

**Marysville Charter Review Board  
Meeting Minutes for June 9, 2009**

**Meeting called to order** on 09 June 2009 at: 6:30 pm by Chairman Ed Pleasant

**In attendance:** Rosalyn DeGood, Alan Seymour, John Popio, Becky Wever, Mike Rose, Alicia Adams

**Absent:** Gary McKinley, Martin Pratt

**Visitors:** Brian Dostanko, Director of Human Resources for the City of Marysville; John Gore, President of City Council; Dan Fogt, Vice President of City Council; Chris Schmenk, Mayor

**Approval of minutes** – Not approved. Alan Seymour requested changes to be made to last week's minutes. The corrections are on page 3 starting with the sentence: "Alan Seymour said the veto power of the mayor ~~is complicated~~ – situations can stagnate or come to an impasse. With the city manager / council form of government, ~~you don't worry about it.~~" The correction should read: "Alan Seymour said the veto power of the mayor can cause complications – situations can stagnate or come to an impasse. With the city manager / council form of government, veto is not an issue."

Minutes will be corrected and review at the next meeting on June 23, 2009.

### **General Report**

Chairman Ed Pleasant began the meeting by suggesting June 23 @ 6:30 pm as the date for voting on the final presentation to council. Signing off on the presentation is required as well and a quorum, or a minimum of five members need to be present for that. As a reminder, the presentation for City Council will occur on July 9 at 7:00 pm.

There was only one item left on the agenda to discuss: the city form of government. Chairman Ed Pleasant then introduced City Council President John Gore, Vice-President Dan Fogt, and Mayor Chris Schmenk and gave them the floor in reference to the question of government form.

**Marysville Charter Review Board  
Meeting Minutes for June 9, 2009**

**John Gore** offered some groundwork as to the reason behind the request from City Council for another form of city government: each time in the past there has been a change in the leadership, there's been problems surrounding the transition: such as a cleaning of house in regards to administration which creates learning curves; changes in agenda which slow momentum of goal reaching or causes a shift a new direction entirely; projects are not finished or set aside, resulting in a waste of funding and resources. Marysville is not a small town anymore and it needs real government management expertise now.

He remarked that he found it interesting the Charter Review Board focused on the lack of checks and balances present in a city manager / council format. He said that you still need four council votes to hire as well as fire. With a mayor, it's just one vote.

John Gore also addressed an issue that council has faced in the past: there have been questions as to the amount of disclosure of information for projects to be voted upon. At times, there was a feeling that something was missing or perhaps something was not fully explained or brought forth in certain presentations. Voting would take place and then complaints would surface as to the direction of the council on certain issues and it seemed during those times that the full picture of the project was not disclosed. In those situations when the presenters were asked about what they disclosed, the answer always was the same: "I told you what the mayor told me to tell you." It seems with this particular form of government, it truly comes down to personalities.

John Gore went on to say that 18 months ago the city received a new mayor and if he was assured that the current mayor was to stick around in the position for the next 50 years, then he could retire in peace, knowing the city was in excellent hands. The current mayor has no personal motives or political agendas to carry out other than to make sure that what's best for the city is enacted.

**Marysville Charter Review Board  
Meeting Minutes for June 9, 2009**

**Mayor Chris Schmenk** thanked John Gore for his views and restated that it's been a real pleasure serving with council. She went on to say that the city is at a point where it needs to be run professionally. She reiterated that this is not to take away from anybody doing the job now because she knows she has excellent people in place, but that this is more for the future. The search for Jillian Froment's position did not attract a large pool of candidates due to the present form of government. The current form is rather convoluted. As far as stability is concerned, this would be interrupted by the usual upheaval that occurs every 4 years. The mayor then gave a handout on an article from the *Columbus Dispatch* (1/26/09) regarding other cities that are pondering the same question as Marysville. Mayor Chris Schmenk went on to say that underlying point is to consider what is best for the future of the city when myself and John are gone.

**Dan Fogt** spoke up with his opinion, saying we've seen a few bad mayors. The form of city government needs to change, but it's not due to the present mayor; it's about the past.

**John Gore** said that in some ways we've been operating as a city manager / council style because the mayor's style has been inclusive. Some of the problems we face today are catch-up, so to speak, due to the past administrations' lack of cooperation or inability to move forward.

**Mayor Chris Schmenk** cites another article in which other cities which operate a mayor / council form of government still hire professionals to run the city. Even though she is here 3 ½ days a week, she could still be here more.

**John Gore** agreed, saying because of things needing attention, we end up working out of our job classification just because it needs done. Jillian is working at capacity and takes on more than what is required of her because of the load and making sure things get done right. She does an outstanding job.

**Marysville Charter Review Board  
Meeting Minutes for June 9, 2009**

**Rosalyn DeGood** asked if this change occurs, what will happen to the mayor and the present government? When will it change?

**Mayor Chris Schmenk** said at the end of her term, ideally.

**Becky Wever** asked how this change would be beneficial -- if the mayor's position goes away, what happens then with the workload? Do we hire an assistant?

**John Gore** replied that has been thought about and perhaps one of the answers is that we wouldn't hire new staff but reorganize the current staff.

**John Popio** said that bad city manager relationships cost a lot of time and money to remove. Is there a way to reach these professional goals and sense of stability without a change of government?

**Mayor Chris Schmenk** said we could beef up the charter. For example, require a Master's degree, etc.

**Dan Vogt** said you might want to also change that the mayor could not fire anyone without council.

**John Popio** said he still didn't see a reason for change. While there is no perfect form of government, making a change to the current one doesn't solve all the problems, just presents a new set.

**John Gore** offered the idea of the president of council would be elected by the public and would take on the title of mayor as well; maybe even be paid a little more for the position. The responsibility would include working alongside the city manager. But the mayor idea would still be in place.

**Dan Fogt** asked if there was any other way to amend this instead of a charter.

**John Gore** replied that it has to be chartered. City Council can write a resolution even if it's not recommended by the Charter Review Board.

**Mayor Chris Schmenk** asked if we choose not to change, can we add safeguards?

**Marysville Charter Review Board  
Meeting Minutes for June 9, 2009**

**Mike Rose** said there doesn't seem to be a perfect form of management, but the city is a business and it not a small town like it used to be. The concern here seems to be about the future of the city and if we stayed the way we are now, maybe it would be a step backwards. The tag of mayor is still important to the public to identify with.

**Chairman Ed Pleasant** proposed that the next meeting should have both recommendations written up by Tim Aslaner so as to cover whatever consensus there may be. He asked if the public should be asked again to participate. We also need to be aware that Gary McKinley was not here for the meeting and did not get a chance to listen to all sides of the table. He should get the chance to review the information.

**Becky Wever** said the public should be invited again for another hearing.

**John Gore** said to keep in mind the goal is to ensure an appropriate level of professionalism for the future.

**Chairman Ed Pleasant** said the next public hearing will be set for June 23 with both write ups and then decide on whether to have another meeting or to sign off.

**Alicia Adams** suggested advertising the meeting in a different way other than before to attract more people to the hearing.

**Mayor Chris Schmenk** offered the idea of flyers to give out at the city's Friday Night Uptown event.

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**Marysville Charter Review Board  
Meeting Minutes for June 9, 2009**

Adjourned at:        pm

Minutes submitted for approval by: Clerk on [Click here to enter a date.](#)