

# City of Las Vegas

1700 N. Grand Avenue Las Vegas, NM 87701

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**MAYOR DAVID ROMERO**

**CITY OF LAS VEGAS  
CHARTER COMMISSION MEETING  
January 6, 2025-Monday-3:00 p.m.  
City Chambers  
1700 N. Grand Avenue  
Las Vegas, NM 87701**

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## **AGENDA**

City Charter Commission Meetings are  
Available via YouTube

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNGDVGRRAL0qVevel5JYeRw?view\\_as=subscriber](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNGDVGRRAL0qVevel5JYeRw?view_as=subscriber)

- I. CALL TO ORDER**
- II. ROLL CALL**
- III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (November 19<sup>th</sup> and December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024)**
- VI. PUBLIC INPUT (comments limited to topics on current agenda; not to exceed 3 minutes per person and individuals must sign up at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to meeting.)**
- VII. DISCUSSION**
  1. Discussion/Review of all sections of the City of Las Vegas Municipal Charter.
- VIII. NEW BUSINESS**
  1. Possible Direction to City Attorney Zamora on discussion items.
- IX. ADJOURN**

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David Ulibarri  
Councilor Ward I

Michael Montoya  
Councilor Ward 2

Barbara Casey  
Councilor Ward 3

Marvin Martinez  
Councilor Ward 4

**ATTENTION PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES:** The meeting room and facilities are accessible to persons with mobility disabilities. If you plan to attend the meeting and will need an auxiliary aid or service, please contact the City Clerk's Office prior to the meeting so that arrangements may be made.

**ATTENTION PERSONS ATTENDING COUNCIL MEETING:** By entering the County Chambers you consent to photography, audio recording, video recording and its/their use for inclusion on the City of Las Vegas website and to be broadcast on YouTube.

**NOTE:** A final agenda will be posted 72 hours prior to the meeting. Copies of the Agenda may be obtained from Utilities, Office of the City Clerk, 1700 N. Grand Avenue, Las Vegas, NM 87701 or the City's website at [www.lasvegasnm.gov](http://www.lasvegasnm.gov)

Minutes of the City of Las Vegas Charter Commission held on November 19, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

**Call to Order**

Chairman Matt Martinez called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

**Roll Call**

**Present**

Matt Martinez  
Meridith Britt  
Joseph Cruz  
Ashley Arellanes  
Joseph Dominguez

**Absent**

Lauren Martinez  
Benito Pacheco

**Also Present**

Geno Zamora, City Counsel  
Casandra Fresquez, City Clerk

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Approval of the Agenda**

Chairman Matt Martinez clarified that under other items for discussion, he would like to discuss the Charter Commission meeting time. Commissioner Joseph Cruz made a motion to approve the agenda with the clarification. Commissioner Meredith Britt seconded the motion. All were in favor.

**Approval of Minutes (October 2, 2024)**

Commissioner Meredit Britt made a motion to approve the minutes of October 2, 2024. Commissioner Joseph Cruz seconded the motion. All were in favor.

**Public Input**

City Clerk Casandra Fresquez advised there was no public input.

**Introduction of Contracted Attorney, Mr. Geno Zamora**

Chairman Martinez thanked the Mayor for contracting an attorney to assist the Charter Commission and introduced Mr. Geno Zamora. Attorney Zamara stated he was there to support the Commission in their work and gave a brief background of his experience throughout his career.

## **Discussion**

### **1. Term of Charter Commission**

City Clerk Fresquez advised that on October 9, 2024, the City Council approved the term of the Charter Commission through April 30, 2025. City Clerk Fresquez stated that the reason for the April 30, 2025 deadline was to give the Mayor and Council sufficient time to review the Charter Commission's recommendations prior to the County and Secretary of State's deadlines for the Ballot questions.

Commissioner Cruz asked if the date could be extended should they need more time. City Clerk Fresquez advised that the Mayor and Council could do so if they determined it was necessary.

### **2. Other items for discussion**

Chairman Martinez stated that he would like to have two meetings a month to ensure the Commission had enough time to go through the entire city charter and asked Attorney Zamora if they could do so.

Attorney Zamora stated that the Commission could in fact schedule two meetings a month as there was nothing that limits the discretion of the Commission to have the meetings they deem necessary.

There was much discussion regarding the meeting dates from January 2025 through April 2025. Commissioner Ashley Arellanes requested the meetings start an hour earlier and Attorney Zamora stated that would be best considering his drive to and from Santa Fe during the winter months.

The Charter Commission recommended looking at meetings on the first and fourth Mondays of the month at 3:00 p.m. and placing the item on the agenda for consideration.

City Clerk Fresquez stated that she would look at the Calendar and advise what dates would be available as there are several other Boards, Committees and Commissions that meet on a monthly basis and she would bring back the available dates at the next Charter Commission meeting on December 4, 2024.

The Charter Commission had a discussion on how to best review the various sections of the City Charter and inquired if they could have a joint meeting with the Governing Body.

Mayor Romero stated that he does want to have a joint meeting with the Charter Commission.

Chairman Martinez suggested the joint meeting be held at the end of February 2025.

## **New Business**

### 1. Guidance/Direction from City Attorney Zamora in regard to the City Charter

City Attorney Zamora stated that he's found that it's best to start by giving the Charter Commission a baseline presentation of who the Charter Commission is and what is their role, the entirety of the Charter Commission and charter process look like. Attorney Zamora gave a power point presentation with an overview of the following topics: Charter Review process, how the Commission is made up, Charter amendments and what the limitations are with the information placed within the charter and what exists in the charter today.

City Attorney Zamora advised that in putting a presentation together for the Governing Body earlier in the year he found some contradictions in the city charter and would bring those findings at a future commission meeting.

City Attorney Zamora stated that he will do his best as counsel to the Commission to in no way impose any public policy, he will bring legal advice, experience and guidance to avoid obstacles but he is not a decision maker.

City Attorney Zamora continued to give an overview of Section 1.05. Charter Review and Amendment, Charter Limitations to include; Section 1.01. C. Municipal Powers and the Municipal Charter Act NMSA Section 3-15-1 et seq., and all the Charter Components. City Attorney Zamora also provided some examples for each section.

The Charter Commission brought up the importance of updating city ordinances so that they are consistent with the city charter and asked if that could possibly be added within the charter.

City Attorney Zamora advised that if that is what the Charter Commission decides, language could be added within certain sections of the Charter for example; under the Governing Body authority to do an annual or biannual review of ordinances or under Boards, Commissions and advisory Committees, have an ordinance advisory committee.

Commissioner Arellanes asked if there would be a quorum at an event outside of a charter commission meeting which violates the open meetings act, how would that be handled. City Attorney Zamora explained that a notice of a potential quorum could be posted although not required by the open meetings act, however is a good practice and asked City Clerk Fresquez if she issues notices of a potential quorum. City Clerk Fresquez stated that she does post such notices for the Governing Body when necessary. City Attorney Zamora explained that a quorum can also take place through email, text or by phone. City Attorney Zamora further explained and gave examples of a rolling quorum.

There was much discussion regarding how specific the agenda should be in regards to discussion versus action items. Attorney Zamora advised that the agenda should state enough information that when someone reads it, they can determine if the item is something that they are interested in.

Commissioner Britt asked Attorney Zamora if it would be a good idea to look at other charters within the state to see what they have. Attorney Zamora advised that the Commission could look at other charter communities and see if there is anything that's interesting in their charters as they would be a good resource especially those communities that are similar in size.

Chairman Martinez asked Mayor Romero if there was anything he wanted to add. Mayor Romero stated as the Commission goes through the process, to keep in mind how the Governing Body members can more efficiently run government. Mayor Romero further stated to also look at the conflicting information between the charter, ordinances and state statute.

**Adjourn**

Chairman Martinez entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Ashley Arrellanes moved to adjourn. Commissioner Meredith Britt seconded the motion.

Charter Commission meeting adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

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Chairman Matt Martinez

Attest:

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Casandra Fresquez, City Clerk

Minutes of the City of Las Vegas Charter Commission held on December 4, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

**Call to Order**

Chairman Matt Martinez called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

**Roll Call**

**Present**

Matt Martinez  
Meridith Britt  
Ashley Arellanes  
Joseph Dominguez

**Absent**

Lauren Martinez  
Benito Pacheco- Excused  
Joseph Cruz - Excused

**Also Present**

Geno Zamora, City Attorney  
Casandra Fresquez, City Clerk

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Approval of the Agenda**

Chairman Matt Martinez entertained a motion for approval of the agenda. Commissioner Meredith Britt made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Joseph Dominguez seconded the motion. All were in favor.

**Public Input**

There was no public input.

**Discussion**

City Attorney Zamora recommended that the Commission should divide up the Charter into sections amongst the members and meet in non quorums, in groups of three or fewer so that the membership is engaged in the process. Those groups could then report back at a future meeting.

Chairman Martinez stated that he would like the present commission members to review the first Article and then possibly look at breaking up into groups during a future meeting when more of the commission members were present. Chairman Martinez also suggested that all the sections of the Charter be reviewed first and then voted on at the end of their term when all sections have been thoroughly discussed and then present the recommendations to the City Council.

Commissioner Britt asked if the commission should be looking for discrepancies, illegal things and contradictions and City Attorney Zamora stated yes, all of the above and legal compliance is something he will be reviewing. City Attorney Zamora also asked the commissioners to look for inconsistencies which are important.

City Clerk Fresquez asked if City Attorney Zamora was aware of any other communities within the state that have a Mayor Council form of government that allow the Mayor to vote other than when there is a tie.

City Attorney Zamora stated he could not think of any, however Santa Fe has given it some consideration.

Chairman Martinez stated that he would like to hear City Clerk Fresquez' perspective on any of the issues within the charter that have come up throughout the years and would appreciate those being pointed out to the commission.

The commission reviewed Article I Section 1.01 and City Attorney Zamora explained what the Section is stating and the differences between Home rule and those communities that follow state statute.

There was discussion and questions regarding the language in the various sections in Article 1 and Attorney Zamora explained that the sections were correct and answered all of the commission's questions.

There was discussion on Administrative directives and if that authority should be included and clarified in the city charter. Also discussed were the general order for the police department and whether that may be included in the charter as well.

There was discussion on Article V regarding structure and consistency of all the sections and that the language in both the charter and city ordinance reflect the same.

There was discussion of Section 1.05, A. Charter Review regarding the difference of using Governing Body or City Council when referring to voting. City Attorney Zamora stated that the commission should be mindful of the various sections that speak to the Council voting versus the Governing Body voting which would include the Mayor as he is part of the Governing Body. However in another section the charter states the Mayor only votes when there is a tie. City Attorney Zamora advised those are the areas that need to be clarified. Attorney Zamora stated that there needs to be a place identified that states a vote of the majority of the Governing Body means that the Council votes and the Mayor votes only when there is a tie or the Mayor votes, whichever way the commission would like to phrase it.

City Attorney Zamora further clarified that when the language states majority of the Council and there is a tie, then the vote of the Council is not a majority, a majority would be three council members.



There was discussion on why it would be beneficial to include the mayor in all votes and what the current practice is, which is the Mayor only voting if there is a tie.

There was discussion on Article II, Section 2.01 Corporate Authority. The commission reviewed and it was stated that Section 2.01 B was prohibited by state law. The commission further discussed the options to recommend the current four districts with four Councilors and the Mayor or recommend four districts with eight Councilors, two in each district and a Mayor or possibly five districts which include constitutional mandates which require equal representation. The commission also brought up the cost of having additional council members and that the Governing Body should be well compensated to draw in more interested candidates.

There was some discussion about the entire charter going on the ballot as a revised charter as per the direction of the Governing Body rather than separate amendments on the ballot which was what was done in the past.

City Attorney Zamora stated that he would need to look further into that as he recalls the revisions to a charter being presented as separate amendments. City Attorney Zamora also mentioned that possibly there could be ballot questions for certain amendments, for instance compensation separate from the rest of the charter.

There was discussion on the decrease in population in the City of Las Vegas as per the 2020 census, the issues behind the decrease and what can be done to increase the growth of the community.

Chairman Martinez requested to end discussion at Section 2.01. City Attorney Zamora stated he could draft the section with the current structure which is four council members and a draft with eight council members for the commission's consideration. The commission asked to include compensation in the draft.

### **New Business**

1. Request approval of proposed meeting dates and time (3:00 p.m.) for upcoming Charter Commission Meetings from January through April, 2025.
  - Monday, January 6, 2025 and Wednesday, January 22, 2025
  - Wednesday, February 5, 2025 and Wednesday, February 26, 2025
  - Wednesday, March 5, 2025 and Wednesday, March 26, 2025
  - Wednesday, April 2, 2025 and Wednesday, April 23, 2025

City Clerk Fresquez advised that the dates on the agenda were the only available dates as Mondays were taken by other Boards and Commissions.

Chairman Martinez asked the commissioners if the proposed dates and time would work for them and those commissioners present stated yes the time and dates proposed would work for them.

Chairman Martinez also asked City Clerk Fresquez to schedule additional alternative dates from March 2025 through April 2025. City Clerk Fresquez advised that the only other available days would be Thursdays.

Chairman Martinez entertained a motion to approve the time and dates proposed by City Clerk Fresquez.

Commissioner Britt moved to approve the proposed time and dates. Commissioner Dominguez seconded the motion. All were in favor.

2. Possible Direction to City Attorney Zamora on discussion items.

City Attorney Zamora distributed copies to the Commission of a powerpoint presentation he gave to the Governing Body and the Department Directors on "Effective Governance for the City of Las Vegas" for their review.

Chairman Martinez asked if questions could be sent to City Attorney Zamora. City Attorney Zamora recommended that questions be sent to City Clerk Fresquez and she will forward them to him.

City Clerk Fresquez suggested that the Commission be given an assignment to read sections of the Charter and bring back questions and notes which would be more effective.

Chairman Martinez requested that Sections 2 and 3 be reviewed by the next Charter Commission meeting to include notes and questions.

Chairman Martinez entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Arellanes moved to adjourn. Commissioner Dominguez seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

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Chairman Matt Martinez

Attest:

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Casandra Fresquez, City Clerk