each other. Rather than trying then setting up like let's say four different neighborhood meetings simultaneously or I just feel like I don't know that this issue has enough public awareness yet and enough traffic to really attract enough people for lots of different meetings. And we might be better off having one big meeting where we really put some press and social media buzz behind it and try and just generate as many people from different sectors of the community to come and brainstorm together. So, I would – that's the way I'd be thinking about it and let's pick on really nice attractive venue that's, you know, I was thinking of maybe Fête in Olneyville which is the new music and community sort of cultural venue which had had a number of public events as well as their nighttime music stuff. And it's right in Olneyville which is a neighborhood that certainly could do with some attention and would generate sort of, not, you know, like people who are not from Olneyville know where it is but people in that part of town could come easily as well on foot. And that might, that was just sort of one initial brainstorm. They could handle about, easily, several hundred people and we have space to break out into small discussion groups too, around tables and really make it productive. So, it isn't just people getting up to a microphone and saying I have an issue or I have a question and everybody listens in silence, you know, it's like – I think we need something more interactive than that to really generate public discussion. And like you said engagement with government. So, we could, I don't think that would need a whole lot of lead time, like what do think of having it in like three weeks lead time, a months leads time? We could have it, I'm saying – because I know from your experience with the on caucus events last year –

MR. TEAR: I had a couple.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: -- and the year before. So, we could schedule it for the, let's say for the first week of May, build to it this month and then assess after that. Like, how many people came? How useful was it? Do we need to do a follow up one after that? Or hold a more formal kind of a one? Say in the beginning of June. So, that would only take one of our meetings out of the schedule I think, really so.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Does anybody have any reaction or thoughts? I was thinking maybe at least two so that you could have one in the evening and one during the day. I'm always sensitive to the criticism of people who say --

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: I mean, who would come during the day?

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- you know, I work

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: I mean --

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- yeah, I don't --

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: -- I know people work different shifts of work, there are definitely people who work evening shifts that might be but they're probably sleeping in the day.

CHAIRMAN MARION: We should talk to the members of the Charter Review Commission about how they've -- the reaction they've had to having them alternated.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Aha.

CHAIRMAN MARION: I know they're having some during the day and some in the evening. So, maybe they have some feedback for what's working in that setting.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: We could certainly do an evening and then we could try a Saturday morning one as well. My experience has been that like

literally during the day weekday meetings does not draw many people and the people it does draw are tend to be sort of your usual suspect kind of people whose job it is to be available at that time to do this kind of meeting. Or, you know, a few other people who make it their job. So, I don't know I'm open to it but I would – my proposal would be an evening first, like say six until seven thirty kind of a thing and then see what we get and then try the next one maybe a Saturday morning.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, I think the weekend's not a bad idea.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah, like Saturday from like ten to twelve or something with coffee and muffins and that kind of a thing.

MR. TEAR: That seems like a reasonable suggestion.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Are you allowed to serve, to like have alcohol in the room with these public hearings, that's the question. Because if we have it at Fête, like lets say and it has a bar I just wanted to know if that's breaking any rules, like the bar doesn't have to be open during the event but it could open at the end –

MR. PADWA: I think that would be fine.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: -- so people could socialize afterwards.

MR. PADWA: I think that would be fine.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah.

CHAIRMAN MARION: I've read the open meetings act I've seen no reference of that at all. – alcohol was consumed during the writing of the open meetings act.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Right, right, okay, okay.

CHAIRMAN MARION: So, maybe we'll work on something more concrete.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah, I can –

CHAIRMAN MARION: Time and date.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: -- yeah, I can get some available dates if you all like the sound of that venue we can start with that. I know they're really community minded and probably would be free. If there was any cost for renting the room or renting chairs or tables do we have a budget for that kind of thing? For the public hearing?

MR. PADWA: I suspect we don't.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: It's like try and get it for free. It's pretty much my MO most times with everything anyway.

MS. CARDILLO: I'm going to go with no cost, low cost.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: No cost, yeah, yeah. That's what I thought. Okay.

CHAIRMAN MARION: So, it won't be a Friday night.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Oh, no, no.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Okay. Yeah, no I mean, I think we need to definitely, obviously given the title and mandate of the Commission make every possible offer to get feedback. But, I think doing it in May is a good idea because that gives us some time for us to think about what we want feedback on.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah, that's right. So we can structure it.

CHAIRMAN MARION: The advertising would need to explain please come and talk to us about these –

MR. TEAR: Right.

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- give us feedback about these sorts of things. So that it's not please come gripe about city government.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

MR. ROCHA: How about tagging along to another event like PechaKucha maybe do the last presentation and then afterwards, you know, allow the public to discuss. There's already a built in audience for that so.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Does everybody know what that is?

MS. CARDILLO: No.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: It's a show and tell kind of a forum where people – it's unjuried and it's free and people get up and have twenty images they've prepared that go on a screen in twenty seconds to introduce each image and it can be on any topic. It draws about a hundred people I would say average sometimes several hundred every month. I think it wouldn't take the place of a public hearing but it could be an addition to, like another way to get the word out –

MR. ROCHA: Yeah.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: -- if one of us wanted to do a presentation on open government and throw it out there and then say, you know, and we're receiving all your ideas or suggestions through the, you know, through where actually? Through the website? The city website? That kind of connects through the questions. But I like the idea of utilizing it.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Because it's going to where people already are, yeah.

MR. ROCHA: And another idea is live streaming video, do we think that may be of interest? If a lot of the public was maybe too busy or shy coming in?

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: And the video would say like what this Commission's about?

CHAIRMAN MARION: No, live streaming the event.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Oh, live streaming the event. Yeah, that's a great idea.

MR. ROCHA: And then you got the opportunity where they can actually perhaps have an option to submit feedback during the hearing too.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah, I like that. Mmm hmm.

CHAIRMAN MARION: That may prove a hurdle.

MR. TEAR: The what?

CHAIRMAN MARION: The live streaming the event outside the venue. Like –

MR. TEAR: Because?

CHAIRMAN MARION: Well –

MR. PADWA: To avoid the cost and then the advertisement that interrupts every so often. Didn't we talk about that last time?

CHAIRMAN MARION: So, I mean you'd have – I mean, certain –

MR. ROCHA: -- live stream.

MR. PADWA: Okay.

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- capability you need to try to do that. I mean, depending on the venue they might not have that.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Well, someone can come to the venue and just do it with the, you know, we can set that up. I think we can set that up.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Okay.

MR. ROCHA: I mean there are other ideas like doing an on caucus, what people submitted in various and different ways.

MR. TEAR: Yeah, we ran an ideas platform, a – search ideas platform which you can, you know, there's several of them out there that you can sign up

for on User Voice, Bright Idea, you know, essentially – do you have one set up right now?

MR. SILVERIA: No.

MR. TEAR: Okay.

MR. SILVERIA: There's not.

MR. TEAR: All right. Which very easily allows us to set up a platform for people to submit their ideas, describe them, vote on them. Any ideas that this group is considering we can create essentially a catalog of ideas that are generated either from the best practices group or from our own discussions and put them up to pre-populate that site. But it also allows people to submit ideas via the web and then vote them up or down and comment on them.

MR. ROCHA: Yeah, and if we do that for the first public meeting we may have a second public meeting to maybe discuss –.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah, yeah like see which ones get the most traction and then sort of winnow it down. Yeah, I like that.

CHAIRMAN MARION: So, we'll further refine this and bring it back to the whole Commission after we name our sub-committee later on in the agenda. Does anyone have any – so in the mean time I thought we could try to sort of sustain for now the every other week for the whole Commission to meet on a Monday night. And then we'll allow, once they're named, the sub-committees to try and organize themselves and perhaps use the Monday night in between or whenever they can meet. Which would make – next meeting on April 16th, so.

MR. TEAR: So, for the people who are organizing sub-committees what's the process for getting your sub-committee up and having the meeting announced in accordance with the open meetings.

CHAIRMAN MARION: So, can I – we'll move to the next agenda item is about – it's about compliance with the open meetings act. And that might be good to take under that. But, before we get there does anybody have any other thoughts about future schedule and/or I put Commission mandate on there just so if anybody had any thoughts after pondering what we talked about two weeks ago if anybody wanted to add anything.

MR. ROCHA: Just one thing, you mentioned something about the Charter Review and whether there was any ideas for that last week. I'm just wondering if anyone had any thoughts on that.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, I mean I went through the Charter the other day, for giggles, and you know there was nothing that struck me particularly about what we talked about in terms of the last meeting. So, I'm not sure there are – I looked at it as are there obstacles that the Charter presents that we may need to alter, you know, to sort of make it more open government. And also is there anything we could add. And I didn't come up with anything.

MR. ROCHA: I have a thought, I think they're doing it on a better level and some at a state level where – redefining the word public where public will mean online and searchable. I know that the Congress is trying to pass POIA, I guess.

MR. TEAR: FOA?

MR. ROCHA: Yeah, FYA but there's POIA.

MR. TEAR: Oh, okay.

MR. ROCHA: It's about – data, you know. So, that's coming down the pipe eventually, you know, that probably would be passed and –. So, basically in the Charter where it says public that could mean it's expected to be online.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Well maybe the, when we create the sub-group, the sub-group that looks at best practices can look at the issue of how other municipalities handle that and you know there might be a model to look at.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: We could invite the Chairman of the Charter Review Commission.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Do you know him?

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: I know him a little bit. He could come, I mean, we could invite him to come and like speak to us. I mean, I actually think that's the best way to do is, you know, just have some cross pollination and they're meeting actively at the moment on that Commission to work through these ideas and proposals and we're meeting to work through ours. And, you know, Cliff could come and tell us what they're working on and how would open government relate and what is the levers that we could be triggering in that process that we should know about so that we could tell people about too at the public hearing and so on. And then maybe some vice versa stuff.

MS. STETSON: Mr. Chairman, Charter Review is working on a very tight schedule right now and they have a timeline to get done with their recommendations so you'd have to act quickly –

CHAIRMAN MARION: Okay.

MS. STETSON: -- act pretty quickly on that.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Okay.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Okay.

CHAIRMAN MARION: So, I was going to go – there's a meeting Wednesday so I was going to go to that with some suggestions.

MS. STETSON: Well, I'd like to talk to you about that after we're done with the meeting.

DISCUSSION OF COMPLIANCE WITH OPEN MEETINGS ACT

CHAIRMAN MARION: Okay. So, Jeff, you sent an email which I then, I forget who and what the path of it was about our compliance with the open meetings act.

MR. PADWA: Open meetings act, you're the expert.

MS. STETSON: Okay. What do you want to know? I know that you sent me something –

CHAIRMAN MARION: I think it was just about clarifying that one, we're subject to the open meetings act and then the sub-committees would be subject to the open meetings act which is why we have to create them. And then our sort of communications as sub-groups would be subject to the open meetings. So, we couldn't have an email conversation –

MR. PADWA: That's correct.

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- as I understand it, among –

MR. PADWA: And I think the one on the current practices sub-committee and there's three of us so two of us cannot pass each other in the hallway and have a conversation, that would be a violation since that would be more than –that would be a quorum right there.

MS. STETSON: It would be a conversation on the matter that concerns this committee.

MR. PADWA: It would be called a rolling quorum.

MS. STETSON: Yeah.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah, it kind of – that's why I mean I kept trying to figure out like how do I talk to the other people about on my sub-committee and in the end I just –

MR. PADWA: This is how we live the – it's not just we're trying to – you get a chance to see the challenges we're living with.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah. So, how do you and where do you make public the fact that you're going to meet? Like where does that need to be advertised or disclosed?

MS. STETSON: The Secretary of State has a website that the City Clerk –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Right, right.

MS. STETSON: -- the Providence City Clerk is in charge of all of the boards and commissions throughout the whole entire city. And anyone who creates a committee, this committee was created, we had to have a file in which myself and my deputy are both filers here, but anybody else would have to have a named filer and that person can file the meetings within forty-eight, not less than forty-eight hours, within a forty-eight hour period –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Right.

MS. STETSON: -- on the Secretary of State's website.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: So, as long as it's posted there –

MS. STETSON: That's right.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: -- that is conforming with the –

MS. STETSON: That's right.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: -- open meeting.

MS. STETSON: And, you know, the City Council has their own requirements, some of the boards and commissions have their own requirements but basically that is – that's where everybody, everyone in the state has to file with the Secretary of State. And it's open, you can go right onto the Secretary of State's office to view all of the agendas.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Oh, yes I have.

MS. STETSON: And you'll see the time that it was posted, who posted it.

CHAIRMAN MARION: And there has to be an agenda.

MS. STETSON: There has to be an agenda and we do need to adhere to the agenda.

MR. TEAR: So, in the – if we are sharing information among ourselves for, let's say the documents for example that were just provided, or any best practices that the best practices committee turns up, we can share that among the group as long as there's no conversation.

MR. PADWA: The best way to do it is BCC people so that they can't hit reply all.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: To prevent a discussion from happening, right.

MR. TEAR: Can we post it to a persistent place like a Google group?

MR. PADWA: You can do that.

MR. TEAR: Okay.

MS. STETSON: And you can discuss it in your committee and that's why it's important for, I think it's important for this group to establish a committee that, you know, three, four, five people can get together and discuss it just like we're doing here in this open forum. You can discuss it in your committee but once you walk out and you walk away from it the discussion has to stop. So, I'm not sure about all these other, and I will defer to the City Solicitor for the legal portion of that as far as how they would work that in the forum he was talking about.

MR. PADWA: The Google group, what do you mean?

MS. STETSON: Yeah, I'm not sure because I'm not too sure what that is.

MR. PADWA: Well, we can share a document.

MR. TEAR: You can turn commenting off.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: You just post information and everyone has access to look at it like a website but it's just the documents so you can't discuss. I mean, you could discuss but you don't –

MR. SILVERIA: Does it need to be publicly accessible?

MS. STETSON: Yeah, but who's everyone?

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Anyone who was invited to view the documents.

MS. STETSON: So, it would be the members of the committee.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah. So, like say Allan could post something –

MS. STETSON: See I don't know if that's like a little snafu.

MR. PADWA: Yeah, I'm thinking –

MS. STETSON: Yeah.

MR. PADWA: -- I'm second guessing myself.

MS. STETSON: You know it's funny because there are some things that the open meetings law, you know, they made it – they wanted the transparency and they wanted a place for everybody to put it but they do tie the hands of even some of the committees that I've seen too where we have created sub-committees and they want to put together reports, you know, they have a report that they have to submit and they really can't even discuss that, the reports with, you know, one another other than when they're in the meeting. So, it does tie our hands to really being able to do the work we need to do sometimes.

MR. ROCHA: What if it's just open to public?

MR. TEAR: Yeah, what if it was by default open to the public?

MR. ROCHA: Yeah.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah.

MR. ROCHA: -- the public is --

CHAIRMAN MARION: It's essentially a --

MS. STETSON: They would see like draft copies and --

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Well, I mean if anybody wanted to see it.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Well, more like these documents, you know, so
just a central place --

MS. STETSON: Yeah it --

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- dump stuff --

MR. TEAR: Some of this is essentially public anyway.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Well, could we even create a place on the
city website --

MS. STETSON: Well --

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: -- where we start putting document links?

MS. STETSON: -- yes, and you know what you can do and we did speak --
we briefly spoke about that we could actually put, you know, this -- do like we had
done with the Charter Review and with Ward Boundaries. We created a page on
the City Clerk's website and all the information probably could filter through there
because it is public, it's in the website so you probably --

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yes, probably can --

MS. STETSON: -- maybe they could use that -- we would have to talk about
that.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Okay.

MS. STETSON: I think we would really have to talk about that and make
sure that we're complying with that open meetings.

CHAIRMAN MARION: But, thought we could create that to take public
input just like Charter Review did.

MS. STETSON: Yes. And we could post all the documents there too so that we can make them public on the website, on that site, so everybody, you know, they can just log right into the, you know, come into the city's website go to the home page there and just open up the documents and be able to view them all, you know, anything that's submitted from this group. Or even through the sub-committees too.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: I'm wondering if to get around this conundrum as best we can and we want to be open so just to try and do both should we just establish now like a standing meeting time and then advertise and then we have to kind of conform to the schedule?

MR. TEAR: You have to publish the agenda each time.

MS. STETSON: Mmm hmm.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Right, but we could create a standard agenda is what I'm saying like let's create –

CHAIRMAN MARION: For the whole group? Or –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: No, for the sub-groups, for the sub-committees. Like each sub-committee could have a standing agenda that, you know, where you say the topics that you're going to hit every time.

MR. TEAR: Can we have a new items?

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: A new items, yeah.

MR. TEAR: Like something –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: For, one, two, three and then number four.

MR. TEAR: -- old business, new business.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: New business.

MS. STETSON: No, no, I don't think so. I think that you have to – what open meetings are looking for is what is your discussion going to be at that meeting.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Okay.

MS. STETSON: So, you know, you could put, you know, discussion relative to but –

CHAIRMAN MARION: New business is reserved for –

MS. STETSON: -- you can't put pending matters –

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- at a future meeting I'd like to put on the agenda, you know, how Cleveland handles their website. But you can't launch into a lengthy presentation about how Cleveland handles their website.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: So, the agendas can be done forty-eight hours ahead as long as it's posted forty-eight hours but we could say now what the times are that we're going to meet –

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, you could –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: -- every week we could just set a standard time.

MS. STETSON: That's fine.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: And then at least it would be posted, it would be known, we'd all know. It's a little bit of a handicap but we just have to do it otherwise we're never going to meet, it just isn't going to happen because I didn't meet for two weeks because I couldn't figure out how to do it, you know.

MS. STETSON: Because we haven't formed a group. Once you form a group – once these sub-committees are you're going to be in a group just like we are right now.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Right.

MS. STETSON: You know, they'll be somebody that's in charge, they're going to set the agenda and the agendas are going to get posted. We will do the posting, we can do the postings here. You just have to contact us, the postings will go out and you're going to have a time and place that you are going to be able to meet.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Okay.

MS. STETSON: So, it will move but and I think that John and I kind of slowed it down a little bit because we were trying to figure it out.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah, that's okay.

MS. STETSON: And we came to the realization that we need to put together some sub-committees. And then those sub-committees will meet and they will come back to this full Council, ah yeah Council I'm sorry I work with Council all the time so I'm sorry, but they'll come back to this committee and they'll be able to discuss all the findings that they had in a open forum here. So, you could probably have one, you know, here something from one group, two groups or even the three groups to give a little breakdown of what's happening.

CHAIRMAN MARION: And then the sub-committee chair would come to me to ask to be put on the agenda for the whole commission?

MS. STETSON: Correct.

CHAIRMAN MARION: And that communication is allowed, I would assume.

MS. STETSON: Ah, yes. That's correct.

CHAIRMAN MARION: So, okay.

MR. PADWA: Less than the quorum can have a conversation, a rolling conversation.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah.

MS. STETSON: Mmm hmm.

MR. ROCHA: Is four a – how does that work? Two –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: But I thought you just said two people talking in the corridor –

CHAIRMAN MARION: Two people having two of the whole body having a conversation –

MR. PADWA: That's fine.

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- about the agenda is okay. But if there's a sub-group of three if two of them have a discussion it's a quorum.

MR. ROCHA: That's two of four?

MR. PADWA: What's that?

MR. ROCHA: Two of four? For example –

MR. PADWA: Do we have four people on a sub-committee?

MR. ROCHA: Yeah.

CHAIRMAN MARION: We have two, by my count we have two –

MS. STETSON: Two and two –

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- and three and then one with –

MR. PADWA: The quorum would be three then.

MS. STETSON: Yeah.

MR. PADWA: So two people could talk.

MR. ROCHA: Okay.

MS. STETSON: Two and two, they could talk to each other.

MR. SILVERIA: Well, there's also some members that weren't here.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah.

MR. SILVERIA: Can we add them to a sub-committee?

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, we'll we're going to – we'll ask Pam what she's interested in and then John hasn't been here, Speck, and I'll reach out to him and try to add him. Yeah.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: I actually have to leave, I had to leave at 6:15 for an appointment, I'm sorry. But I'm willing to like schedule my sub-committee meeting for like next Monday or next Tuesday if, I mean, it's just John, myself and Elaine so.

MS. STETSON: So, you can let them know that and then just send your information to me.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: And then I just send it to you.

MS. STETSON: If you have an agenda, but what I'd like you to do is send me your agenda so that we –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: An agenda.

MS. STETSON: -- yeah, and then just you have my email address?

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yes. All right, so send it to Anna.

MS. STETSON: And once we have the names I can get the committees created, you know, if we have the names because that's going to take a few days too to get that – in there.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Right. And what's the name of our committee?

CHAIRMAN MARION: We were on the public engagement.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Public engagement, okay.

MR. SILVERIA: Do the sub-committees need to meet here with your office?

MS. STETSON: The sub-committees I think they can determine where they're going to meet.

MR. SILVERIA: Okay. Does the Clerk have to be in the meeting as well?

MS. STETSON: I am, no, no, they'll be meeting on their own. My office will not be able to staff that. The sub-committees will not have minutes, we've had to do that because there's just too many, too much going on here with us. So, they're not going to have minutes, somebody there in each sub-committee will probably have to take notes if they wanted to have their own minutes and do something like that. And like I said they'll come back to this full committee and report to them.

**CREATION OF SUBCOMMITTEES ON PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT,
BEST PRACTICES AND CURRENT PRACTICES**

CHAIRMAN MARION: So, if there aren't any more questions about the OMA we can move onto creating the sub-committees and sort of confirm who's on what. So, you're good on public engagement?

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah, I'm good and I'm going to get the date sorted out and the agenda and I'll send it to Anna. And that's great.

CHAIRMAN MARION: So, I assume we need a motion for each? To create each –

MS. STETSON: I don't think so. I think you could just name the committees.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Okay. So, I have three sub-committees; one on public engagement, which would consist of Karina Wood, myself John Marion, Elaine Collins and Pamelee Murphy.

MS. STETSON: Okay, so that's going to be sub-committee on?

CHAIRMAN MARION: Public engagement.

MS. STETSON: Public engagement.

CHAIRMAN MARION: And then for the best practices, this is the biggest one, we have Allan, Nelson, James, Elaine also wanted to be on that, Elaine Collins, Jim and Anna, you wanted to be on that.

MS. STETSON: Okay, so that's the sub-committee on?

CHAIRMAN MARION: Best practices.

MS. STETSON: Best practices.

MS. CARDILLO: Excuse me John, I wanted to join that committee.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Oh yes, you mentioned that later. Okay, so Pamela wants to be on that. So, that's and I'm –

MS. STETSON: And then the third one?

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- that's seven. And then the last one is on current practices or I think we actually – that's how I put it on the agenda last meeting called it assessment but current practices works for me.

MS. STETSON: So, it's the sub-committee on current practices?

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah. And that also had Nelson, Paul and Jeff. And I'll see if I can scrounge up the people who weren't here maybe some more people for that because that seems like that's going to be a lot of work to sort of fan out and see what's currently going on. So –

MS. MURPHY: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yes.

MS. MURPHY: There was an idea that was floated around, oh I don't know, in the conversation of this past year about allowing the public to attend collective bargaining negotiations. Would that idea be discussed in current practices or public engagement? Or what committee would that fit into?

CHAIRMAN MARION: Public engagement, the idea was more of how this body could try to engage the public in the work we're doing we didn't talk

necessarily about sort of the outcomes of this commission. So, current practices is sort of an assessment of what is currently being done and best practices and assessment are a look at how other jurisdictions are handling it. So, I think that's something maybe, I don't know, that you could bring to the best practices is something you want to see done.

MR. TEAR: I think one way to – that we can envision this happening is you're going to have two streams of information coming together. What we're doing today, you know, in Providence and what's being done in other places. That comes together to provide, you know, a base of ideas and combined with the public input that seems like a public input point, right.

MS. MURPHY: Public engagement.

MR. TEAR: Yeah, which would come through the public engagement side. It gives you a base of things to consider. And I think when we had discussed this last time the idea was to try and get through that part in the first two-thirds of the process such that that would give us sort of the last month, last few meetings to synthesize that information together. You've got some new ideas, you've got some best practices from other places and you've got what the ground reality is of what we're doing today. That kind of comes together, we put – we synthesize that in order to make a set of recommendations.

CHAIRMAN MARION: And do these sub-committees need to have Chairs?

MS. STETSON: Well, I was going to suggest that maybe you name a chair for each one of these so that you at least know –

MR. ROCHA: I thought we did that.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, I sort of asked if somebody wanted ownership.

MS. STETSON: Yeah.

CHAIRMAN MARION: But we could formalize that.

MS. STETSON: Because then at least you know who's going to be making the call.

MR. ROCHA: Oh, I didn't know – .

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, I don't recall though, I don't have it in my notes who raised their hand and said they'd take ownership. But –

MR. ROCHA: If I have to that'll be fine.

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- I mean, I'd certainly, I'm willing to, for the public engagement take – to chair that and I'll – unless someone else wants to chair that, that's the lightest load of these three.

MR. TEAR: So you think, just you wait.

MS. STETSON: -- best practices –

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, okay, last time I said yes look where I ended up.

MR. TEAR: Yes. I had said that I was willing to chair the best practices.

MS. STETSON: Okay. So, we'll put you down as chair for the best practices Allan. Is that right?

MR. TEAR: Yeah, sure.

MS. STETSON: Okay. And then you're current practices?

CHAIRMAN MARION: Nelson, yeah.

MR. ROCHA: Yeah, if I have to.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Unless Paul, I'm sorry, Paul.

MR. DICECCO: No, I don't want anymore involvement than I already have.

MS. STETSON: So, Nelson will be chair. So, I have Nelson chair on the current practices, Allan on the best practices and John on public engagement. So, you are our leaders.

CHAIRMAN MARION: So, I didn't put new business on here so we've sort of run through our agenda. As I have it we meet again as a whole on the 16th and then the sub-committees will be responsible for scheduling their own meetings in between that. You know, I emphasize if you can get your work, you know, it doesn't have to be Monday night if you can schedule a meeting I don't think there's any reason why Monday night's are sacred. I know it won't be easy with everybody's schedule to get together but.

MR. TEAR: May I ask a question with regards to scheduling?

MS. STETSON: Mmm hmm.

MR. TEAR: Is there a particular process that has to be held in terms of polling people for scheduling?

CHAIRMAN MARION: The open meetings act says you can basically contact people about –

MS. STETSON: To schedule a meeting, yeah.

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- scheduling a meeting.

MR. PADWA: Yeah, I would schedule it like the way you'd schedule anything in your life.

MR. TEAR: Okay.

MR. PADWA: Yeah.

MS. STETSON: Yeah, just get your agendas to me and I'm going to post these tomorrow with the Secretary of State's office and get those committees created. So, even if you get me your agendas tomorrow that's not a problem as soon as I can post it – as soon as I can get them posted I'll return them back to the committees, the sub-committees and inform everybody of the agenda and you'll be all set.

MR. TEAR: So, in our notes in this meeting the decisions that we just made in terms of who's on the committees and what their contact information will be provided so that I can get in touch with those people?

MS. STETSON: We'll do that.

MR. TEAR: Yeah, okay.

CHAIRMAN MARION: All right, do I have a motion to adjourn?

MR. PADWA: So moved.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Seconded?

MS. MURPHY: Second.

ADJOURNMENT: On the motion of Mr. Padwa, Seconded by Ms. Murphy it is voted to adjourn the meeting at 6:27 o'clock P.M.

City Clerk

Assistant Clerk