

DEPARTMENT OF CITY CLERK

CITY HALL

MARCH 19, 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; Ms. Elaine Collins; Mr. Nelson Rocha; Mr. Jim Lucht; Mr. Allan Tear; Ms. Anna M. Stetson; Mr. Jeffrey Padwa; Mr. James Silveria; Mr. Paul DiCecco and Ms. Pamela Cardillo – 10.

ABSENT: Mr. John F. Speck; Ms. Karina Wood; Mr. Andrew Law; Ms. Pamelee Murphy and Ms. Felicia Ingram – 5.

Also present are Sandy Riojas, Operation Clean Government and Tina L. Mastroianni, Assistant Clerk.

(Subsequently Ms. Karina Wood joins the meeting)

CHAIRMAN MARION: I haven't chaired a committee hearing since high school.

MS. STETSON: Pardon me?

CHAIRMAN MARION: I haven't chaired anything since high school student government.

MS. STETSON: Oh.

CHAIRMAN MARION: I just testify all day long. But, I'll try to do this correctly so please correct me if I break Robert's Rules. I'll call this to order. I'm John Marion. Somehow I volunteered when Matt Jerzyk said who would like to chair the Open Government Commission. I just want to thank everyone for coming. I know everybody here, I talked to almost everybody in advance of the

meeting and everybody's very, very busy so I appreciate your time. I thought today we could simply do a couple of things –

MS. STETSON: If I could interrupt you.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yes.

MS. STETSON: Can we have the clerk call the roll.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Oh, yes.

MS. STETSON: So that we can see who's here.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Sorry. Thank you, sorry about that. So, I thought we could try to accomplish a few tasks tonight in organizing this. One, simply introduce ourselves, what we do and a little bit about what we envision for this. Talk a little bit about future meetings and where it can fit into people's schedules and how we could make the meetings open to the public and inviting the public. We need to elect a vice-chair. So, if in my absence somebody's running the meeting. And talk about the possibility of breaking out into smaller groups to work on specific projects. But, first Anna Stetson the Clerk asked that people sign a – put more contact information, I think Nelson's the only one who hasn't done that. And then she also had full rosters for everyone.

MS. STETSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**WELCOME AND OVERVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION
CREATING COMMISSION FROM JOHN MARION, CHAIRMAN**

CHAIRMAN MARION: I try, I'm drunk with power. So, I thought I'd start and maybe we can go around the room and introduce ourselves. I'm John Marion, I run an organization called Common Cause. For those of you who aren't familiar it's a good government group – been in Rhode Island for forty-two years working largely at the State House pushing for reforms in campaign finance, ethics, open government and the like. I've been with the organization for about three and a half years. Previously I came from teaching Political Science so I'm not a practitioner

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necessarily like many of you are of a lot of what we're going to do. So, hopefully those who are practitioners can bring a lot to the table for those of us who aren't. I, somehow Matt Jerzyk and I, he approached me about this Commission and I agreed to Chair it. I'm hoping that we can have some good products come out of this. I'm a citizen of the city, I've been a citizen of the city, a resident of the city for eleven years and like many residents of the city I'm both thrilled to live here and frustrated sometimes by the way my city government responds. And so I'm hoping what we can do is take the energy of the many people who are just thrilled to live and work here and translate into something that's better to serve them. The real crux of it for me is trying to make this whatever deliverables we choose to be something very reasonable that we can achieve and that we all stay invested. I, over the weekend, read the IBM Smarter Cities report, and, you know, what a great product and they're gone and there's nobody there from what I can tell to sort of make sure that that carries forward, it's left to the, you know, the city itself to do that. And really I'm hoping what we could do is get citizens engaged so that when this Commission is all said and done people feel empowered, they know what's coming they know what to expect and they will ask for it so that there's really something tangible to come out of this. And really it comes down to transparency for me, people should expect to see a government see how government is making decisions on their behalf and it should be predictable. One of the frustrating things I think about municipal government here and in many places in government in general is that when decisions aren't predictable for citizens then they suspect favoritism or they suspect whatever else. And even if those things aren't occurring and oftentimes I don't think they are just that lack of transparency and predictability really makes it frustrating for citizens. So, there's my little stump

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about this. But, you know, I really look forward to working with everybody and I will go around this way.

MR. LUCHT: I'm Jim Lucht. I'm the Commission Director of the Providence Plan, I've been there for about eleven years. The bulk of our work is taking data either publicly available data or government data and analyzing it. And in the case of confidential data aggregating it and making it available to make decisions. So, I definitely have been in a business similar to this for a long time. I'm kind of – we use a lot of technology to do that and I'm just interested in contributing however I can. I'm kind of a little more from the curated data camp than the completely open data camp, recognizing that not all forms of government data are necessarily appropriate to put out without any explanation. And a lot of times it requires additional work to make it to not only clean the data, although making data open is a good way to keep data clean but you all know that, but that there's definitely some work involved. So, it's important that our goals be realistic and that we look for things that are really going to make a difference, the balance and the work that's involved with making it happen.

MS. CARDILLO: My name is Pamela Cardillo. I'm the Director of ProvStat which was started by the previous mayor, David Cicilline, designed to be the accountability and transparency tool for the city, introduced in 2003, inspired by Mayor Martin O'Malley and his city/stat model that was used in Baltimore. Together with an initial staff of three individuals including Jim Lucht who just spoke before me, we began designing schemes for collecting data in the city. What initially in 2003 the city had a woefully inadequate data technology infrastructure, so we spent the first year or two kind of designing ways to collect data from the departments electronically and to move them from a paper driven data collection scheme to electronic data that we could analyze for the mayor. At the same time

we identified some key performance indicators for each department and then we analyzed the data according to the metrics that we established for each department and brought each city department to what was called a ProvStat meeting, an official meeting where we showed the data analysis to the mayor along with his senior staff basically made up of the Finance Director, Chief of Staff, City Solicitor, Office of Neighborhood Services, Human Resources Director. Mayor Cicilline chose to use ProvStat as a management tool and once the departments were up and running, we had a dozen or so departments up and running, collecting data and helping them utilize data to make evidence based decisions for operation. But the previous mayor saw that it was, that ProvStat would be used more effectively as a management tool so the decision was to not make performance data, analyze performance data publicly available on the website. So, let's fast forward through that administration, now we're at a new one and I think, I suspect that, from what I've heard anyway, this mayor might feel a little bit differently. He seems to support more transparent – to support transparency and more transparency for performance data whatever form that takes. And as a Director of ProvStat I couldn't agree more, I'm a strong believer in sunshine as the great antiseptic and I think the tax payers are entitled to know how, what the, you know, city employees are doing and how well they're doing it and how well, you know, we – this mayor is doing in stewardship of their money. So, I'm thrilled to be here.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Okay, thanks.

MR. ROCHA: Hi, my name is Nelson Rocha and I'm a member of the public appointed by the mayor. And I worked in the financial service industry in the Boston area in the role as a consultant in systems, business systems analyst and project management. And so recently I got interested in government, so I was a new user looking at the website and trying to get to know and I become frustrated.

So, and I kept looking around asking questions and demanding some transparency. And I do believe it's, you know, a right of the public to know what's going on. So, that's why I'm here, I'm honored to be here and hope I can contribute every way I can.

MR. SILVERIA: Jim Silveria, the CIO for the City of Providence. I've been here for almost one year and I'm primarily responsible for day to day support, activities of network and applications in the city. Prior to coming here I spent about thirteen years working in IT management. I have developed several reporting systems on project reporting, financial reporting, HR reporting and performance reporting. So, I do have some experience and hopefully bring something useful to the group and look forward to working with you.

MR. DICECCO: My name is Paul DiCecco I'm the Webmaster. And my duties include back end management, some content administration. The website that we currently have was designed prior to my coming here so I didn't really have much input in the structure of it. But I maintain it daily and update it constantly. And I have a lot of questions and a lot of ideas, there are a lot of things we've been trying to accomplish that there are just limitations that prevent us from going to the next level. Some of them are, you know, the ability to accept electronic signatures, the ability to accept payments in order to, you know, register for a license you need to be able to accept a payment, you need sometimes a notary signature and these things have just been road blocks, there is no way around them. So, I'm anxious to see if we can come up with solutions to some of these road blocks and if we can make things more accessible to the public. I've done quite a bit myself as far as like Board of Licenses has been using a pretty antiquated system of – the licenses were on half sheets of paper and they fold them and they put them in file cabinets and I think I took about thirty of them and I made them

like a formal document with the city seal and I made them fillable PDF's and they're all on the website. So, it's one step in the right direction but like I said you need to sign it. So, the only real thing that's provided is the ability for the constituent to complete the form on line and print it, you know, a legible manner and they still need to sign it and submit it manually. And in turn, you know, the people in the Board of Licenses can read the submitted data because they used the, you know, keyboard to complete the form. But as far as accepting payments and, you know, completing the license process online there are some road blocks. So, you know, I'm anxious to see if we can – if there are other cities, municipalities that have gone to the next step and I'm all for it. But, you know, between budget and, you know, the funds we have available to take this to the next level and the technology and then there is the aspect of, you know, the departments interacting and, you know, it wouldn't just be the website, everybody needs to be involved in, you know, completing this. But I'm anxious to see what we can come up with.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Can I just ask, are you – when you say you're Web Master are you the Web Master for every city website? Or everything but the City Council?

MR. DICECCO: In Rhode Island?

CHAIRMAN MARION: No, no, in Providence.

MR. DICECCO: Well, in Providence we have one website it's providenceri.com. Felicia, she – I manage the City Council website, the back end I provide updates. Our website is called Droople, it's a CMS, it's an open source content management system. It was heavily customized by a third party company and, you know, everyday there are updates to it, to, you know, for security purposes. So, I manage – do the updates and I oversee the City Council website. Felicia adds content and I kind of help her with certain things. But most of my

interaction with her is just the back end, keeping the site updated. And as far as Providence, you know, we have brought all the departments under one website. There may be a few websites that I manage like Mayor's Substance Abuse has their own website, we're building something for the lobbyist registration which the road blocks are accepting payments, signatures, but we're in the process of developing something. There are a couple of other sites that the Arts, Culture Department, you know, some Rhode Island Latin Community celebration, and again they're either Word Press or Droople. And I just manage the security, the updates. I don't really do content so much unless instructed to, you know, if someone says Paul can you post this then I do. How this website was designed was departments assign a writer and an editor and the writer would be, you know, a worker and the editor would be the director. So, the writers post content, an email is sent to the director who is an editor and he would view the content, spell check it, make sure it's fact and then submit it or publish it and then it would go live. So, the plan and the intent was great but not very many departments have followed that model and either they just don't post content or they submit it to me and I do it. For example, you know, DPW has a guy that constantly posts street closings, that's what he does, every morning he posts what streets are closed, he uses it well. The Police Department submits to me daily an arrest log and a case log, a daily case log, I convert them to a PDF and I list them on the Police Department's webpage. I've done some work with the Board of Licenses, like I said we redid the forms and we put them all online. The City Clerk I do post the jobs bids, not the job bids what are they?

MS. STETSON: The board –

MR. DICECCO: The Board of Contract and Supply, the bids.

MS. STETSON: -- yes.

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MR. DICECCO: Same thing, Lori will provide me with a word document of the bid, I convert it to a PDF and I upload them at a, you know, dated format.

CHAIRMAN MARION: No, I mean I was just trying to get – some of us are – you know, have spent more time on the sites than others.

MR. DICECCO: Yeah. I'd be curious to ask Nelson what he was frustrated with. I mean, the site is a hundred times better than its ever been.

MR. ROCHA: It is, yeah.

MR. DICECCO: It isn't?

MR. ROCHA: It is, it is. It has been.

MR. DICECCO: And you know I'm open to suggestions. I find it, besides some issues with cross browser compatibility, because if you're surfing on, you know, and the city has a lot of old computers, and some of them have IE6 and I'm hoping not everybody does but there are some issues with Flash, you know, some of them the main center of the website is a flash movie that rotates an image. And I've been to some employees computers that just don't have flash installed, the computer can't handle it. So, there are some issues with that. But, as far as navigation and departments and, you know, as far as content if it's old content that can't be, you know, I can't – I'm not to blame for that because I don't – I can only post I can't extract it out of them. So –

MR. ROCHA: It's mostly content balance.

MR. DICECCO: Yeah, which even the content, you know, we've been – we've come a long way as far as what's out there. There are some departments, you know, Arts & Culture he's – they post constantly with events and, you know, a calendar of events. And we actually just recently lost Eliza who worked for the Mayor's Office and she was in charge of posting the Mayor's content. So, the Mayor's office has, you know, obviously a press secretary. And the previous

administration we had it a little different, we did have more interaction from the departments. When the new administration started the director of communications saw things in a different light and wanted to do more with social media. Which, not to go off topic, but there are some other IT issues and web based and internet issues that we have to address but maybe not in this Commission. But, so the Communications Director had a different perspective as to how and the previous administration the Communications Department posted the content themselves. In other words, David Ortiz is the Press Secretary, the previous administration, his position used to post all the Mayor's news. The new administration, well not the administration but the Director of Press didn't take on any of that responsibility and they put it all on Eliza, who Eliza recently resigned. So, right now I'm kind of juggling and posting the content for that department and they're looking to replace that position so.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Well, hopefully, you know, we'll have time to really get at both what Commission members feel need to be on the table and then the public. You know, one of the things I want to do today is talk about more meetings so that we can take a lot of public input and you can get the feedback you need to do –

MR. DICECCO: Yeah, well open government is what this is about. Open government basically is the public's interaction with the website and the distribution of those things I spoke of; licensing, you know, maybe other information like we had discussed; purchases, you know, all city purchases and like. Where is here? Jim. Like Jim said about filtering the data and what we would really want to be distributed. You know, I'm sure not all city business would be on the website but we did look at some, you know, purchases and making the bid process or the distribution of the bid and the bid packet and there are some

things I don't even know what they are. But, an open government that's, my interpretation is strictly the website and the content we distribute to the public. So, how we can better do that is what I would, you know, would think that this Commission is to try to figure out.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Thanks.

MS. STETSON: Hi, I'm Anna Stetson I'm the City Clerk for the City of Providence. I work under the jurisdiction of the City Council and oversee all of their committees, posting, I post notices with the Secretary of State which is a public record so that there's some transparency so people can see all of the meetings within a forty-eight hour period. We do a lot of work here, lots of committee meetings are here constantly at night, I have like since January almost every night so far. But I'm here to, I'm excited to be here to see what we can do and how we can make, my job in particular and my office and even the Council office too, make it a lot easier for them to be able to retrieve documents. Just today I had a request, and I did forward that to the IT people this afternoon, request from a Council person for us to do a simple little thing like take our calendar, you know, my calendar that I have all of the committee meetings on it and actually post it onto the website so that people can see that, you know, the public can just go on there. Because I send out notices on the weekend, I send out all of these agendas, a lot of you in this room get copy, you know, you get emails from me but some of the Council members they're here, they don't know what it is, if they can go onto the website and be able to look at it. It's a simple, simple thing and I'm hoping that we're going to be able to, I haven't had a chance to talk to these guys, it's something simple like that. And just technology and just to see how we can evolve. I have seen a lot of different presentations for agenda management and, you know, keeping minutes. I've been up to Boston and couple of other cities and

towns, worked with the Rhode Island Association of City and Town Clerks and share a lot of information from them too and some of the things that they do – and towns have Probate Court, birth and death certificates, vital records, the recording of deeds and stuff like that and those things are important here too in the city to be able to see how we can get, you know, get all that information put online too. So, I'm excited to be here and hopefully we'll be able to pull something together and come up with some ideas. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Thank you.

MR. TEAR: Hi I'm Allan Tear I'm here as a citizen. I'm a technology entrepreneur, I run a program called Data Spring here in town which is a boot camp for technology startups. A few years ago I became interested in how government was being transformed by technology. Some of you may have heard the term "government tu dato" which was something that was coined around this phenomenon. And was one of the – I started going to national meetings of government officials and technologists who were looking at this trend called "gov tu dato conferences" and then the "city tu dato conferences". And a few years ago rallied a group of local government interested technologists to run a series of experiences around opening up data and taking calendars from different places and republishing them as common open feeds, making it very easy to convert data from one form to another, creating a platform for citizens to submit ideas about reinvention of the city. So, we played with a series of experiments kind of up through the election culminating in something called the on caucus and since then I've been otherwise distracted. So, I'd say I've been a rather inactive node in this national network of people that – but it remains a strong interest of mine. And I think we'll find that there are, the good news is there's really good models out there, right now of cities that are using technology enabled approaches along with

good policy to open up both around the areas of accountability and transparency but also around the areas of citizen engagement. So, San Francisco, Chicago, Boston and a handful of other cities have incredibly good initiatives around one of the these two areas. The, you know, the bad news is there's probably much more that we could do, or that can be done than we have appetite or ability to do. So, I think that goes back to John's set up comments about what's really going to be useful for citizens, for the citizens of Providence. And, you know, what are the things that we should focus our limited time and energy on in order to have the biggest bang for the buck in terms of what would make a difference for the people here. So, I can provide a lot of information about what's being done in other places but I think part of that question is going to be what's really useful to the people of Providence.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Thanks.

MR. PADWA: Hi, Jeff Padwa, I'm the City Solicitor for Providence, also I'm the lawyer for the mayor and the City Council and every agency, board, commission, department in the city. For the reasons mentioned by many of you including John and Pamela and Allan I'm sort of passionate about open government and restore some of the honesty and trust in our government. And so I'm happy to serve on this commission and look forward to working together.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Is there anything specifically – one question I had is the Charter Review Commission that's taking place right now and I don't know if you thought about this or anybody's thought about this but that's sort of a once in a decade opportunity to get under the hood of the most important document in the city. Is there anything anybody sees or Jeff do you see that might come out of this that we should start talking about earlier in the process that might be useful for that? Not to put you on the spot –

MR. PADWA: Nothing is sort of clicking on the –

MS. WOOD: I would just say we could enhance the openness to the public of what the City Charter Review even is. I mean, it's sort of something that people ask me questions about and I ask other people questions and people read some stuff in the paper or they here something on WRNI but they don't really know what even is the City Charter Review and how they can play a part in it. So, that might be one thing we could even do is make sure that's really central, not just on the website, but getting out a press release that's more user friendly.

MR. DICECCO: We actually have a form on the web that people can submit their –

MR. PADWA: I think more of a PR campaign to communicate –

MS. STETSON: Yeah, I've gotten some –

MS. WOOD: That's what I – driving people to the site, right. Not to discuss it now but I think to flag it as something on our agenda that that is something we can do.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, I'm just thinking that needs to wrap up in the next couple of months and if there's anything people think, oh, you know, if this were in the Charter it would enhance what we're trying to do in terms of transparency, you know, we should think about that too. I, to be honest, haven't really looked at the City Charter and thinking through those –

MS. STETSON: The City Charter is on our website. You can access it –

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- I mean I've read portions I've had to deal with but I've never gone through it and thought oh, in terms of transparency how does this compare and so forth.

MR. ROCHA: In terms of participation, like public comment, I'm not sure how much of that is really in the Charter.

CHAIRMAN MARION: I mean a lot of that is governed by State Law and so, you know, I'm not an expert on how the two –

MS. WOOD: You can make it a homework assignment –

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah.

MS. WOOD: -- that we can go and take a look at it.

CHAIRMAN MARION: As people think about what we're doing. Elaine.

MS. COLLINS: I'm Elaine Collins and I'm the Vice-President on the Board of the West Broadway Neighborhood Association. And also a supporter of clean, open government and transparency and that it does. But, also as some other people here remarked also making it accessible and welcoming for public comment and public opinion. I'm not sure exactly, I'm not an IT person, how that can be accomplished.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, I mean that's one of the things we're going to have to manage, I think, is we have non IT people that like me press that start button every morning on the computer and the –

MS. COLLINS: I know there are things that I'd like to see but can we do it.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah.

MS. COLLINS: We shall see.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Thank you.

MS. WOOD: Hi I'm Karina Wood and I'm a citizen, resident of Providence appointed by the Mayor to the Commission. Last year I was the Executive Director of a non profit citizens group called Better Providence and one of the things that we advocated for was a Commission like this. So, I'm really happy to be a part of it and see it happen and I'm very grateful to the Mayor and people here at City Hall and the City Council who think it's a great idea as well and made this Commission happen. A couple of quick things to add is I think technology is very

important and I think the website is an obvious vehicle for a lot of this improvement but I wouldn't say that it's the only place or that technological means are the only things. I mean, there's some very kind of concrete physical, environmental things like coming into City Hall as a citizen and there's not really a sign telling you City Council Chambers are here and if you are new in the building this is where you will find meetings taking place or sometimes when you go to the meetings there's no chairs for you to sit it and you don't really feel like you belong. And there's all those kind of things too about opening up the house of government which is the people's house to the people and maybe even parking passes for, you know, like when you go and get your parking validated when you've been to a store, how about getting your parking validated if you come to do business in City Hall or something. And then just one other thing to mention straight off, I love the idea of looking at the Charter Review but school information, I mean, there's a lot of where I've intersected with government as a parent with two kids in the Providence public schools and they have been for the last seven years. It's so difficult to find out information just so – from the, you know, the city's – the website for the Providence public schools has definitely improved.

MR. DICECCO: Well, actually they do their own managing of –

MS. WOOD: But I'm telling you we have to have an impact on the public schools. I mean, that is where so many residents need to get better information and need to know how to be engaged. People have to find out from each other even like which school is my first choice school, how do I find out, when is registration. It's really, it's improved but it still hasn't so I'll leave it at that for now.

CHAIRMAN MARION: I'm making no promises, but parking problems I don't think any of us want it. We have a member of the public.

MS. RIOJAS: I'm Sandy Riojas, I'm actually an educator – and I'm also a community liaison and I'm also with Operation Clean Government, I'm on their board – also of interest to me.

ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRPERSON

CHAIRMAN MARION: So, the next item on the agenda is election of a Vice-Chairperson. Anyone feel compelled at all to –

MS. STETSON: You want to call for nominations, open the floor.

CHAIRMAN MARION: I open the floor for nominations.

MR. PADWA: I nominate Karina.

MS. WOOD: I don't know about that. What is the length of this Commission? Is it three months?

MS. STETSON: June 30th.

CHAIRMAN MARION: That's the –

MS. STETSON: We have extended the deadline to June 30th.

MS. CARDILLO: 2012?

MS. STETSON: Yes. You need a second.

MR. PADWA: Any other nominations?

MS. STETSON: Any other nominations?

CHAIRMAN MARION: Are there any other nominations? Or a second?

MR. TEAR: I would second that if Karina's willing to serve.

MS. WOOD: All right, thank you.

Chairman Marion calls for nominations for Vice-Chairperson of the committee.

Mr. Jeffrey Padwa nominates Ms. Karina Wood and the nomination is seconded by Mr. Allan Tear.

Chairman Marion calls for further nominations and there being none, the Clerk is directed to cast one ballot for Ms. Karina Wood as Vice-Chairwoman.

CHAIRMAN MARION: All in favor?

COMMISSION: Ayes.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Any opposed? Hearing none, Karina is now the Vice-Chairwoman of the Open Providence –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Great – parking validated.

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- Transparency and Accountability and is delegated to work on parking.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: It's the least of my concerns, really but I'm just throwing it out there.

MS. CARDILLO: It sounds like accessibility is also a common theme here. So, I mean is that something that we –

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, I think this is what we make –

MS. CARDILLO: -- will be mindful about including –

DISCUSSION RELATIVE TO UPCOMING MEETINGS AND SCHEDULE

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- yeah, this is what we make of it. You know, so I'm mindful of the fact that there are people in the City of Providence who don't have access to technology. And so if we only focus on technology we aren't talking about them.

MS. CARDILLO: Right.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Or we think about sort of this, you know, the levels of technology people have access to. There are many people who have access to a cell phone but it might not be an web enabled cell phone so a text message like the School Department uses might be a handy thing for them for meeting agendas or

something. And so if we think about sort of the continuum of access to technology that might be a helpful frame for us to put this in.

MR. TEAR: I have a question related to that scope question. So, are we taking our scope at all from the original resolution? Or are we kind of defining scope as whatever we think it should be? There's kind of these three points towards the bottom of the Resolution that appear to outline what the Council originally intended by putting the Commission together. I'm not arguing for one or the other but I just was reading through this and it seems to place some guidance on what they thought we were going to accomplish.

CHAIRMAN MARION: I mean, I'll be honest with you I did not author this. I saw it in advance and said, you know, it looks kind of reasonable. I don't think we need to be bound strictly by this. Do we?

MS. STETSON: Pretty much, yes.

CHAIRMAN MARION: You think so.

MS. STETSON: This is a Resolution that was created by the Council asking us to comply with this and come up with recommendations.

MS. COLLINS: Within ninety days of the –

MS. STETSON: Within ninety days.

MS. COLLINS: -- the November Resolution.

MS. STETSON: Yes.

CHAIRMAN MARION: But, I mean –

MR. PADWA: Well, that was extended. And the language is it says that we should –

MS. STETSON: We should, yeah.

MR. PADWA: -- but that doesn't mean that we're mandated –

MS. COLLINS: Well, also I mean it's a suggestion.

MR. PADWA: -- that gives us some, yes, that gives us some flexibility.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: It seems to be worded in some things are specific but some things are general. And I, you know, I mean one thing I'd like to see is a live streaming flash televisation of City Council meetings and Finance Committee meetings and those words are not explicitly written in here but I think you could trigger those things by interpreting, you know, some of this.

MR. DICECCO: We've explored --

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Using technology to get more stuff out to the people. I mean that could be visually.

MR. DICECCO: -- there's been talk of streaming --

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah.

MR. DICECCO: -- it becomes a money -- it's \$5,000.00 to get a video stream from -- we're using a free one and we did two video streams of the Mayor's last speeches and I don't know if you watched them but there are these annoying commercials that overlay and if you refresh the page you've gotta sit through another thirty second commercial and it's about \$5,000.00.

MR. TEAR: So, without diving into a solution by solution thing though it would be good for us to figure out some way that we can bound the conversation or how we'd like to approach the conversation.

MR. SILVERIA: Are we limited to these three items?

MS. STETSON: Well, I think that like what Jeff said some of these things just say should, that you should. We have to take a look at each one of them.

MR. SILVERIA: But I mean can we do things in addition to this? So, if we're also going to explore physical access.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah, like we should do these and can we suggest others. I think it doesn't say that we can't, right?

MS. STETSON: Well, it's saying that you should hold a public hearing too. So, they are saying, you know, come forth with your findings, that you should report your findings and recommendations to establish the City of Providence an open and accountable government. So, if it means that you have to go a little further than what this Resolution has and you have other ideas I'm sure that they would be welcome by the Council.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Well, has the Council officially changed the finish date?

MR. PADWA: Yeah.

MS. STETSON: Yes.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Oh, the –

MS. STETSON: That was done at last Thursday's meeting. The Mayor has them so I couldn't give you a copy of them, he has to sign them.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Okay. I was just thinking if they hadn't then if people wanted to add another bullet into that.

MS. STETSON: But Mr. Chairman, we can go back –

CHAIRMAN MARION: Right, we can –

MS. STETSON: -- we can go back to Council and ask to change the Resolution or make changes to it too. That's not a problem.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Okay.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: In terms of feasibility of budget is it, I mean, I could have a proposal on this, I mean, are we as a Commission going to come up with our best ideas in an ideal budget situation? Or as we come up with ideas are we going to then say well this would be great to do but we know it's not going to be possible with the budget we have? So therefore, I mean are we being asked to do a feasibility kind of assessment as we go along or are we here to do the

ideas and put the great ideas forward and then let the people in office say what's affordable?

MS. COLLINS: Well, we're also supposed to find funding.

MR. TEAR: Yeah.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: We are, yeah. Identify sources of funding, right.

MS. CARDILO: I suggest that we not shoot the moon.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: So, we, yeah, we don't go crazy and we try and cost things out or come up with innovative suggestions. I mean, for instance, with the live streaming or the televising, you know, we could say should we search for a sponsor to do such a thing for the City. You know, and propose it knowing that these things are expensive.

MR. SILVERIA: The thing is, my opinion is so important to find those best practices and shoot for the moon and find these things but take that into consideration saying we can't do all of this, maybe we can't do the ten things that we think are reasonable, perhaps we can do three and there's a couple of free tools that we could use to get some of the other ones. But, I think it might still be worthwhile to put these things forward to show should other funding become available.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Right, yeah. And see how other cities have afforded it and what they've done.

MS. STETSON: And if I could make just a suggestion, Mr. Chairman, it's asking for a public hearing and I would suggest that we probably hold a public hearing as soon as possible so we can get the input from the public so you get some ideas to see what they're looking at, what their suggestions are and you can move forward with that.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, I thought in conjunction with also soliciting perhaps online for people who cannot come to a public hearing. So, I don't know if there's a possibility we can use something similar to what the Charter Review has set up. And even, I guess it was at the state level, redistricting they had a form too, I don't think they had it in the city.

MR. DICECCO: Well, we got that Ward –

MS. STETSON: The Ward Boundaries.

MR. DICECCO: -- Ward Boundaries.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, but does that possibility – is it within our power to request that –

MS. STETSON: These guys would do that.

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- there be something on the website inviting –

MR. DICECCO: Yeah, I can do that.

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- comment?

MS. COLLINS: Yeah and we can put out a press release.

MR. TEAR: One thing that worked really well for us during the on caucus was using, we used two tools; we used something called User Voice which essentially allows people to submit and rank ideas, vote them up and down in a public, online environment. And two, as we used, actually what we used funnily enough was we used Google Voice which provides admittedly imperfect transcriptions. But we published an idea line number which then allowed people that didn't have web access to call the idea line and submit their ideas and then we would have somebody transcribe the idea and put it into User Voice. These are things that come up through the phone which showed up in User Voice and could be voted on as well. And that provided a way for people that regardless of whether you had web access or not to put an idea into the system and have it publicly seen.

MR. DICECCO: Well, you know, I want to – you know how you mentioned something about technology and people that don't have. I was recently in a meeting with the Fire Department and they want to accept candidates to go to the training facility and the only way you can apply is online, they don't want any human interaction at all. If you don't have a computer their answer is go to the library or go to a fire station. So, as much as I'm in agreement with you and people without whether they're senior citizens in a nursing home without a laptop or this is some of the things that we're getting is they had, you know, 1,400 people lined up around the building and in order to address all these people and you're waiting in that line and you get there and you forgot your drivers license so, you know, basically you wasted your time. And this was right from the Fire Department, the Commissioner in the meeting, you were there and just online is what they want to do. Which I'm fine with it but is it limiting, well, I mean, really to go to the Fire Academy you wouldn't be a senior citizen in a nursing home without a laptop. But, you know, is it limiting the exposure, are we preventing people or candidates from being able to apply, I don't know. I don't know the stipulations, I'm just relaying some of the things that I'm encountering.

CHAIRMAN MARION: And that's helpful, I think we do need to really be cognizant of people's, you know, limitations and how we can use technology to overcome them when we can.

MR. TEAR: Yeah, you need to, I think you also need to acknowledge that in person municipal hearings are practically as limiting for different reasons as online forums. And that they are usually hard to figure out where they are, they're difficult to get to, they often occur during work hours. So, you end up with the same self selection of people who show up at in person forums as you do with, you know, it's a different self selection but there is definitely a selection bias –

CHAIRMAN MARION: Oh, yeah, I mean –

MR. TEAR: -- for those meetings as well.

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- so if you create a system whereby those who have the technology can participate through the technology, those who don't or choose not to can participate in person. You don't take one away and add another, you layer, I think.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: And there's the difference between giving out information to the public and having the public participate in making decisions. So, for instance the text messages or the connect-ed phone messages that you get as a public school parent in Providence which are great, that's information coming in to you as a tax payer or as a, you know, a parent telling you important things you need to know. And that's great but it comes through the phone or a text, as well as, online. Whereas, participation, yeah that's a whole other ball of wax and points well taken there.

MR. DICECCO: The School Department is in the process, I guess they have their website is some proprietary software that someone developed and they are in the process of adding more functionality where teachers can do, you know, homework assignment for the kids. But, I met with them once but I don't manage that site at all.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: That's something we could look into.

MR. DICECCO: And as far as the video I did look into fees. Right now we have a guy that volunteers and does the recordings. So, you know, as far as funds and what we're spending we're not spending anything because there is no money to spend and we're doing what we can with, you know, the free use stream. And you know we've – there's been talk of streaming the City Council meetings and I've had ideas and mount a video camera in there and we've talked about it a little

bit. But, it does come down to, you know, funds, buying the equipment, assigning someone to do it, you know record. So, there are things it's not that we haven't considered –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Oh, no.

MR. DICECCO: -- and maybe this Commission will get the ball rolling.

MS. STETSON: But there are other things, if I may, there are and staying on that topic because I have been to many different places and looked into this extensively as far as video streaming and one of the things that how I look at it is the video streaming wouldn't just benefit the City Council, it could benefit the Mayor's office and the Board of Licenses and everybody in the city. And it could fall under one umbrella and probably be a lot less expensive than if I bought one, you bought one, this one, and you know everybody bought it. We – out to the public too where the public can see it immediately that we may not be able to do that here, you know.

MR. DICECCO: Well, actually I have PEMA close to paying for it but we would like to share that and use the stream. But PEMA, he gets government funding, federal funds –

MS. CARDILLO: Emergency Management.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Oh, okay.

MS. CARDILLO: Providence Emergency Management.

MR. DICECCO: -- he has a press room set up with the live feed and we're using the same stream that the Mayor is using. And, you know, it's –

MS. STETSON: So, why can't we advance on that and just bring out to the Council –

MR. DICECCO: Well, the problem is, is that the free account has a lot of advertising, it's a thirty second commercial before the public gets to see one. So,

the Mayor may be speaking and a new user logs on to view the Mayor's speech they have to sit through a thirty second commercial. And then about every three or five minutes there's a ten second commercial and it just goes right over the Mayor's speech. So, to get rid of that it's \$499.00 a month. And depending on, it has to do with hours, if you have ten users viewing a one hour presentation that's a hundred hours and you have a set amount of hours and they up-sell you it as to your usage. But I have researched it, it is possible, if it were me and my money then we would have it, but it's not so.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Well, before we get into nuts and bolts does anybody have any thoughts about how we're going to sort of organize and conduct our business so we can make the greatest use of everybody's time?

MS. COLLINS: It would be interesting if we made our process transparent.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yes.

MR. DICECCO: Allan said he's got some experience with other municipalities and the technologies they're using that are doing some of these things.

MR. TEAR: Yes. Yeah, and certainly that's one of the things that's asked for in the Resolution is, you know, looking at best practices in other places. So, I would imagine that's one of the things we need to look at is –

MS. COLLINS: Other cities, similar Commissions to ours have actual websites showing the –.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Many of them have gone that far.

MR. TEAR: But it seems like there's a couple of things asked for in the Resolution. So, you know, one is assessment of the current state all right. Which seems like if we were to think about how we might break this group down into smaller groups to get things done we might think about one group that does an

assessment of the current state, one group that looks at best practices in other places, one group that looks at, you know, maybe new, well maybe one group that looks at trying to harness public engagement and how is that public engagement. All right. And maybe those all provide the inputs for us then to have a more formed conversation about, okay, if you have some priorities from the public and you see what other places are doing and we have a sense of what the current state is you can put those things together and then make a decision about with all that stuff where should we focus –

MS. CARDILLO: Right, prioritize.

MR. TEAR: -- the recommendations about what to do.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: And what about funding sources maybe, identifying funding sources.

MS. COLLINS: We should probably all look for them.

MR. TEAR: Yeah, I wonder whether we almost need to go into kind of to shorter cycles. One of an assessment cycle and then another one of a recommendations cycle where the recommendation cycle involves looking at funding sources because you don't want to look at funding sources in the abstract –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: You kind of have to know what you're doing –

MR. TEAR: -- if we don't know what it is we're doing first.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah, yeah. Right, good.

CHAIRMAN MARION: I nominate –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: I like that.

MR. DICECCO: Karina, you mentioned sponsor.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Uh huh.

MR. DICECCO: And my only thought with that would be we're getting blasted with ads from You Stream, if we had a sponsor that was going to blast ads

—

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: I'm thinking more like a college —

MR. DICECCO: Ah huh.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: -- you know, like a university who might want to donate things, that kind of a sponsor. Like do things for us.

MR. TEAR: Or Cox Business, right.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Instead of money.

MR. TEAR: Who has a particular —

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah, Cox.

MR. TEAR: -- you know, they have effort around using their network to enable things like this.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Right.

MR. TEAR: And if it were more of a sponsorship that said sponsored by Cox Business it's a different kind of overall —

MS. CARDILLO: Yeah, in exchange for a small commercial —

MR. TEAR: Yeah, but we have to know what we're asking for first.

MS. CARDILLO: Right, yeah, yeah.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Any other thoughts about how we conduct ourselves?

MR. TEAR: How do people feel about splitting into smaller groups to try and accomplish these things?

MR. PADWA: That makes a lot of sense.

MS. STETSON: I think that's a good idea.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: That sounds good.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, I just don't know if anybody feels we need to first complete sort of the task of what ideas we're bringing to the table or if we should assign the sub-groups to try to ferret that out of people who aren't in the sub-groups necessarily? I, the only, I worry that if we break into teams too early then you, you know, before everyone knows who knows what. But, that said we do have a short timeframe and we do need to kind of get moving and it's probably easier to move as small groups.

MS. CARDILLO: How regularly are we meeting because –

CHAIRMAN MARION: So we haven't set regular meetings.

MS. CARDILLO: Okay.

CHAIRMAN MARION: I thought we would talk about that tonight, the sub-group issue and really sort of the public, the first order of business being sort of the public engagement part of it, including how we're going to advertise this better. I didn't take any ownership over that yet and there are a lot of good ways to seek public input that we haven't sought yet. So, if we did break into groups that thought about, if I get this right, the three areas being sort of the assessment of the current state of things, the best practices in other places and then the public engagement part. Who would feel comfortable working on the assessment?

MR. DICECCO: Well, I think I'd be good at that because I know what we have already.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Anyone else on the assessment piece?

MR. ROCHA: I can get involved as well.

CHAIRMAN MARION: And then the best practices part.

MR. TEAR: I'd be willing to do that.

MS. CARDILLO: I want to be on it too.

MR. LUCHT: Me too.

MR. ROCHA: Are we able to go on both?

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: As much time as you'd like to put in I guess.

MS. COLLINS: I'd like to help on that too.

MS. STETSON: What would the best practices do though? I'm just curious as to –

MR. TEAR: I think we'd be looking at other examples of cities that are further along than us and find out how they approached it and what priorities they chose to you, what underlying technologies they chose, how they launched it, how they engaged the public.

MS. STETSON: Because that might be something I would be interested in, I don't know how many people are on that.

CHAIRMAN MARION: I mean that's the biggest one but it's –

MR. DICECCO: -- it's Boston it's – there's a lot of them.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, I've heard great things about Boston but I don't really know –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: It sounds like a lot of the idea generation of what we want will naturally flow from the study of the best practices. So, it sound to me totally fine if it's one of the bigger sub-groups because it's very necessary.

MR. TEAR: Although, I wouldn't underestimate the effort of putting together anything decent on public engagement.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Oh God, no, no, that's right.

MR. TEAR: Because –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: They're not counter –

MR. TEAR: -- in terms of, yeah, the sort of – the best practices defines what we could do, the public engagement should define what we should do, you know.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Mmm hmm, mmm hmm.

CHAIRMAN MARION: And then the public engagement piece.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: I can help on that, yeah.

MS. COLLINS: I can.

MR. DICECCO: Now, I curious –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Who else was that?

MR. DICECCO: -- Karina –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: So, me, Elaine and who else? John.

MR. DICECCO: -- when you talk about public and public interaction personally I have some issues, personal issues, with some of the things that are going on with social media for example. Personally I don't think the public should be allowed to post anything to the Mayor's webpage, the Facebook page, only because you need to monitor to it. And you get people that aren't as respectful and proper. And you know if you have an enraged or an outraged constituent that posts something –

MR. ROCHA: It starts to look like the ProJo comments.

MR. DICECCO: -- horrible you need to be able to monitor that. And you know so even like the website sometimes I've been asked, oh, can we put a comment form on that page and you know, no, because, you know, we can't because the people aren't as polite as you would think they should be. And I'm wondering is that what you're talking about? Like, should Providence –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: I mean, it could be, it could be. I think, my understanding of doing this public engagement piece is to organize, like this sub-group will look into the public hearing that we've been tasked to do in this

Resolution as part of our work here as the Commission. Organize a good public hearing, publicize it, make sure it's well organized and let people really get to put forward their views and if they can't come in person to that forum can there be an avenue for them to put their ideas through online, through different social medias, through the website, whatever. I mean, and then hear what people have to say and then our Commission will take those ideas and do something with it.

MR. DICECCO: Okay.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: You know, I mean it would be great if we could produce one of those, Allan you know what this is called and I always get the name wrong, is it like one of those cloud diagrams or something?

MR. TEAR: Tag cloud, yeah.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: The what?

MR. TEAR: A tag cloud.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: A tag cloud thing, you know, where you see the words or the phrases that are the most popular or the most asked for are the biggest and then it's just a nice, visual representation that then we can put out onto the website or in other places. And, yeah, so that is exactly the kind of question that we would want the public to address.

MR. DICECCO: Well, I can understand a meeting where we ask the public for their input.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah, that's what we're talking about.

MR. DICECCO: But, you know, on a day to day basis on, you know, the various – like right now we probably have ten departments that have Facebook pages and there's no control at all. I don't know who's posting what, I don't know if there information is valid, I don't know if their translation is correct. And God forbid there are people that are posting, you know, vulgar comments and, you

know, we have no control. How do we hide this? How do we delete it? How do we, you know –

CHAIRMAN MARION: But that's for looking at best practices.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah, sure.

CHAIRMAN MARION: So, I –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: I think it's a good point.

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- worked with the Assembly a little bit on this and there are states and municipalities that have developed policies, social media policies for legislators but also for official pages. So, it's classic don't reinvent the wheel, there are places that have effectively used social media that way without having to invest resources in monitoring these sorts of things. You know, there are spectacular failures too, the House of Representatives did a little experiment a few weeks ago asking a question about a bill and an interest group grabbed hold of it and just ran. And they had to shut it down because they didn't expect it to be used that way. But, you know, I think we all recognize it's evolving really quickly but there are best practices out there for that sort of thing too. I don't think we should reject any ideas out of hand, you know, I – my personal experience working with college interns who that's – they don't answer email, the answer Facebook, and so if that's how they're going to interact with their government that's how their government it going to have to interact with them. It's not – it doesn't make it any easier but it sure does help. That's how I met Nelson, through the Common Cause Facebook page.

MR. ROCHA: So, it allowed me to post myself. So, I think people are gaining a maturity on how to – especially when you see their face and I think people are held accountable more too. So, personally I think –

MR. DICECCO: Well, I know I see some posts on ProJo and I see some of the public's comments whether –

MS. COLLINS: They allow anonymous comments.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, it's an anonymous platform.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: The anonymous thing is part of the problem.

MR. PADWA: I think Facebook and these other social media are an important way for us to communicate with each other and have conversations. And some people will yell and scream but that doesn't mean other people can't have conversations. And I think if there are best practices ways to set rules and enforce them I think that encourages a civil conversation. So, I wouldn't rule out having it just because you've experienced some people who are shouting and yelling and using vulgar language.

MR. DICECCO: Yeah, well I mean they were at the Mayor –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: People do that in person too.

MR. DICECCO: -- you know and –

CHAIRMAN MARION: I'm sure there are platforms better than others. You know, and, you know, Facebook I think you're not supposed to be allowed to be anonymous on Facebook although people somehow manage to be and some people aren't deterred by the lack of anonymity. But, some of these problems are bigger than the people sitting around this table. But, you know, we should also I think listen not just to the public but there are people, some of the people you talked about, in government who control some of the content and we should seek their opinions too. You know, the press, David Ortiz should definitely be consulted about some of these things and likewise the people at the City Council

and so forth who work on the press and the public interaction. You know, I think we've seen, you know, some really spectacular uses of technology to engage the public, particularly in campaigns that can translate really well into, you know, when you have to govern after the campaign is over. So, do people feel – I would love to walk away from this though with a sense of where we're going in the immediate future. Do people, would people feel comfortable trying to set a date for the next meeting? Or do people want to be ambitious and try to set out, like the Charter Review Commission did, almost a whole timeline so that we can –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: I have a suggesting. How, seeing that it's three months, how would people, and I'm just brainstorming, how would it be if we met one week you meet in your teams and then the following week we meet as a body? And we do it like that so like next, it doesn't have to be on a Monday, but whenever your sub-group wants to meet next week you meet as your sub-group and then the following Monday, if that's a good day for us all, we meet back as a full group and we do it every other week like that until we don't – I don't know it's just a thought. I'm trying to – because we can't meet monthly it's not enough, weekly seems to be a lot to meet as a Commission and to meet in your sub-groups. I don't know. Anybody else?

MR. ROCHA: I'm pretty organized online our planning sessions online.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, I mean we're constrained a little bit online on what we can do as a body because of the, you know, we can't meet as a body online. I don't believe.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: You mean as a full Commission –

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: -- needs to meet in person I think we do. But your sub-group could.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Now I'm a little unclear, could a sub-group meet –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Because we have to –

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- is it a public meeting –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: -- open meetings –

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- if it's a sub-group?

MS. STETSON: As long as there's not a quorum of that committee, right?

As long as there's not a quorum.

CHAIRMAN MARION: I'm not trying to evade I'm just trying to –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah, see what we can do.

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- you know, can people go and get a cup of coffee to, or four people to talk about what they're working on without –

MS. STETSON: But, Jeff, we're not voting on anything though. Is that, I guess maybe what we need to do we probably need to talk to Amy and get –

MR. PADWA: Yeah and understand –

MS. STETSON: -- some –

MR. PADWA: -- our open meeting act obligations.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Right, right.

MR. TEAR: Yeah, when we did this, admittedly it was a different process, when we did for selecting the Economic Development Director.

MR. PADWA: It was a different situation.

MR. TEAR: It was a different situation, okay. So –

MS. STETSON: Yeah, so I think that it might – I think that we may have a little more flexibility but we probably should just get something in writing from –

MR. TEAR: I mean, it would be ideal to be able to arrange our work and especially our sub-groups online. And –

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, I just want to be careful –

MR. TEAR: -- those don't need to necessarily need to be, I mean, we could probably find a way to make all that information public, you know, while it's being worked on.

MR. PADWA: I'll get an answer for that, I can do that.

MS. STETSON: Yeah, one of the --

MR. PADWA: Do we have everybody's email?

MS. STETSON: Hopefully everybody put information on that, we passed something around.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Does everybody have their email on here?

MR. PADWA: Just having said that it then occurs to me that sending an email to everybody and have anybody responding is then a meeting and a violation of the open meetings law. So, I can certainly send an email out and warn everybody not to reply all.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Oh, okay.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, that seems --

MR. ROCHA: Can you use something like a Google groups for email?

MS. STETSON: But it may be the same thing though too.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, you have to be careful because if meet, if you basically engage in a discussion as a group then you've violated the open meetings act.

MS. STETSON: Yeah.

CHAIRMAN MARION: So, to Karina's idea of sort of alternating weeks does that --

MR. TEAR: I like the idea.

CHAIRMAN MARION: The one caveat being, you know, and my schedule stinks because I go to the Assembly three nights a week, but we can't just do

Monday nights because there are citizens who can't come to a public meeting on a Monday night and there should be something maybe at least once during the day for the public to have input. You know, I think that's what the Charter Review Commission did, they're having some after five –

MS. STETSON: They're alternating, they're having one night meeting, one day meeting.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, and I know that work's really hard especially with public members who have day jobs.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah, I couldn't come during the day.

CHAIRMAN MARION: And we just have to admit that we all can't, we all can't attend but particularly for taking public input I would love to see at least one of those or more during the day and outside of City Hall. You know at a community center or something that might be, people might feel a little –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: You mean just these regular meetings is what we're talking about right?

CHAIRMAN MARION: I'm talking about the, yeah, the larger meeting to take public –

MR. TEAR: You're talking about public input.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Oh, absolutely.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: I'm just meaning let's set up a schedule for this Commission before we leave that to your earlier point, like and see what –

CHAIRMAN MARION: But this Commission might sit as a whole to take public input is all I'm suggesting. It might not be left just to the sub-group to take the public input.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: No, we're going to bring a recommendation of how we're going to do this.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Okay.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Oh gosh, yeah. So, like we'll say –

MS. COLLINS: We'll set up a –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: -- there should be a public hearing and it should be at such and such a school or this place or we should have two of them or one should be in Spanish or, you know, we're going to bring the recommendations here.

MS. COLLINS: And since it's just the three of us we can all figure it out.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah.

MS. COLLINS: Like that it can be –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Exactly.

MS. COLLINS: We'll figure that out.

MR. ROCHA: Shooting for the moon, you know, the perfect setting would be video, filming the meetings and the public engaging during our meeting, tweeting perhaps, giving their ideas as well, if we shoot there. But we are about open government so I think we are about shooting the moon as well.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah, we have to walk the walk and talk the talk.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, the sub-group can work on the discreet issues about, you know – somebody to come video tape it and what do we do with that. But, so two weeks from tonight do you want to try to have a meeting of the full group?

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Mmm hmm.

MS. CARDILLO: I would think yeah.

MS. COLLINS: I think Monday's a good one.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah, are Monday's good, I mean, are the people who didn't come tonight not here because it's a Monday?

MS. COLLINS: Two people are out of town.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Two people are out of town –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Okay.

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- and they'll be back in two weeks.

MR. TEAR: What was that April 2nd?

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: And I guess Monday is good for you John because it's not a – House night.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, I can always skip an occasional one.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Aha, okay. I mean, I'm fine –

CHAIRMAN MARION: April 2nd.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: -- meeting on another night too if it's a better – if we want to alternate –

CHAIRMAN MARION: Monday seems pretty good for, I mean, the people in –

MS. STETSON: Would you be meeting here?

CHAIRMAN MARION: If it's not one to take public input, again, you know the public can come but if it's not sort of the public forum one –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: No, the next one shouldn't be.

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- we'll meet here and then we'll pick locations after that. Is that okay?

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah.

MS. STETSON: Yes, it's available, yes, I did –

MS. COLLINS: 5:30 again?

CHAIRMAN MARION: So, April 2nd.

MS. STETSON: And at what time?

CHAIRMAN MARION: 5:30 again. And then we'll find out from Jeff it, sort of the protocol for meeting in sub-groups. And hopefully the sub-groups can meet in the interim to start organizing themselves to some of these tasks.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Right. And the sub-groups bring your first reports to –

MR. PADWA: I'll just send out a note to everybody.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Okay.

MR. PADWA: Hopefully tomorrow saying that we can or can't do that or how we do that.

MR. TEAR: If you just bcc everybody then you will automatically enable them not to reply.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Yeah, yeah –

CHAIRMAN MARION: Good point.

MR. PADWA: I'll do that.

CHAIRMAN MARION: The, for the group that's sort of best practices I know when Matt Jerzyk asked me to do this he talked a lot about having traveled to Boston, I think, so I would encourage that group to try to engage him in the out set. And then the other thing was the Smarter Cities, and Pamela we didn't get a chance to connect today.

MS. CARDILLO: Right.

CHAIRMAN MARION: I'm sorry. But, I know that that came in and that might be a little bit of something that we can build on without having to reinvent here.

MS. CARDILLO: Yes.

CHAIRMAN MARION: So, hopefully the –

MS. CARDILLO: There are some recommendations in there.

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- the assessment group and the best practices –

MS. CARDILLO: Right.

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- could look at that. The people who are engaged in that and have read that how do you feel about sort of that model of looking at things? It was sort of interview stakeholders, you know, produce sort of the classic consultant report.

MS. CARDILLO: But recommendations and priorities were set and kind of marching, not marching suggestions were delivered. I think that was a great model, I mean, I participated in that as did Jim I think and –

CHAIRMAN MARION: Has everybody looked at that in some way or another?

MR. TEAR: Not –

MS. CARDILLO: I can –

MR. SILVERIA: Is it available?

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, it's on the city's website. I forget where I found it, it is someplace on the city's website.

MR. DICECCO: I never heard of it, what is it?

MS. CARDILLO: I can send everyone a copy.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Oh, okay. So, IBM's Smarter Cities.

MR. DICECCO: Oh.

CHAIRMAN MARION: We won that contest to have the consultants come in –

MR. DICECCO: Yeah, I think Eliza just posted that. That was an IBM contest they –

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, I can find it, the link. I found it someplace. And it seemed like, you know, it was narrow it's just about largely about land use management but some of the lessons in there about how the city departments work in silos and you need to cross the silos, the language seemed directly applicable with what we're charged with doing. So, there's no need really to redo that. Okay, so –

MR. ROCHA: One more thing, are we able to use collaboration tools? I know we'll find out about how we can engage online and stuff. But, like, for example, working documents should we use some collaboration tools on that or are we going to be able –

MR. PADWA: Like Google Doc?

MR. ROCHA: Hmm?

MR. PADWA: Like Google Doc.

MR. ROCHA: Google Doc, exactly.

MR. PADWA: Yeah, I don't think there's any problem doing that.

MR. ROCHA: Start out there and share it with each other.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Because you're not –

MR. PADWA: One of the, as the lawyer for the city, one of the things that I'm mindful is that there's gotta be a space for some deliberation. And so a Google Doc kind of a document would be, I think, appropriate.

MR. DICECCO: Well I have a city Google Docs account, I could create a group, I mean –

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, I mean when you're working in a Google Doc you're not doing it all at once, you know, you're not in a conversation – the document.

MR. ROCHA: Yeah, and we can also create a Wiki if we wanted to organize our data, I mean, the information what we worked on as well. Google sites is another tool.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Maybe that our little sub-group about public engagement -. Does anyone have any other points or thoughts? I thought 7:00 o'clock would be a good time to try to get out of here by. Any other thoughts about how we work?

MR. TEAR: Are we going to - so we have a proto splitting up of the into the three groups, are we going to try and have some conversation in the intervening week among those sub-groups?

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah.

MR. PADWA: Subject to my confirming tomorrow that that's appropriate.

MR. TEAR: All right, okay.

CHAIRMAN MARION: And even if it needs to be posted then -

MR. PADWA: Then we'll just post it.

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- they could post it. So, you could -

MS. STETSON: Because one of the things, if I could just help you out a little bit, one of the committees that was formed, a study committee that was formed what they did was they actually created three different, within that group they created three sub-committees. And those anytime that they met they had an agenda, you know, they put together an agenda and the agenda was posted. So, they had an agenda that said, you know, that we are meeting at this date and this time and this is what we're going to be discussing. And those groups broke up and went on their own and did what they had to do and then they all reported back. It was a three month or a one month period they came back to the committee as a

group and they collectively got all their ideas together and together they were able to come up with their report to the Council so that worked out for them.

MR. PADWA: So, in other words if we're going to be open meeting, you know, to walk the walk we could certainly give notice to all the sub committee meetings.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah, how long I know the law is forty-eight hours but how far ahead of that forty-eight hours do you need to know?

MR. PADWA: I guess there was a question about whether we could do it online.

MR. TEAR: Well, I – this seems like an interesting opportunity for the city to investigate whether there could be a better supporting of – bring – of supporting open meetings but having them conform to kind of 21st century ideas. Like the fact that we can have a meeting online and it's possible and it's actually more transparent than having a meeting in a City Council Chamber at, you know, 10:00 a.m. when nobody can come there. That's actually less open than having something that's online and the stuff is archived and available to someone even if they didn't show up at the meeting.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: They can see it all.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah. We're bound largely though by constraints of state law.

MS. STETSON: State law, yeah.

CHAIRMAN MARION: And we could recommend changes to state law, you know, although that's not in our mandate here.

MS. STETSON: Well, we could – that might be a good suggestion though to be able to, you know, open up the state laws a little bit so that, you know, groups like this here could have some, you know, active discussion and not tie their hands.

CHAIRMAN MARION: And maybe the best practices group can as you examine other constituents, locations think about that. You know – Massachusetts somehow – does the Massachusetts open meetings act allow them greater flexibility that way. I don't know to be quite honest but a group like Common Cause could champion it up at the State House.

MR. TEAR: The other question in my mind is are we allowed to go take a road trip? No, I mean if we find the people in Boston to go talk to is there any reason why we can't, you know, four of us go jump in a car and drive up there.

MS. STETSON: Boston's a great place to go because they're all paperless and they did a little bit at a time and it's very interesting, it's a big city.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: I would hope that there are no constraints because we need to do that. I mean I would say that's essential to this Committee's –

CHAIRMAN MARION: So, the sub-committees I think Jeff's point is right and the sub-committee should post meetings of the sub-committees. So, the only really big remaining question then is can the sub-committee members have an email conversation that isn't considered an open meeting.

MS. STETSON: The sub-committee, if the sub-committee were not part of the quorum of the actual committee they can do that, you know, if you keep it into smaller groups they can discuss those things amongst themselves.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Okay.

MS. STETSON: And like I said they would come back to the full committee, when you have a full quorum and you can – everybody can talk about what you've done in an open session.

MR. TEAR: There is a, with respect to the previous topic, there is a Smarter Cities Summary posted on you tube for the Smarter Cities Report, if you want to start with the –

MS. CARDILLO: I have the actual, yeah, I have the actual document that I can – that I'll be happy to email everyone.

MS. COLLINS: Can we just go over our sub-committees?

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yes.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: I've got you, me and John for –

CHAIRMAN MARION: Now, for the three sub-committees, the one last task, I'll just ask can somebody take ownership over organizing the first discussion among the sub-committees? So, we have a sub-committee –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Like a point person for each one.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Yeah. So, the assessment committee I have Jeff, Paul and Nelson. And does one of you want to take ownership over –

MR. ROCHA: Like do the minutes, is that what you mean?

CHAIRMAN MARION: No, no like make sure –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Just call the meeting, make sure it happens.

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- make sure it happens.

MR. ROCHA: Oh.

CHAIRMAN MARION: So, that three people don't sit around and go oh, I thought you were going to do it, I thought you were going to do it.

MR. ROCHA: I usually volunteer on that too.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Okay. And then the bigger one is Allan, Nelson, James, Elaine, Jim and Anna –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: That's the best practices, right?

CHAIRMAN MARION: -- do you want to?

MR. TEAR: Sure.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Okay. And then the three of us, one of us – I'll do it.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Okay.

CHAIRMAN MARION: Okay, any other business anyone has? Otherwise we'll –

MR. PADWA: Move to adjourn.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: All right. And you're emailing us all tomorrow, Jeff, is that right?

MR. PADWA: Yeah, with respect to whether the sub-groups can meet online –

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN WOOD: Just giving us some guidance.

MR. PADWA: Yeah. I think the answer to that is going to be yes because it's not a quorum so. It's not a quorum of the larger group but I'll just verify that.

MS. STETSON: Yes.

CHAIRMAN MARION: And I'll volunteer for one other task, I'll reach out to the members who weren't here about what sub-groups they might want to participate with. Okay, great.

MS. MASTROIANNI: I need a second.

MR. SILVERIA: Second.

ADJOURNMENT: On the motion of Mr. Padwa, Seconded by Mr. Silveria it is voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:03 o'clock P.M.

City Clerk

Assistant Clerk