

**FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY
GROUP EXAMINING RALEIGH CITY COUNCIL TERMS,
COMPENSATION AND VOTER ENGAGEMENT**

**Presented to Raleigh City Council
September 7, 2021**

ASSIGNMENT

Raleigh has operated under the same electoral framework since 1973. But on January 7, 2020, a group of citizens petitioned the Raleigh City Council to appoint a study group to consider modernizing how the City elects and compensates the Mayor and City Council. City Council accepted the petition and finalized the appointment of a 10-member study group on November 4, 2020. Consistent with the citizen petition, City Council directed the Study Group to study the following questions:

1. Should Raleigh City Councilors serve two-year or four-year terms?
2. Should Raleigh City Councilors serve staggered terms?
3. Should Raleigh City Councilor compensation be adjusted?
4. Are there ways to increase voter engagement and participation in local elections?
5. Should the size of Raleigh City Council be increased?

STUDY GROUP MEMBERS

Eric Braun (Chair)
Justin Sutton (Vice Chair)
Harvey Schmitt (Secretary)
Eugene Weeks
Diana Powell
Ashton Smith
Nervahna Crew
Catherine Lawson
Beth Trahos
Robbie Rikard

GROUND RULES

The Study Group adopted the following Ground Rules and Mutual Expectations to guide its deliberations:

1. **Be Respectful:** The conversations we will have during our work will involve tradeoffs and policy choices that may prompt disagreements and differing viewpoints. When this happens, we should all assume that each person is acting in good faith and with the best intentions.
2. **Be Patient:** If someone else is speaking, please let that person finish their thought/comment. We want to hear everyone's ideas and understand the diverse perspectives of the Study Group. This is especially true in the age of virtual meetings and COVID-19.
3. **Be Prepared:** In order to be efficient and effective, it is important for members to review the agenda and backup materials in advance of each meeting.

- 4. Be present:** This is the first time in more than 40 years that the City has looked at how City Council is structured. The Committee’s work could have a significant impact on how the City is governed for decades to come so it is important for each of us to be flexible and willing to make the time necessary to attend meetings. Understanding the importance of attending Committee meetings, if any Committee member misses a total of three meetings without being excused by the Chair, that member shall resign from the Study Group.

PROCESS AND CONSENSUS

Given the polarized nature of politics at all levels of government, the Study Group decided to make only recommendations to City Council that received unanimous support. This report reflects that decision and so each recommendation has the unanimous support of the Study Group. This is a testament to the commitment, thoughtfulness and mutual respect Study Group members demonstrated throughout the process.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

All Study Group meetings were conducted virtually due to COVID-19. And while all meetings were open to the public, the Study Group did not allow the public to participate during meetings. That decision was made to be efficient with staff time and resources and to ensure that the Study Group completed its work in a timely manner.

The Study Group did establish a unique email address (Councilstudygroup@raleighnc.gov) for citizens to provide feedback and ask questions. The Study Group received approximately 13 questions or comments from residents. Most were addressed during Study Group meetings so that all interested residents had access to the same information. A more comprehensive community engagement process is appropriate as City Council considers adopting the recommendations contained in this report.

METHODOLOGY¹

The Study Group used a hybrid approach for its data gathering and research since a citizen study committee appointed by the Charlotte City Council recently completed a similar project. That citizen group delivered its report to the Charlotte City Council on November 2, 2020.² Because their report was current and would facilitate the delivery of a timelier report to the Raleigh City Council, the Study Group used data from the Charlotte report to supplement its independent research.

¹ All data and research referenced in this Report, along with all meeting agendas, back up materials and minutes can be found in the City’s BoardDocs Portal under the “Study Group on City Council Terms” tab:

<https://go.boarddocs.com/nc/raleigh/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=A4EMF95B00BF#> .

Additionally, all Study Group meetings were recorded and can be found by searching “Study Group” on the City’s YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/cityofraleigh/featured>

² [Charlotte Study Committee Final Report](#)

RECOMMENDATIONS

To stay true to its guiding principle, the Study Group discussed and debated each issue until reaching consensus. But summarizing the collective viewpoints of 10 people shared over the course of 15 meetings and more than 30 hours of discussion is impossible. So, while this report briefly explains the rationale supporting each recommendation, City Council and the public should review the complete meeting record for a thorough understanding of the process and rationale of the Study Group and how it reached consensus. All Study Group meeting agendas, backup materials and approved meeting minutes can be found [here](#). The Study Group’s master data set may be found [here](#). In addition, video replays of all Study Group meetings can be viewed on the City’s [YouTube Channel](#) by searching “Study Committee.”

The need to facilitate a governing environment that encourages City Councilors to “think strategically while acting locally” was a primary theme that emerged during the deliberative process. In other words, the Study Group’s recommendations attempt to strike the proper balance between City Council’s need to maintain strategic focus on Raleigh’s future and the political pressure to address constituent concerns and localized issues. Therefore, the Study Group recommends City Council evaluate the recommendations in this Report as an integrated whole rather than as a set of independent recommendations. Doing so will help future City Councils govern more effectively as the social and fiscal complexity of the City grows in the coming decades.

Recommendation 1:

City Council should transition from 2-year to 4-year terms.

Extending the time between elections enables City Councilors to better manage the complexities of governing Raleigh. The City has experienced phenomenal growth since 1972 when its population was about 128,000 spread across 47 square miles. According to the 2020 Census, Raleigh has about 467,665³ people spread across 147 square miles.⁴ This robust growth is likely to continue for decades to come. Similarly, the City’s physical size will expand through annexations as developers in the urbanizing parts of Wake County connect new developments to Raleigh’s water, sewer, and transportation systems in the coming years. In fact, there are approximately 62 square miles of land available for annexation into Raleigh’s city limits. The planning required to extend water and sewer lines, not to mention upgrading the transportation system to serve these areas is a complex task.⁵

Non-staggered 2-year election cycles are simply too short given that it can take over a year for ordinances to go from City Council authorization through drafting and review by the Planning Commission to adoption and implementation. This extended timeline leaves little opportunity for citizens to evaluate the impact of those ordinances between elections. Similarly, planning and

³ Stradling R. and Raynor, D. “Triangle, Charlotte Led Growth in North Carolina Since 2010, Census Shows.” *The News and Observer*, 15 August 2021 p. A1

⁴ The Interim Report delivered to City Council on June 15, 2021, erroneously stated that Raleigh was currently 211 square miles.

⁵ There are approximately 29 square miles within the City’s Urban Services Area which is designated as the area most likely to receive public utility extensions. See [2019 Raleigh Data Book p. 29](#).

constructing public infrastructure requires long lead times and significant funding from tax and/or user fee increases. Governing effectively through this complexity demands a level of persistent attention and strategic focus that is not achievable on 2-year election cycles dominated by localized issues and relentless pressure to campaign and fundraise.

Recommendation 2:

City Council should adopt staggered terms whereby all District City Councilors are elected on one side of the cycle and the Mayor and all At-Large City Councilors are elected on the other side of the cycle.

While longer terms will help City Council maintain heightened focus on strategic initiatives, staggering is important because it preserves the ability of voters to signal dissatisfaction and/or the need for course corrections every two years. Staggering also eliminates the possibility of an entire City Council being defeated in a single election. Ultimately, 4-year staggered terms establish political stability that is more conducive to policy development and effective implementation.

Recommendation 3:

Increase total compensation for the Mayor and City Council.

The demands of holding elected office changed dramatically over the last 20 years. Since electronic communication and social media are now ubiquitous, citizens have access to and demand frequent attention from elected officials. This means City Councilors are increasingly reliant on technology and spend more time on constituent service. Acknowledging this, the Study Group recommends increasing total compensation to better align with the time and resources it takes to serve effectively in a council-manager city. Additionally, higher compensation reduces the financial burden of serving on City Council and thus lowers the financial barrier for diverse, non-traditional candidates.

Methodology and Rationale:

To ensure City Councilors are compensated fairly for the time, effort and sacrifice required to serve the City effectively, the Study Group analyzed compensation data for 15 North Carolina peer jurisdictions and 25 others from across the country. Compensation among mayor-council cities was inconsistent, but generally higher than North Carolina cities and counties. Compensation is generally higher (particularly for mayors) in large mayor-council cities because mayoral responsibilities resemble those of a CEO.⁶ City council compensation varied more than mayoral compensation among mayor-council cities depending on the specific legal structure and mayoral preferences.⁷ In contrast, compensation among elected officials in the council-manager cities was typically lower and fairly consistent across the country. Further, it generally tracked population and operating budget, but was generally lower in council-manager cities because mayors and city councilors are expressly part-time since city managers run the city's day-to-day operations.

⁶ See https://ballotpedia.org/Mayor-council_government

⁷ <https://www.nlc.org/resource/cities-101-mayoral-powers/>

Given Raleigh’s current population, operating budget and growth trajectory, the Study Group agreed that the Mayor and City Council’s current total compensation lags its peers in North Carolina and across the country. However, there was no specific compensation data, demographic data, or other compelling reasons to tie Raleigh’s total compensation to cities outside of North Carolina. Accordingly, the Study Group recommends benchmarking against the three North Carolina jurisdictions paying the highest annual stipends⁸ to their elected officials and using the same process to develop total compensation recommendations for Mayor and City Council. The resulting annual stipends for Raleigh were determined by averaging the three highest annual stipends paid by North Carolina jurisdictions.⁹ Expense allowances were then adjusted to ensure total compensation for Raleigh elected officials fell within the range established by the benchmark jurisdictions.

Considering the factors, the Study Group recommends compensating the Mayor and City Councilors as follows:

For Mayor:

Annual Mayor stipend:	\$36,511
Annual Expense Allowance:	\$6,000
Annual Car Allowance:	\$2,400
Annual Technology Allowance:	<u>\$1,000</u>
TOTAL COMPENSATION:	\$45,911

For City Councilors:

Annual City Council Stipend:	\$29,848
Annual Expense Allowance:	\$4,000
Annual Car Allowance:	\$2,400
Annual Technology Allowance:	<u>\$1,000</u>
TOTAL COMPENSATION:	\$37,248

An interesting issue surfaced while considering the compensation issue. Few jurisdictions provide for regular adjustments to elected official compensation. Those that do apply some component of the adjustments recommended for employee compensation established during the annual budgeting process. The Study Group was unable to identify any jurisdiction with a process for regularly reviewing the adequacy of elected official total compensation. To address this deficiency, the Study Group recommends reviewing total compensation at regular intervals to ensure future compensation aligns equitably with the unique and evolving demands and sacrifices required of part-time legislators. To maintain equitable compensation, City Council should conduct a similar review every four *non-election* years.

⁸ “Stipend” is used rather than salary in this context to acknowledge that elected officials are not City employees.

⁹ Most compensation data considered by the Study Group is from FY20-21 except for Charlotte. Because its FY 21-22 budget proposes substantial increases to the total compensation for elected officials, the Study Group agreed to use the proposed annual stipends because the proposed increases moved Charlotte to the top jurisdiction in terms of both its annual stipend and total compensation.

Recommendation 4:

City Council should move elections to even years to spur greater voter turnout.¹⁰

Voter turnout is generally low in local elections, particularly for those held in odd years. Based on data comparing voter turnout for elections held in odd years and those in even years, the Study Group determined that holding local elections on even years is a particularly effective and efficient way to generate higher turnout. In fact, the data suggests that moving elections to even years could boost voter turnout by anywhere from three to eight times.¹¹ Higher voter turnout; however, does not necessarily equate to a more informed electorate.

Recommendation 5:

City Council should direct staff to develop and implement a comprehensive voter engagement program.

While increasing voter turnout in local elections is important, it is equally important that voters are knowledgeable about the candidates and issues when voting. Because Raleigh will continue growing rapidly for the foreseeable future, City Council faces difficult policy choices among fierce competition for constrained resources. To ensure that future City Council decisions reflect the needs and desires of the broader community, Raleigh needs an active, engaged, diverse electorate. To that end, the Study Group explored ways to enhance voter engagement by reducing barriers to participation and increasing access to objective information about candidates, issues, and the voting process.

Historically, Raleigh has not prioritized voter outreach and engagement. And while the Study Group acknowledges the sensitivity and potential for concern, the City is uniquely positioned to help residents become active and informed voters. This is particularly true given Raleigh's renewed emphasis on diversity, equity & inclusion, and community engagement. After careful consideration, the Study Group determined that the benefits of using the City's resources to develop and implement a comprehensive voter engagement program outweigh any associated risks.

Specifically, the Study Group recommends the City:

1. Reallocate the anticipated savings from shifting elections to even years to offset the costs of developing and implementing a voter engagement program.¹²
2. Include voter engagement as part of the City's broader diversity, equity & inclusion, and community engagement strategy.

¹⁰ Voter turnout for Raleigh City Council elections will substantially increase given the recent enactment of SB 722. That law delayed Raleigh's next City Council election to November 2022 and permanently moved future City Council elections to even years to coincide with national elections

¹¹ See June 9, 2021, Study Group Meeting Minutes in Appendix B.

¹² See August 11, 2021, Study Group Meeting Minutes in Appendix B; see also [Raleigh Adopted Budget FY 2021-22 at p. 137.](#)

3. Direct the City Manager to assign responsibility for developing and implementing a voter engagement plan to a specific department within the City administration.
4. Develop a voter resource guide with a unique and prominent landing page on the City's web site and cross-reference the voter engagement tab throughout the City's website and other electronic communications tailored to where in the election cycle the City is at any given time.
5. Create a standard process for using GovDelivery to distribute a non-partisan voter information tied to various deadlines and important dates related to each local election. This will also indirectly benefit the City by driving more traffic to its website.
6. Add voter engagement to the City's social media platforms by creating a Twitter handle for Raleigh voter information and use GovDelivery and other City communication channels to "cross-pollinate" users of GovDelivery to seed the social media channels.
7. Develop and distribute a voter guide modeled on those used for statewide judicial races pursuant to the North Carolina General State 163-278.69. Distribution channels should include the U.S. Postal Service and appropriate electronic means.
8. Promote and continue free bus transportation on Election Day.
9. Enhance the existing interactive City Council map with additional information like polling places for voters and other related information tied to a voter's address. Also, include the link to this interactive map wherever the City places the general voter information page on the City's website.
10. Develop a PSA campaign in coordination with community groups and local businesses to encourage citizens to register and vote.
11. Use the Public Utilities Department's billing newsletter, the Parks and Recreation newsletter and other official City newsletters to inform voters and/or direct them to important voter information. Using City newsletters is important because it increases the chances of reaching residents lacking Internet service.

The Study Group debated whether and how the City could use its local access TV channel to support voter engagement. While there was support for using local access TV to promote voter engagement and education, there were countervailing concerns about whether the City could ensure both actual and perceived objectivity while doing so. Despite these reservations, the Study Group encourages the City to consider using local access TV to televise candidate forums and to educate and inform voters about local elections. In addition to being an effective way to deliver election information across the City, it may reach citizens who do not have Internet service.

Recommendation 6:

City Council should increase its size to 9 by adding 1 district seat.

Determining the ideal size and mix of district and at-large city council seats was the most challenging issue the Study Group addressed for several reasons. There is no clear pattern or best practice within North Carolina or nationally suggesting an ideal city council profile. City council size varies across the country regardless of population. Similarly, there is no identifiable pattern or best practice pointing to an ideal mix of district and at-large city council seats for a city like Raleigh. As a result, the Study Group focused on striking the proper balance between ensuring that City Council remains responsive to the needs of current citizens, while acting strategically in making policy decisions shaping Raleigh's future.

Initially, the Study Group addressed the merits of shifting City Council from an even number to an odd number in general and without reference to a specific number of City Councilors. Although City Council has operated with eight members for decades, Raleigh's growth has increased the complexity of the issues facing City Council and the intensity of debate around those issues. Moving to an odd number will ensure efficient and effective decision-making by avoiding potential deadlocks that could make adapting to changing circumstances more difficult. Only two the North Carolina jurisdictions and one the national council-manager peer jurisdictions reviewed by the Study Group operated with an even number of elected officials.¹³

The Study Group also considered how the size of City Council might complicate the professional administration of the City. Raleigh is a complex organization with a \$1.07 billion budget and approximately 4,344 full-time employees and thousands of additional part-time employees.¹⁴ Every City Councilor needs time and staff assistance to gain a working knowledge of City operations, challenges and needs. So, to varying degrees, each additional City Councilor requires time and attention from the professional staff, particularly the City Manager. The Study Group was sensitive to the possibility that managing the City could become unwieldy and inefficient if too many seats are added to City Council. It is worth noting that of the fifteen North Carolina peer jurisdictions studied, the average governing body had 7.9 members and the nine national council-manager jurisdictions had 10.4 members.¹⁵

In terms of direct impact on constituents, any increase in the number of district seats will have a negligible impact on the constituent-per district ratio over time as the City's population grows. Similarly, the physical size of districts will grow as new developments are annexed into the City. And although the physical expansion may slow in coming years, there are approximately 62 additional square miles that could be annexed into the City over time.¹⁶ As these areas are annexed into the City, they are added to City Council districts and then eventually rebalanced after each Census. Just like constituents per City Councilor, the physical size of each City Council district will expand over time. Thus, the immediate benefits of smaller districts with

¹³ See <https://cityofraleigh0drupal.blob.core.usgovcloudapi.net/drupal-prod/COR14/council-group-study-spreadsheet.xlsx>

¹⁴ See page 51 of the [City's FY 2022 adopted budget](#)

¹⁵ See <https://cityofraleigh0drupal.blob.core.usgovcloudapi.net/drupal-prod/COR14/council-group-study-spreadsheet.xlsx>

¹⁶ See page 29 of the [2019 Raleigh Data Book](#)

fewer people flowing from the addition of district seats will dissipate over time. This is true even if City Council chooses to expand the number of City Councilors to the State mandated cap of twelve. At the same time, a district City Council seat has a lower financial barrier to entry and is more likely to attract a more diverse candidate pool than adding an at-large seat, similar to increasing City Council total compensation.

Based on these factors, the Study Group recommends expanding City Council to nine by adding one district representative. Adding a district City Councilor reduces the ratio of residents to City Councilor slightly, avoids the systemic risk of voting deadlocks, lowers the financial barrier to entry and reduces the potential inefficiencies of an overly large City Council. At the same time, retaining two At-large City Councilors, along with the Mayor, preserves sufficient City-wide representation to maintain City Council's strategic focus.

CONCLUSION

Organizational change is fundamentally important for any dynamic environment, particularly for a City Council confronting the complexities associated with accelerating economic expansion and rapid population growth. And what worked for Raleigh over the last 48 years is not likely to serve residents as well going forward. Anticipating the need for cities to evolve and adapt over time, the North Carolina General Assembly established a statutory process that authorizes cities to make fundamental changes to the way they are governed and how they operate.¹⁷ As explained in this Report, to secure the brightest future for all Raleigh residents, City Council should use this statutory process to:

1. Transition from 2-year to 4-year terms;
2. Adopt staggered terms whereby all District City Councilors are elected on one side of the cycle and the Mayor and all At-Large City Councilors are elected on the other side of the cycle;
3. Increase total compensation for the Mayor and City Council;
4. Direct staff to develop and implement a comprehensive voter engagement program; *and*
5. Increase City Council size nine members by adding an additional district seat.

¹⁷ See North Carolina General Statutes 160A-101 through 160A-111

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
1	RALEIGH CITY COUNCIL GROUP STUDY PROJECT: National Master Data Set															
2																
3	City/State	Mayor Current Annual Stipend	Mayor Annual Expense Allowance	Mayor Annual Auto Allowance	Mayor Annual Technology Allowance	Mayor Total Compensation	Council Member Current Annual Stipend	Council Member Annual Expense Allowance	Council Member Annual Auto Allowance	Council Member Annual Technology Allowance	Council Member Total Compensation	City Population	Size of Governing Body (excluding Mayor/Chair)	Number of At-Large Members	Number of District Representatives	Average Size of Districts
4	Council-Manager															
5	Raleigh, North Carolina	\$24,550	\$1,200	\$1,800	\$ -	\$27,550	\$18,021	\$ -	\$1,200	\$504	\$19,725	474,708	7	2	5	94,942
6	Arlington, Texas*	\$36,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$36,000	\$28,800	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$28,800	398,854	8	0	8	49,857
7	Austin, Texas	**	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	**	\$79,934	\$ -	\$5,400	\$ -	\$85,334	978,908	10	10	0	n/a
8	Charlotte, North Carolina*	\$27,196	\$10,000	\$4,800	\$3,100	\$45,096	\$21,015	\$5,800	\$4,000	\$3,100	\$33,915	885,708	11	4	7	126,530
9	Dallas, Texas*	\$80,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$80,000	\$60,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$60,000	1,343,573	14	0	14	95,970
10	El Paso, Texas	\$45,300	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$45,300	\$45,300	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$45,300	679,813	8	0	8	84,977
11	Fort Worth, Texas	\$29,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$29,000	\$25,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$25,000	909,585	8	0	8	113,698
12	Kansas City, Missouri	\$123,156				\$123,156	\$61,569				\$61,569	495,327	12	6	6	82,555
13	Las Vegas, Nevada	\$167,556	\$32,338	\$ -	\$ -	\$199,894	\$48,121	\$17,256	\$ -	\$ -	\$48,121	651,319	6	0	6	108,553
14	Long Beach, California*	\$152,689	\$ -	\$5,400	\$960	\$159,049	\$38,177	\$ -	\$5,400	\$960	\$44,537	462,628	9	0	9	51,403
15	Virginia Beach, Virginia	\$30,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$30,000	\$28,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$28,000	449,974	10	3	7	64,282
16	Mayor-Council															
17	Atlanta, Georgia*	\$184,300	\$65,000	\$36,313	\$ -	\$285,613	\$60,300	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$60,300	506,811	15	3	12	42,234
18	Chicago, Illinois	\$216,210	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$216,210	\$115,442	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$115,442	2,716,450	50	0	50	54,329
19	Columbus, Ohio*	\$190,299	\$ -	\$4,740	\$ -	\$195,039	\$57,138	\$ -	\$4,740	\$ -	\$61,878	898,553	7	7	0	n/a
20	Denver, Colorado*	\$175,520	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$175,520	\$105,527	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$105,527	727,211	13	2	11	66,110
21	Houston, Texas*	\$236,188	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$236,188	\$62,972	\$ -	\$4,200	\$ -	\$67,172	2,320,268	16	5	11	210,933
22	Indianapolis, Indiana*	\$99,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$99,000	\$11,400	\$3,936	\$ -	\$ -	\$15,336	876,384	25	0	25	35,055
23	Louisville, Kentucky*	\$121,551	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$121,551	\$48,791	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$48,791	621,349	26	0	26	23,898
24	Memphis, Tennessee*	\$185,052	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$185,052	\$31,493	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$31,493	651,073	13	6	7	93,010
25	Minneapolis, Minnesota*	\$126,528				\$126,528	\$98,685				\$98,685	429,606	13	0	13	33,047
26	Nashville, Tennessee*	\$180,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$180,000	\$23,100	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$23,100	670,820	40	5	35	19,166
27	Omaha, Nebraska*	\$106,445	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$106,445	\$38,888	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$38,888	478,192	7	0	7	68,313
28	Portland, Oregon*	\$143,666	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$143,666	\$125,694	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$125,694	654,741	4	4	0	n/a
29	Richmond, Virginia	\$125,000	\$ -	Car Provided	\$ -	\$125,000	\$25,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$25,000	230,436	9	0	9	25,604
30	San Diego, California*	\$100,464	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$100,464	\$75,386	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$75,386	1,423,851	9	0	9	158,206
31	Seattle, Washington*	\$216,087	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$216,087	\$129,686	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$129,686	724,305	9	2	7	103,472
32	Tulsa, Oklahoma*	\$105,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$105,000	\$24,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$24,000	401,190	9	0	9	44,577
33																
34	* Data was taken from a report prepared by the City of Charlotte for a report issued in November 2020															
35	**Mayor has refused stipend for several years															

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	RALEIGH CITY COUNCIL GROUP STUDY PROJECT: National Mayor Compensation					
2						
3	Council-Manager					
4	City/State	Mayor Current Annual Stipend	Mayor Annual Expense Allowance	Mayor Annual Auto Allowance	Mayor Annual Technology Allowance	Mayor Total Compensation
5	Raleigh, North Carolina	\$24,550	\$1,200	\$1,800	\$ -	\$27,550
6	Charlotte, North Carolina*	\$27,196	\$10,000	\$4,800	\$3,100	\$45,096
7	Fort Worth, Texas	\$29,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$29,000
8	Virginia Beach, Virginia	\$30,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$30,000
9	Arlington, Texas*	\$36,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$36,000
10	El Paso, Texas	\$45,300	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$45,300
11	Dallas, Texas*	\$80,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$80,000
12	Kansas City, Missouri	\$123,156				\$123,156
13	Long Beach, California*	\$152,689	\$ -	\$5,400	\$960	\$159,049
14	Las Vegas, Nevada	\$167,556	\$32,338	\$ -	\$ -	\$199,894
15	Austin, Texas	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
16						
17						
18	Mayor-Council					
19	City/State	Mayor Current Annual Stipend	Mayor Annual Expense Allowance	Mayor Annual Auto Allowance	Mayor Annual Technology Allowance	Mayor Total Compensation
20	Indianapolis, Indiana*	\$99,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$99,000
21	San Diego, California*	\$100,464	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$100,464
22	Tulsa, Oklahoma*	\$105,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$105,000
23	Omaha, Nebraska*	\$106,445	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$106,445
24	Louisville, Kentucky*	\$121,551	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$121,551
25	Richmond, Virginia	\$125,000	\$ -	Car Provided	\$ -	\$125,000
26	Minneapolis, Minnesota*	\$126,528				\$126,528
27	Portland, Oregon*	\$143,666	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$143,666
28	Denver, Colorado*	\$175,520	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$175,520
29	Nashville, Tennessee*	\$180,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$180,000
30	Atlanta, Georgia*	\$184,300	\$65,000	\$36,313	\$ -	\$285,613
31	Memphis, Tennessee*	\$185,052	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$185,052
32	Columbus, Ohio*	\$190,299	\$ -	\$4,740	\$ -	\$195,039

	A	B	C	D	E	F
33	Seattle, Washington*	\$216,087	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$216,087
34	Chicago, Illinois	\$216,210	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$216,210
35	Houston, Texas*	\$236,188	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$236,188
36						
37	* Data was taken from a report prepared by the City of Charlotte for a report issued in November 2020					

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	RALEIGH CITY COUNCIL GROUP STUDY PROJECT: National Council Member Compensation					
2						
3	Council-Manager					
4	City/State	Council Member Current Annual Stipend	Council Member Annual Expense Allowance	Council Member Annual Auto Allowance	Council Member Annual Technology Allowance	Council Member Total Compensation
5	Raleigh, North Carolina	\$18,021	\$ -	\$1,200	\$504	\$19,725
6	Charlotte, North Carolina*	\$21,015	\$5,800	\$4,000	\$3,100	\$33,915
7	Fort Worth, Texas	\$25,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$25,500
8	Virginia Beach, Virginia	\$28,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$28,000
9	Arlington, Texas*	\$28,800	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$28,800
10	Long Beach, California*	\$38,177	\$ -	\$5,400	\$960	\$44,537
11	El Paso, Texas	\$45,300	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$45,300
12	Las Vegas, Nevada	\$48,121	\$17,256	\$ -	\$ -	\$48,121
13	Dallas, Texas*	\$60,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$60,000
14	Kansas City, Missouri	\$61,569				\$61,569
15	Austin, Texas	\$79,934	\$ -	\$5,400	\$ -	\$85,334
16						
17						
18	Mayor-Council					
19	City/State	Council Member Current Annual Stipend	Council Member Annual Expense Allowance	Council Member Annual Auto Allowance	Council Member Annual Technology Allowance	Council Member Total Compensation
20	Indianapolis, Indiana*	\$11,400	\$3,936	-	-	\$15,336
21	Nashville, Tennessee*	\$23,100	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$23,100
22	Tulsa, Oklahoma*	\$24,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$24,000
23	Richmond, Virginia	\$25,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$25,000
24	Memphis, Tennessee*	\$31,493	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$31,493
25	Omaha, Nebraska*	\$38,888	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$38,888
26	Louisville, Kentucky*	\$48,791	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$48,791
27	Columbus, Ohio*	\$57,138	\$ -	\$4,740	\$ -	\$61,878
28	Atlanta, Georgia*	\$60,300	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$60,300
29	Houston, Texas*	\$62,972	\$ -	\$4,200	\$ -	\$67,172
30	San Diego, California*	\$75,386	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$75,386

	A	B	C	D	E	F
31	Minneapolis, Minnesota*	\$98,685				\$98,685
32	Denver, Colorado*	\$105,527	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$105,527
33	Chicago, Illinois	\$115,442	-	-	-	\$115,442
34	Portland, Oregon*	\$125,694	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$125,694
35	Seattle, Washington*	\$129,686	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$129,686
36						
37	* Data was taken from a report prepared by the City of Charlotte for a report issued in November 2020					

RALEIGH CITY COUNCIL GROUP STUDY PROJECT: National Cities - Forms of Government Comparison

City/State	Population - City	Population - MSA	General Fund Budget	Form of Government	Council Size, (Excluding Mayor)	Number of At-Large Members	Number of District Representatives	Average Size of Districts	Term Length	Staggered Terms
Council-Manager										
Raleigh, North Carolina	474,708	1,390,785	\$507,700,266	Council-Manager	7	2	5	94,942	2 Years	No
Arlington, Texas*	398,854	7,573,136	\$265,444,666	Council-Manager	8	0	8	49,857	2 years	Yes
Austin, Texas*	978,908	2,115,827	\$1,100,000,000	Council-Manager	10	0	10	97,891	4 years	Yes
Charlotte, North Carolina*	885,708	2,525,305	\$718,809,225	Council-Manager	11	4	7	126,530	2 years	No
Dallas, Texas*	1,343,573	7,573,136	\$1,365,966,274	Council-Manager	14	0	14	95,970	Mayor - 4 years Council - 2 years	Yes
El Paso, Texas	679,813	844,818	\$984,600,000	Council-Manager	8	0	8	84,977	2 years	No
Fort Worth, Texas	909,585	7,573,136	\$771,937,585	Council-Manager	8	0	8	113,698	2 years	No
Kansas City, Missouri	495,327	2,128,912	\$606,300,000	Council-Manager	12	6	6	82,555	4 years	No
Las Vegas, Nevada	651,319	667,501	\$48,740,514	Council-Manager	6	0	6	108,553	4 years (3 term limit)	No
Long Beach, California*	462,628	13,291,486	\$554,000,000	Council-Manager	9	0	9	51,403	4 years	Yes
Virginia Beach, Virginia	449,974	1,768,901	\$1,184,491,625	Council-Manager	10	3	7	64,282	4 years	Yes
Mayor-Council										
Atlanta, Georgia*	506,811	5,884,736	\$677,628,773	Mayor-Council	15	3 (Super Posts)	12	42,234	4 years	No
Chicago, Illinois	2,716,450	8,865,000	\$4,465,200	Mayor-Council	51	0	50	54,329	4 years	No
Columbus, Ohio*, **	898,553	2,078,725	\$965,000,000	Mayor-Council	*7	*7	*0	n/a	4 years	Yes
Denver City/Co., Colorado*	727,211	2,888,227	\$1,485,509,355	Mayor-Council	13	2	11	66,110	4 years	Yes
Houston, Texas*	2,320,268	6,770,000	\$2,365,073,294	Mayor-Council	16	5	11	210,933	4 years	No
Indianapolis, Indiana*	876,384	2,028,614	\$1,033,476,146	Mayor-Council	25	0	25	35,055	4 years	No
Louisville/ Jefferson Co., Kentucky*	621,349	770,517	\$712,442,232	Mayor-Council	26	0	26	23,898	4 years	Yes
Memphis, Tennessee*	651,073	1,348,260	\$668,680,951	Mayor-Council	13	6 (Super Districts)	7	93,010	4 years	No
Minneapolis, Minnesota*	429,606	3,600,618	\$481,000,000	Weak Mayor - Council	13	0	13	33,047	4 years	No
Nashville/Davidson Co., Tennessee*	670,820	1,903,045	\$969,874,000	Mayor-Council	40	5	35	19,166	4 years	No
Omaha, Nebraska*	478,192	933,216	\$386,513,029	Mayor-Council	7	0	7	68,313	4 years	No
Portland, Oregon*	654,741	2,478,996	\$681,600,000	Commission	4	4	0	n/a	4 Years	Yes
Richmond, Virginia	230,436	1,300,000	\$744,050,117	Mayor-Council	9	0	9	25,604	4 years	Yes
San Diego, California*	1,423,851	3,338,330	\$1,540,000,000	Mayor-Council	9	0	9	158,206	4 Years	Yes
Seattle, Washington*	724,305	3,867,046	\$1,300,000,000	Mayor-Council	9	2	7	103,472	4 Years	Yes
Tulsa, Oklahoma*	401,190	1,251,172	\$278,100,000	Mayor-Council	9	0	9	44,577	Mayor - 4 years Council - 2 years	No

* Data was taken from a report prepared by the City of Charlotte for a report issued in November 2020

** Columbus City Council voted to place a charter amendment on the May 8, 2018, ballot that increases the size of the Council to nine; institutes at-large, by place elections and addresses the appointment process; vote passed; Changes will take place in January of 2024. There have also been conversation about limiting terms to 12 consecutive years.

**Mayor has refused stipend for several years

RALEIGH CITY COUNCIL GROUP STUDY PROJECT: North Carolina Master Data Set

North Carolina City/County	Mayor/Chair Current Annual Stipend	Mayor/Chair Annual Expense Allowance	Mayor/Chair Annual Auto Allowance	Mayor/Chair Annual Technology Allowance	Mayor/Chair Total Compensation	Council Member Current Annual Stipend	Council Member Annual Expense Allowance	Council Member Annual Auto Allowance	Council Member Annual Technology Allowance	Council Member Total Compensation	Automatic Stipend Adjustment	Eligible for Health Benefits	Population	Population - MSA	General Fund Budget	Form of Government	Council Size, (Excluding Mayor for Cities, Entire Commission Size for Counties)	Number of At-Large Members	Number of District Representatives	Average Size of Districts	Term Length	Staggered Terms	
City																							
Raleigh	\$24,550	\$1,200	\$1,800	\$ -	\$27,550	\$18,021	\$ -	\$1,200	\$504	\$19,725	Yes/employees	Yes	474,708	2,079,687	\$ 543,900,000	Council - Manager	7	2	5	94,942	2 years	No	
Asheville**	\$22,898				\$22,898	\$17,525				\$17,525			92,452	449,937	\$ 134,557,345	Council - Manager	6	1	5	18,490	4 years	Yes	
Cary	\$13,754	\$ -	\$10,590	\$2,460	\$26,804	\$11,493	\$ -	\$9,626	\$2,460	\$23,579		Yes	168,160	2,079,687	\$ 190,557,193	Council - Manager	6	2	4	42,040	4 years	Yes	
Charlotte	\$27,196	\$10,000	\$4,800	\$3,100	\$45,096	\$21,015	\$5,800	\$4,000	\$3,100	\$33,915			885,708	2,636,883	\$ 718,809,225	Council - Manager	11	4	7	126,530	2 years	No	
Durham	\$29,289	\$ -	\$2,400	\$ -	\$31,689	\$24,879	\$ -	\$2,400	\$ -	\$27,279	No	Yes	278,993	2,079,687	\$ 199,137,768	Council - Manager	6	3	3	92,998	Mayor - 2 years Council - 4 years	Yes	
Fayetteville	\$32,518	\$ -	\$ -	\$1,112	\$33,630	\$17,779	\$ -	\$ -	\$1,112	\$18,891	No	Yes	209,468	534,904	\$ 173,799,332	Council - Manager	9	0	9	23,274	4 years	No	
Greensboro	\$30,475	\$ -	\$4,200	\$ -	\$34,675	\$23,377	\$ -	\$3,000	\$ -	\$26,377		Yes	296,710	1,689,151	\$ 318,254,608	Council - Manager	8	3	5	59,342	4 years	No	
High Point	\$14,400	\$4,200	\$0	\$0	\$18,600	\$10,800	\$3,600	\$0	\$0	\$14,400			116,065	723,801	\$ 109,499,463	Council - Manager	8	2	6	19,344	2 years	No	
Wilmington	\$15,228	\$ -	\$4,200	\$2,400	\$21,828	\$11,592		\$4,200	\$2,400	\$18,192	No		122,891	297,533	\$ 200,693,458	Council - Manager	6	6	0	n/a	Mayor - 2 years Council - 4 years	Yes	
Winston-Salem	\$23,400	\$8,400	\$3,900	\$ -	\$35,700	\$18,220	\$5,100	\$3,900	\$ -	\$27,220			246,328	1,689,151	\$ 211,891,750	Council - Manager	8	0	8	30,791	4 years	No	
County																							
Durham County ***	\$29,920	\$ -	\$3,300	\$2,100	\$35,320	\$25,417	\$ -	\$3,300	\$2,100	\$30,817			321,488	644,367	\$ 467,034,886	Commission - Manager	5	5	0	n/a	4 years	No	
Forsyth County	\$25,560	\$ -	\$ -	IPad/Cell phone	\$25,560	\$21,960	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$21,960	Yes/Employees	Yes	378,469	676,008	\$ 454,237,003	Commission - Manger	7	2	5	75,694	4 years	Yes	
Guilford County	\$23,400	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$23,400	\$20,700	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$20,700		Yes	537,174	771,851	\$ 633,225,520	Commission - Manager	9	1	8	67,147	4 years	Yes	
Mecklenburg County	\$37,370	\$9,233	\$4,893	\$4,935	\$56,431	\$29,894	\$9,233	\$4,501	\$4,935	\$48,563			1,110,356	2,636,883	\$ 1,289,512,928	Commission - Manager	9	3	6	185,059	2 years	No	
New Hanover County	\$26,074	\$ -	\$3,640	\$900	\$29,789	\$17,890	\$ -	\$ -	\$900	\$18,790	No		234,473	297,533	\$ 399,600,000	Commission - Manager	5	5	0	n/a	4 years	Yes	
Wake County*	\$28,517	\$ -	\$3,000	\$300	\$31,817	\$34,315	\$ -	\$3,000	\$300	\$37,615	Yes/employees	Yes	1,112,000	1,390,785	\$ 1,464,296,000	Commission - Manager	7	0	7	158,857	4 years	Yes	

*Wake County district representatives are elected county-wide

**In June 2018, the Legislature passed a bill establishing five Asheville City Council election districts, with the mayor and one council member elected-large. The bill also moved Council elections from odd to even years and removed primary elections

*** Durham County Chair and 2 of 4 Commissioners have a total travel allowance, not just vehicle.

Forsyth County - Out of county travel and expenses shall be reimbursed to each commissioner in accordance with actual expenses incurred per prevailing county policy

RALEIGH CITY COUNCIL GROUP STUDY PROJECT: NC Council Mayor & Chair Compensation

North Carolina City/County	Mayor/Chair Current Annual Stipend	Mayor/Chair Annual Expense Allowance	Mayor/Chair Annual Auto Allowance	Mayor/Chair Annual Technology Allowance	Mayor/Chair Total Compensation
Charlotte - NEW	\$39,646	\$9,795	\$5,192	\$5,235	\$59,868
Mecklenburg County	\$37,370	\$9,233	\$4,893	\$4,935	\$56,431
Raleigh - PROPOSED	\$36,511	\$6,000	\$2,400	\$1,000	\$45,911
Charlotte - CURRENT	\$27,196	\$10,000	\$4,800	\$3,100	\$45,096
Winston-Salem	\$23,400	\$8,400	\$3,900	\$ -	\$35,700
Durham County ***	\$29,920	\$ -	\$3,300	\$2,100	\$35,320
Greensboro	\$30,475	\$ -	\$4,200	\$ -	\$34,675
Fayetteville	\$32,518	\$ -	\$ -	\$1,112	\$33,630
Wake County	\$28,517	\$ -	\$3,000	\$300	\$31,817
Durham	\$29,289	\$ -	\$2,400	\$ -	\$31,689
New Hanover County	\$26,074	\$ -	\$3,640	\$900	\$30,614
Raleigh - CURRENT	\$24,550	\$1,200	\$1,800	\$ -	\$27,550
Cary	\$13,754	\$ -	\$10,590	\$2,460	\$26,804
Forsyth County	\$25,560	\$ -	\$ -	IPad/Cell phone	\$25,560
Guilford County	\$23,400	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$23,400
Asheville**	\$22,898	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$22,898
Wilmington	\$15,228	\$ -	\$4,200	\$2,400	\$21,828
High Point	\$14,400	\$4,200	\$ -	\$ -	\$18,600

**In June 2018, the Legislature passed a bill establishing five Asheville City Council election districts, with the mayor and one

*** Durham County Chair and 2 of 4 Commissioners have a total travel allowance, not just vehicle.

Winston Salem Mayor has elected to not take a salary

Forsyth County - Out of county travel and expenses shall be reimbursed to each commissioner in accordance with actual expenses incurred per prevailing county policy.

RALEIGH CITY COUNCIL GROUP STUDY PROJECT: North Carolina Council Member Compensation

North Carolina City/County	Council Member Current Annual Stipend	Council Member Annual Expense Allowance	Council Member Annual Auto Allowance	Council Member Annual Technology Allowance	Council Member Total Compensation
Charlotte - NEW	\$32,638	\$9,795	\$4,776	\$5,235	\$52,444
Mecklenburg County	\$29,894	\$9,233	\$4,501	\$4,935	\$48,563
Raleigh - PROPOSED	\$29,848	\$4,000	\$2,400	\$1,000	\$37,248
Charlotte - CURRENT	\$21,015	\$5,800	\$4,000	\$3,100	\$33,915
Durham County ***	\$25,417	\$ -	\$3,300	\$2,100	\$30,817
Wake County	\$24,315	\$ -	\$3,000	\$300	\$27,615
Durham	\$24,879	\$ -	\$2,400	\$ -	\$27,279
Winston-Salem	\$18,220	\$5,100	\$3,900	\$ -	\$27,220
Forsyth County	\$27,012	\$ -	\$ -	IPad/Cell phone	\$27,012
Greensboro	\$23,377	\$ -	\$3,000	\$ -	\$26,377
Cary	\$11,493	\$ -	\$9,626	\$2,460	\$23,579
Guilford County	\$20,700	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$20,700
Raleigh - CURRENT	\$18,021	\$ -	\$1,200	\$504	\$19,725
Fayetteville	\$17,779	\$ -	\$ -	\$1,112	\$18,891
New Hanover County	\$17,890	\$ -	\$ -	\$900	\$18,790
Wilmington	\$11,592	\$ -	\$4,200	\$2,400	\$18,192
Asheville**	\$17,525	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$17,525
High Point	\$10,800	\$3,600	\$ -	\$ -	\$14,400

**In June 2018, the Legislature passed a bill establishing five Asheville City Council election districts, with the mayor and one council member elected at-large. The bill also moved Council elections from odd to even years and removed primary elections.

*** Durham County Chair and 2 of 4 Commissioners have a total travel allowance, not just vehicle.

Forsyth County - Out of county travel and expenses shall be reimbursed to each commissioner in accordance with actual expenses incurred per prevailing county policy.

Study Group Meeting Minutes

APPENDIX B

Minutes of the December 11, 2020 Organizational meeting of the Raleigh City Council Appointed Study Committee on Terms, Compensation and Voter Participation

The meeting commenced at 12:31

Attendees: Robin Currin Tatum, McLean Moore, Diana Powell, Nervahna Crew, Eugene Weeks, Beth Trahos, Justin Sutton, Ashton Smith, Harvey Schmitt, Robbie Rikard, Catherine Lawson and Eric Braun

The meeting started with introductions and each member describing why they were interested in serving on the Study Committee and what they hoped to achieve.

The Group then reviewed City Council meeting minutes where the formation and direction to the Study Committee was discussed/approved.

The Study Committee reviewed and discussed the 3 specific study topics approved by City Council on October 6, 2020. Those topics were:

1. Whether Council should change the current terms of office from 2-years to 4-years, whether to stagger terms and the timing of any such changes.
2. Review Council compensation with a goal of expanding opportunities for more people to seek elected office.
3. Ways to increase voter information, engagement and turnout for Council elections.

As to topics 1 and 2, there was consensus that the Group needed to identify what it considered "Peer" cities as a starting point for gathering data regarding how other cities structured their governing boards and how those elected officials were compensated.

There was consensus that members would give thought to what they considered a peer city was relative to Raleigh and would submit potential cities for the Group to consider at its next meeting. The goal would be to agree on a set of peer cities within NC and some from across the country to research.

As part of this discussion, members asked the City Attorney to supply the following information:

1. Basic information about the law related to the topics to be addressed by the Study Committee.
2. Preliminary compensation data compiled by City staff prior to the Group's first meeting.

Members then discussed how it might address the additional study topic authorized by Council of expanding the size of Council from the current 8 members.

There was a lengthy discussion among the members, including the City Attorney about how this topic was substantially more complex for a variety of reasons. The first reason related to the

status of the US Census and when final data would be available. The City Attorney explained how the City is required by law to adjust current Council district boundaries after every Census to ensure that each district represents roughly the same number of people across the City. This process is typically an objective process. But because the Census results have been delayed due to litigation and COVID-19, it is unclear when final results will be available to the City so that it can start adjusting the District boundaries to account for population growth over the last 10 years.

The City Attorney then discussed how the process would be significantly more complex if the size of Council was expanded by adding additional district representatives because of the convergence of several factors. The delayed Census results and uncertainty about when they would be available combined with the approaching Council election and the need for clear districts in time for the filing deadline in July 2021 makes it very difficult to accomplish expanding the Council size for the 2021 election cycle. There was also discussion that adding at-large members to Council did not create the same logistical issues because at-large seats are not dependent on the Census data and do not require adjusting district boundaries.

The group discussed the expansion issue in light of the other assigned tasks and agreed to try to reach consensus at its next meeting about how to address each task and on what timeline. One suggestion was to address the first 3 tasks and provide an interim report to Council and then seek further guidance regarding the issue of expanding the size of Council.

The Group then moved on to discussing how to handle future meetings. The consensus was to meet every 3 weeks and to try to identify a regular day and time to meet so it was easier for staff and the public to keep up with the proceedings. No specific date and time was identified, but City Staff will conduct a poll of the members to see if a meeting date and time emerges that works for the Group.

The Group also talked about the possibility of inviting outside subject matter experts to present information to the Group on an as-needed basis to help guide its deliberations and to make sure Group members are operating with a similar level of information and knowledge.

The Group then discussed topics and tasks for the next meeting. Those included nominating and electing a Chair and a Vice Chair to run future meetings. The Group also discussed developing some basic ground rules to operate by going forward.

The meeting adjourned at 1:21pm.

These meeting minutes prepared and submitted by Eric Braun

Minute of the Study Committee on Terms, Compensation and Voter Participation
January 11, 2021
8:00 AM
Via Zoom

Attendees: Diana Powell, Nervahna Crew, Eugene Weeks, Beth Trahos, Justin Sutton, Ashton Smith, Harvey Schmitt, Robbie Rikard, and Eric Braun. Absent Catherine Lawson
City Staff: Robin Currin Tatum, McLean Moore, Stacy Lundy
Guest: Gerry Cohen

Meeting called to order by Eric Braun

Mr. Braun reviewed updates from the City. The committee now has a tab on Board Documents on the city website. Committee agendas and back up materials will be posted there. A unique e-mail CouncilStudyGroup@raleighnc.gov has been created for the public to communicate with the committee.

A motion was made by Schmitt and seconded by Trahos to accept the minutes of the December meeting as distributed. Motion carried.

The Committee then organized itself. On a motion by Schmitt and a second by Powell, Eric Braun was nominated and unanimously elected as Chair of the Committee. On a motion by Schmitt and a second by Rikard, Justin Sutton was nominated and unanimously elected as Vice-Chair. On a motion Braun and a second by Weeks, Harvey Schmitt was nominated and unanimously elected as Secretary.

Chm. Braun then led a review of proposed committee Ground Rules (attached.) In discussion the committee reviewed the number of meeting absences that would disqualify a member from participation. Committee consensus was that active participation is important and three missed meetings would be the minimum tolerated, but that a committee member could petition the chair for an excused absence for health or extenuating circumstances. A motion by Schmitt and a second by Crew that three (3) meeting absences trigger a committee member resignation but that an excused absence process (by petitioning the chair) be added to the Ground Rules document. Motion carried unanimously. Mr. Braun will make this adjustment and resubmit Ground Rules to the committee.

Chm. Braun than asked the committee to surface peer cities that the committee should use in evaluating best practices and considering potential recommendations. Criteria such as relevant: population, budget size, and council-manager form of government were discussed. The group discussed the difference between council-manager (mayor part-time) and council-mayor (mayor fulltime) forms as a differentiating characteristic among peer cities. It was also noted that different peer cohorts may be useful depending on whether we are evaluating compensation or terms of office. The committee reviewed a similar and recent Charlotte study

https://charlottenc.gov/Mayor/Documents/Citizen%20Advisory%20Committee/Presentations/November-2-2020_CACG_Final_Report.pdf

This report has a good review of both potential peer cities and evaluated characteristics. The study is much broader than our committee's charge but is a useful frame of reference as we fashion our scope of study. Municipalities specifically mentioned included those in the Charlotte report and in addition New Orleans, Las Vegas, El Paso and larger cities in Georgia (Augusta, and Savannah), Florida (Jacksonville, Tampa, St. Petersburg, and Orlando), and Virginia (Virginia Beach, Norfolk, Richmond, Arlington and Alexandria.) Among North Carolina municipalities and counties mentioned were Asheville, Cary, Durham, Greensboro, Winston-Salem, Charlotte, High Point, Mecklenburg Co. and Wake Co.

A brief discussion followed on providing some additional focus on council-manager forms of government.

The committee then heard from Gerry Cohen Adjunct Professor Sanford School of Public Policy, member of the Wake County Board of Elections and a veteran of over 36 years of service to the NC General Assembly in guiding bill drafting and specialized research and legal services. Mr. Cohen reviewed his report (attached) on municipal elections and the Home Rule charter amendment process. He discussed term lengths, size of council and manner of election (dates such as November instead of October.) Some elements of the committee's review (term changes) and ultimate implementation will be impacted by legal requirements. Mid-April was mentioned as a deadline to begin implementation. There is also the potential for presenting the issue for referendum. Changing compensation is a budgetary issue but if to be implemented in 2021 would require action (May) prior to budget adoption in July. In brief discussion the committee agreed to discuss the speed of our committee work as a major issue for our February meeting. Other potential issues surround 2 or 4 year terms and when to conduct the election odd or even years and the time frame November vs current October elections. If 4 year staggered terms how to stagger the council and Mayor. For example do you have at-large council in one election and district councilors in the next cycle or mix them? Do you make the mayor a two year term and stand in each cycle or as a 4 year term in sync with at large council members or the district councilors?

Chm. Braun said he had had received inquiry regarding a couple of issues. He asked if the law allows for the restriction/prohibition of outside employment of the Mayor. Mr. Cohen indicated that such prohibition was not allowed but conflict of interest review can be used to minimize concerns regarding council/mayor employment impacting municipal business.

The second issue was in regard to setting term limits for councilors as recommended in the Charlotte report. Mr. Cohen indicated that term limits were removed from municipal control by the legislature and such a move would require the NC General Assembly to address a change in the law. He noted that the term limit issue had been removed from the Charlotte discussion.

Mr. Braun thanked Mr. Cohen for his report and support. He then encouraged all committee members to review the Charlotte Report and fill out the doodle poll so we can pick a date for the February meeting.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.
Respectfully Submitted

Harvey Schmitt
Secretary

**Minutes for Raleigh City Council Study Committee
February 1, 2021 Meeting
8:30 AM via Zoom**

Attendees: Eric Braun Chair, Nervahna Crew, Catherine Lawson, Diana Powell, Robbie Rikard, Harvey Schmitt, Ashton Smith, Justin Sutton, Beth Trahos, and. Absent Eugene Weeks (excused)

City Staff: Robin Currin Tatum, McLean Moore, Stacy Lundy

Meeting called to order by Chairman Braun. He asked all committee members to keep their Zoom video on for the purposes of keeping track of committee action and participation.

On a motion by Sutton and a second by Rikard the minutes of the Jan 11, 2021 meeting were approved as written.

Chair Braun noted that the official email for the Council Study Group is CouncilStudyGroup@raleighnc.gov

The committee then reviewed the guiding principles of the Charlotte study to determine if they were in line with our efforts.

Charlotte Guiding Principles:

- Increase voter participation in our local elections.
- Knowing that well-prepared, thoughtful, and long-term strategic discussion and decision-making by the mayor and council members are optimal for the city; consider the length of terms, compensation, number of terms, implementation, and support staff and function.
- Ensure elected officials are well prepared for long-range decision making.
- Create a way elected officials can serve, communicate with, and represent the citizens most effectively.
- All recommendations should ultimately encourage robust interface with citizens, and adequate compensation and support to allow them to engage at an appropriate level with other CC members, citizens, and other interest groups.

It was noted that the second bullet refers to “support staff and function” was not part of our charge and should be eliminated. Chair Braun indicated that it could be removed and added at the end if the committee had an interest in doing so. Atty. Tatum noted that each council member has personal Analyst support.

It was noted that encouraging responsiveness and accountability by council members would also be part of the guiding principles. Another suggested focusing on encouraging a diverse pool of candidates.

The committee then discussed the peer cities to be included in our study. The group was asked which cities we might add to the list beyond the Charlotte peer list.

Council-Manager Communities: Arlington, Texas; Charlotte, NC; Dallas, TX; Ft. Worth, TX, Austin, TX; Kansas City, MO; and Long Beach, CA

Mayor Council Communities: Tulsa, OK; Atlanta, GA; Columbus, OH; Denver, CO; Houston, TX; Indianapolis, IN; Louisville, KY; Memphis, TN; Minneapolis, MN; Nashville, TN; Omaha, NE; Portland, OR; San Diego, CA; and Seattle, WA;

In the discussion that followed these **Council-Manager** Communities were added El Paso, TX; Las Vegas, NV and Virginia Beach and these **Mayor-Council** Communities were added Richmond, VA and Chicago IL

The committee then discussed which NC governments should be added to the Charlotte benchmark list: Asheville, Cary, Charlotte, Durham, Greensboro, Winston-Salem, High Point, Fayetteville, Raleigh and Mecklenburg County.

The following were added to the list; New Hanover County, Wake County, Guilford County, Forsyth County and Durham County.

The committee spent some time on the data to be collected and agreed that the Charlotte format/template in broad terms fit our needs with the exception of categories that were outside our requested review: Term Limits, Form of Election (partisan v non-partisan), support staff composition and compensation.

A discussion was held on whether the committee would vote ultimately on the report as a whole or for each individual recommendation as the Charlotte report. Chm. Braun indicated that he would prefer general consensus recommendations but it was an issue that could be reviewed later in the process.

The Committee then reviewed how it would handle its assignment over the months ahead and agreed on this outline

Task 1: Compensation for Mayor and Council defined broadly to including items like car allowance, technical allowance, expense allowance, healthcare and automatic escalators (2 meetings)

Task 2: 2-year or 4-year terms and staggered or not (2 meetings)

- Benefits and challenges between 2 and 4-year terms
- Whether and how to stagger terms

Task 3: Size of Council (2-3 meetings)

- What is the appropriate Council size for Raleigh?
- If Council should be expanded, add at-large or district Councilors?

Task 4: Voter engagement and turnout (2 meetings)

- Timing of election
- Other ways to engage and inform voters?

The committee agreed it would meet after data had been collected by staff. A meeting Doodle will be used to set a date. Committee members were urged to review the Charlotte study to see if any additional thoughts came to mind (regarding data to be collected) and share

suggestions with the chair by end of the week so that when we begin collecting data we are clear in what we want collected.

Ashton Smith noted that we had had received a note from the public regarding whether committee members should be disqualified from participation if they considered running for council or mayor. Atty. Tatum indicated that there was no legal conflict of interest.

There being no further business it was moved by Crew and seconded by Schmitt that the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted

Harvey Schmitt
Secretary

Minutes for Raleigh City Council Study Committee
March 29, 2021 Meeting
8:30 AM via Zoom

Attendees: Eric Braun Chair, Nervahna Crew, Catherine Lawson, Diana Powell, Harvey Schmitt, Ashton Smith, Justin Sutton, Beth Trahos, and Eugene Weeks. Absent Robbie Rikard

City Staff: Robin Tatum, McLean Moore, Stacy Lundy, Janie Richardson, Brandon Poole

Meeting called to order by Chair Braun. He asked all committee members to keep their Zoom video on for the purposes of keeping track of committee action and participation.

On a motion by Sutton and a second by Powell the minutes of the Feb 1, 2021 meeting were approved as written.

Chair Braun opened the meeting with a review of our meeting timeline. To become more intentional in our work he proposed that we meet twice a month. After reviewing options the consensus of the committee was to meet from 12 pm to 2:00 pm on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month beginning April 14.

Chair Braun noted that the data collection process is underway and staff will hopefully have new spreadsheets ready by end of April. He then led the committee in a discussion on the merits of 2-year Council terms versus 4-year terms. Each committee member reviewed their perspectives with the following observations:

- Support for 4-year terms because 2-year terms tend to yield one year of work and one year of focus on re-election. 4 year terms would give councilors more time to learn the job and the city before focusing on re-election
- Support for 4-year terms but would prefer them not staggered so the entire group would stand for election at the same time and focus would be on same issues
- Support for 4-year terms since the city has grown a great deal since 1972 when the 2-year terms were implemented. In 1972 the population was 125,000 over 26 sq. mi. today it is 510,000 over 211 sq. mi. As a result the council and mayor assignment is more complex requiring more of a learning curve for new members. A longer term would give council members time to learn the city, their district and be more likely to discern priorities among constituent concerns.
- 2-year terms are more responsive. If conditions merit the citizenry can impact city direction more frequently by this cadence.
- 2 year terms require of all councilors and mayor more time fund raising for more frequent election cycles. Challenging assignment for part-time elected officials.
- 4-year terms help build council competency and longer term decision making rather than being held hostage to the issue of the moment.
- Staggered 4-year terms would give both an emphasis on longer term decision making and the flexibility to have the citizenry the opportunity to weigh in every 2 years on their opinion of the councils direction.

- 4 year terms could be a negative to some candidates who would need to have some flexibility from their employers. 2-year is a more bite sized commitment.
- If better governance is a goal 4-years should yield better long term strategic thinking and action
- Having all council with simultaneous 2-year terms is attractive for responsiveness, it does however create an environment where you could completely change all members in one election cycle.
- In the short term dynamics of 2 year cycles the timing of major infrastructure referendums could be negatively impacted for political considerations. Or contentious zoning issues could create an undue influence on elections especially with a low turnout.
- 2-year terms makes it harder for councilors to be able to finish projects as they must work on re-election and are either distracted from those projects or turned out before they are completed.
- In a conversation around cost it was noted that annual budget for a city election cycle is \$1.7 million. This covers the election and run-off
- There were comments on how many citizens would be voting in a staggered 4-year format? Whether odd (more focus on City issues in a standalone election) or even years (more people at the polls in a national and state cycle) would be better?

While there was no attempt to settle on a position the consensus seemed supportive of 4-year terms. The format i.e. not staggered, staggered, and how staggered was left for debate at a future meeting. The Chair reminded the committee that he was seeking general consensus on all issues and that he was not in favor of parsing our recommendations by individual vote counts on each recommendation.

The committee homework for the next meeting is to review the Charlotte report. The staff homework will be to get the data out to the committee as soon as practical. The next meeting will be April 14 12-2pm.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted

Harvey Schmitt
Secretary

**Minutes for Raleigh City Council Study Committee
On Council Terms/ Salaries and Voter Engagement Participation
April 14, 2021 Meeting
12:00 PM via Zoom**

Attendees: Eric Braun Chair, Catherine Lawson, Diana Powell, Robbie Rikard Harvey Schmitt, Ashton Smith, Justin Sutton, Beth Trahos, and Eugene Weeks. Absent Nervahna Crew

City Staff: Robin Tatum, Stacy Lundy, Janie Richardson, Brandon Poole

Guest: Gerry Cohen

Meeting called to order by Chair Braun.

On a motion by Sutton and a second by Lawson the minutes of the March 29, 2021 meeting were approved as written.

Chair Braun opened the meeting with a review of our meeting timeline. The committee is now meeting from 12 pm to 2:00 pm on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month. He reiterated his interest in working toward a consensus recommendation to the council. This would reflect an understanding, by the committee, that there (necessarily) would be some give and take required to reach that consensus.

At our last meeting the committee considered 2 vs 4 year terms and supported the concept of 4 year terms. Chair Braun asked the members to offer their perspectives on staggered vs. non staggered terms. In reviewing the data from the Charlotte report the use of staggered terms was in the clear majority. **The group after discussion gravitated toward supporting staggered terms.** It was noted that committee member Crew (who was not on the call) had expressed support for non-staggered terms.

The committee members felt that staggered terms should yield longer term thinking and productivity (by Council), as all councilors are not standing for re-election every two years and trapped by the issues of the moment vs. issues to be addressed for long term strategic decision-making. This approach also supports continuity, avoiding turning out a council (in total) and losing direction, momentum and experience. Finally staggered terms offer a degree of responsiveness providing the citizenry with the opportunity to weigh in on municipal leadership and direction every two years and give feedback to Council.

There are however a variety of ways in which to stagger those terms: at large on one cycle and district on the other; a mix of at large and district elections on each cycle; Mayor on at large cycle, Mayor on district cycle, Mayor on 2 year term and stand each cycle. The committee entered into a vigorous review of these options and did not reach consensus. They did feel that all voters should have a voice in each cycle either their district or at large or both. That as much as possible make it attractive to voters to participate and be interested in city issues. To this end having the Mayor serve a two year term and be on the ballot for each cycle engendered some discussion. It was also noted that having the Mayor up every two years (Durham model)

might be good for voter interest and turnout but not as beneficial for long term thinking, continuity and productivity.

Gerry Cohen, election law expert noted that having all the district races in one cycle would make it easier to redistrict the city. Otherwise it is conceivable to have a jumbled schedule as occurred when Wake County School Board Districts had staggered 4 year terms and were redrawn in 1991, as some voters got to vote twice in 2 years (1989 and 1991) while others did not get to vote but once in 6 years. (1987 and 1993)

The group briefly discussed adding council seats but agreed to postpone that conversation till a later date. They also explored whether we could recommend changing the voting cycle of municipal elections to coincide with the Federal and State cycles. It was noted that this required General Assembly approval and was not part of the original scope of study for the group.

Chair Braun then summarized the meeting by noting we had general consensus on staggered 4-year terms. He asked Mr. Schmitt to contact former Mayor Bell of Durham for his opinion on how the Durham format of 4-year council terms and 2 year mayor terms looked in retrospect so that we could add some anecdotal perspective to our review. At our next meeting we will work to gain consensus on the staggered cycle format and begin our conversation around compensation. About 30% of the extra data the committee sought has been compiled and we should have some fresh numbers by end of the month.

There being no further business it was moved by Powell and seconded by Sutton to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved

Respectfully submitted

Harvey Schmitt
Secretary

**Minutes for Raleigh City Council Study Committee
On Council Terms/ Salaries and Voter Engagement Participation
April 28, 2021 Meeting
12:00 PM via Zoom**

Attendees: Eric Braun Chair, Nervahna Crew, Catherine Lawson, Diana Powell, Robbie Rikard, Harvey Schmitt, Ashton Smith, Justin Sutton, Beth Trahos, and Eugene Weeks.

City Staff: Robin Tatum, Stacy Lundy, Janie Richardson, Brandon Poole

Guest: Gerry Cohen

Meeting called to order by Chair Braun.

On a motion by Weeks and a second by Sutton the minutes of the March 29, 2021 meeting were approved as written.

Chair Braun opened the meeting with a review of our progress to date. He noted that we were in general agreement on recommending 4 year staggered terms for council and would focus discussion on how the terms were staggered at today's meeting. He noted the following 4 options:

- a. Option 1-blending some city-wide races with some district races each 2-year cycle
- b. Option 2-conduct all district races in one cycle and then all city-wide races the next cycle
- c. Option 3-conduct all district races AND the Mayor in one cycle and then all at-large races the next cycle
- d. Option 4-Mayor serves 2-year terms and is elected every 2 years while the other races are staggered

Mr. Schmitt reported that (at the committee's direction) he had talked to former Durham Mayor Bill Bell (elected in 2001 and then for 7 successive 2-year terms) regarding the Durham model where the Mayor is elected every 2 years while council is elected every 4 years. The committee expressed interest in determining if this approach impacted voter turnout for district races, whether there was constant pressure on raising campaign funds and was city direction and the mayoral agenda negatively affected by every other year electioneering? Mr. Bell noted that his situation may not be completely analogous to our inquiry. In Durham all of the district seats are elected at large (district representatives must live in the district but all city voters get to vote.) Since all are at large, the Mayoral vote did not have a discernable impact on turnout in staggered council races. He also noted that he was generally not pressed for fund raising as he had only two contested races during his term. From his experience prior to running for mayor (20 plus years on the Durham County Commission with 2 year terms) he was comfortable running every two years and felt his agenda and that of the city was not impacted by a 2 year referendum on the city's direction. He offered to meet with the committee if they wished to pursue further.

In the review and discussion that followed all committee members voiced general agreement that Option 2 with District races on one cycle and Mayor and at large on the next cycle would be the preference.

Regarding implementation of this approach the following was noted by Mr. Cohen in a previous discussion

- 1) Initial implementation could be initial election of one side of cycle for 4 years and the other side for 2 years. Then it becomes staggered
- 2) General Law for 4 year terms provides that if vacancy occurs in first 21 months of term it is on the ballot in the mid-term for the final two years. For example Knightdale mayor is 4 years, Mayor resigned 14 months into term, and it will be in ballot this fall for final two years. On the other hand Raleigh charter says vacancies filled by appointment for remainder of unexpired term, but context was current 2 year terms. A new implementation ordinance will need to pick one of the two methods.

Ms. Smith noted that we might want to consider recommending having all district seats elected at large as in Durham feeling that would boost interest in each cycle. This option is available to council but as noted by Attorney Tatum, this was not directly a part of the committee's assignment. Chair Braun asked that we park this conversation and revisit it later if we feel it needs additional attention as we discuss encouraging voter engagement.

Chair Braun then turned the discussion toward compensation. There was a general review of the differences between Mayor-Council and the Council-Manager form of government. The committee will be seeing data from both types but the fundamental difference is in who has the legal authority to hire and fire city employees. In a council-manager system, the manager has that power. In a mayor-council system, the council collectively has the power. Therefore Mayor-Council forms see councilors in a more full time responsibility (often with operational oversight) while Council-Manager councilors are more part-time and act as a board of directors for the manager setting policy.

With that in mind, compensation varies greatly between forms. In the discussion that followed the consensus was to focus our attention on Council-Manager peers for comparisons and acknowledging that Mayor-Council city peers are different.

It was noted by all, that the expectation on a councilor's time was increasing and that there should be a recognition of those pressures as we evaluate an equitable stipend for their work. That acknowledgement should not however drive us to recommend compensating councilors as if they had a full-time assignment and violating the Council-Manager governance model.

There was discussion about establishing a metric to support a fair compensation. Ms. Smith offered that a percentage of the city's median income might be a measure. This would allow for scaling the compensation base over time. It was the feeling of the group that requiring the council to raise its own compensation was a political challenge which brought politics to bear on practical and rational realities facing councilors. It was noted by Attorney Tatum that there is a council compensation escalator tied to general budget considerations that already exists in policy.

Follow-up conversations also covered the application of other compensation such as expense accounts, technology allowances etc. to provide a rational recognition of the expectations on council. These will be reviewed when the final data set is available.

Chair Braun applauded the committee for their work and diligence and noted that the compensation conversation will be the focus of our next meeting. Soon the committee will receive the latest data available to review peer national and North Carolina communities prior to the next meeting.

There was a brief review of the timing of the next city election set for Oct 2021. Because census data is not available to map equitable council districts (by population) in a timely manner there is ongoing discussion between the General Assembly and municipal governments on how to legally conduct the next municipal election. Chair Braun said that the committee will press on with our assignment regardless of the election timetables.

There being no further business it was moved by Crew and seconded by Smith to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved. Our next meeting will be 12:00 PM May 12, 2021 via zoom.

Respectfully submitted

Harvey Schmitt
Secretary

**Minutes for Raleigh City Council Study Committee
On Council Terms/ Salaries and Voter Engagement Participation
May 12, 2021 Meeting
12:00 PM via Zoom**

Attendees: Eric Braun Chair, Nervahna Crew, Robbie Rikard, Harvey Schmitt, Ashton Smith, Justin Sutton, Beth Trahos, and Eugene Weeks. Absent: Catherine Lawson, Diana Powell

City Staff: Stacy Lundy, Janie Richardson, Brandon Poole

Meeting called to order by Chair Braun.

On a motion by Crew and a second by Sutton the minutes of the March 29, 2021 meeting were approved as written.

Chair Braun opened the meeting with a review of our progress to date. He noted that we were in general agreement on recommending 4 year staggered terms for council and on conducting all district races in one cycle and then all city-wide races the next cycle.

This meeting was to discuss the compensation for the Mayor and Council. The Chair then went through the various spread sheets staff has prepared outlining the way peer communities both in the nation and North Carolina remunerated their Mayors and Councils. He noted that we would refer to compensation as a stipend and not salary as the elected officials are not employees of the city.

In reviewing the data it was noted that Charlotte's numbers reflected current conditions but not proposed increases in this year's budget. Under their budget plans Charlotte City Council compensation would increase to \$52,444 and the Mayor to \$59,865. Charlotte's committee had settled on building their stipend increases based on matching the Mecklenburg County Commission compensation. Action to adopt is expected to commence with the Charlotte budgeting process to begin next month.

It was noted that total compensation for the Raleigh Mayor and Council was the lowest among peer national cities. Among large North Carolina municipalities Raleigh compensation trailed Charlotte, Durham, Greensboro, Fayetteville and Winston-Salem. Using national data for Council-Mayor forms of government the contrast was even more striking. Raleigh also trailed commissioner compensation in Mecklenburg, Durham and Wake Counties. The consensus among the committee was that Raleigh elected officials were under compensated in relation to peers. We should be near the top of the North Carolina Communities given the challenges in keeping in touch with our rapidly growing population and incumbent complexities. The group also agreed to focus on peer NC municipalities rather than national data since many were Council-Mayor forms which tend to place councilors in more full-time responsibilities. Among those outliers (six figure compensation) among the Council-Manager group it would be difficult to understand all of the political and economic nuances in cities such as Kansas City MO, Long Beach, CA and Las Vegas, NV.

In discussing the various allowances offered in many municipalities (general expenses, auto, and technology) it was agreed that allowances should be simply granted (as is the case in Raleigh for general and auto expenses) rather than a reimbursement. No new expense categories were highlighted by the committee.

Regarding step-ups in compensation, Raleigh's current process, adopted in 2018, follows city employee increases i.e. if the budget calls for a 2% increase for employees it would hold true for Mayor and Council. There was some discussion about a regular peer municipality review e.g. every four years that would be similar to our committee's work.

It was noted by staff that a comprehensive compensation study had been done in 2018. It was requested that the committee get copies of such to review to see if it offers any points of reference useful to our work. Chair Braun said he would find and distribute.

Chair Braun gave an assignment for the committee. For our next meeting he asked that each member come prepared to recommend how they might compensate Mayor and Council if they had the power and their rationale for the recommendation.

Chair Braun noted that he has heard from a few community members that the committee should set up a process to hear from the public on our work. Noting that we are: on assignment as a study committee to report to Council; that we do not have staff or capacity to seek wide input; that our work is available for review on the city website and we are accepting written communication regarding citizen input; he did not feel we should attempt to set up a broader public input mechanism. In the discussion that followed there was broad support for this position.

For our next meeting we will try to come to a recommendation on compensation. The final part of the process will be to look at council size in a succeeding meeting.

There being no further business Chair Braun adjourned the meeting. Our next meeting will be 12:00 PM May 26, 2021 via zoom.

Respectfully submitted

Harvey Schmitt
Secretary

**Minutes for Raleigh City Council Study Committee
On Council Terms/ Salaries and Voter Engagement Participation
May 26, 2021 Meeting
12:00 PM via Zoom**

Attendees: Eric Braun Chair, Catherine Lawson, Diana Powell, Robbie Rikard, Harvey Schmitt, Ashton Smith, Justin Sutton, Beth Trahos, and Eugene Weeks. Absent: Nervahna Crew

City Staff: Robin Tatum, Stacy Lundy, Janie Richardson, Brandon Poole

Guest: Gerry Cohen

Meeting called to order by Chair Braun.

On a motion by Powell and a second by Smith the minutes of the May 12, 2021 meeting were approved as written.

Chair Braun opened the meeting with a review of our progress to date. He noted that we were in general agreement on recommending 4 year staggered terms for council and on conducting all district races in one cycle and then all city-wide races the next cycle. We also had a consensus on needing to increase council/mayor stipends and that we would concentrate on using North Carolina stipends and expense rates as a guide because of familiarity and similarity.

Today's meeting was to review how we might determine a logical and specific remuneration and to discuss the speed of our committee's work in relation to anticipated legislation changing the timing of the next municipal election.

Chair Braun asked Attorney Tatum and guest Gerry Cohen for an update on timing of the next municipal election (currently set for October 2021). The legislation (SB 722) would empower NC municipalities to set their municipal elections for March 8, 2022 allowing enough time for the receipt of census data needed to set up new council district boundaries. Absent legislation the current election schedule would not allow for redistricting and create legal conditions and potential liabilities if allowed to proceed. Mr. Cohen noted that given a Mar. 2023 timeline recommendations regarding term length and staggering could be implemented by council before the 2022 election. It would require the committee to present its recommendations to council in June so the city can go through its change of charter process (public hearings, time for petition etc.) should they wish to take action.

Chair Braun noted that recommendations regarding compensation will not be timely for council to act in this budget cycle. He posed to the committee whether we wished to file an interim report to council to allow them the flexibility to take action now rather than 2023. The group discussed three options: 1) filing an interim report to Council in June; 2) hold more frequent meetings and see if we can file a full report by June 15; 3) continuing at our current pace and filing a report later this summer.

It was moved by Sutton and seconded by Lawson that we provide Council flexibility (2022 v. 2023) and meet more frequently and present to Council those issues where we have consensus

(four year staggered terms, one cycle districts/one cycle at large)) and as many other positions/proposals (compensation) we can review prior to the June 15 council meeting. Motion was unanimously approved. Those topics not addressed by the committee before June 15 would remain on our “to do” list.

Chair Braun then offered a proposal for compensation for consideration. Given agreement on increasing compensation since Raleigh is the second largest municipality, in the largest county, our stipend (no modest) should reflect top tier remuneration similar to other large counties and cities, he proposed using the top three municipalities and counties from our list and average the three as our stipend. He also said we could use four options so we include Wake County. These formulas would yield a stipend of \$30,600 or \$28,300. Mr. Schmitt offered a formula to use the top five communities/counties and place the stipend at 120% of the average of the five. Chair Braun said he would circulate the formulas and their impact prior for review.

There was discussion regarding adding a national peer city to the formula, but choosing which city was deemed somewhat arbitrary and hard to defend. There was also a conversation regarding setting the rate in relation to some particular employee category or group. Again finding a formula that would offer a fair comparison and defensible logic was not identified.

The committee discussed the use of expense accounts. City code calls for flat fee expense accounts (for general out of pocket expenses) and not reimbursable expenses unless participating in a conference or event representing the city outside normal councilor duties. The committee discussed child care expenses as something that would impact some candidates, and should be one of the reasons to increase expense accounts. It was noted that City health and dental insurance is available to individual councilors and family coverage is available at a cost. In general the group supported increasing expense accounts to \$3000-\$4000. Action on expense accounts will be discussed at our next meeting.

Chair Braun mentioned that we will address promoting voter turnout and council size at a future meeting. Ms. Smith asked if we could find out if council had offered any potential financial resources to help promote voter turnout assuming we had some suggestions requiring a city expenditure.

To facilitate meeting our June 15 report deadline the group agreed to meet next week Wednesday (2nd) or Friday (4th) at 8:30. Staff will finalize and confirm once committee members have been polled.

There being no further business Chair Braun adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted

Harvey Schmitt
Secretary

**Minutes for Raleigh City Council Study Committee
On Council Terms/ Salaries and Voter Engagement Participation
June 4, 2021 Meeting
12:00 PM via Zoom**

Attendees: Eric Braun Chair, Catherine Lawson, Diana Powell, Harvey Schmitt, Ashton Smith, Justin Sutton, Beth Trahos, and Eugene Weeks. Absent: Nervahna Crew, Robbie Rikard
City Staff: Robin Tatum, Stacy Lundy, Janie Richardson, Brandon Poole

Meeting called to order by Chair Braun.

On a motion by Weeks and a second by Powell the minutes of the May 24th, 2021 meeting were approved as written.

Chair Braun opened the meeting with a review of our progress to date. He noted that we were in general agreement on recommending 4 year staggered terms for council and on conducting all district races in one cycle and then all city-wide races the next cycle. We also had a consensus on needing to increase council/mayor stipends and that we would concentrate on using North Carolina stipends and expense rates as a guide because of familiarity and similarity.

Today's meeting was to review two proposed remuneration formulas and to discuss upcoming mid-term report to council on June 15. He noted that the Senate Bill to adjust election schedules had passed in the Senate 46-0 and the likely date for the next election in Raleigh is now Mar. 8, 2022. Our report therefor will be timely to council.

The committee then spent the bulk of the meeting reviewing compensation data and options. In summary the consensus was to set the Mayor/Council stipends at an average of the top three compensations for North Carolina municipal councils and county commissioners. The group also proposed increasing the expense accounts in response to growing operational costs associated with auto/travel, technology, child care, event attendance/constituent outreach etc. of the Council and Mayor.

The Committee
agreed upon stipends and allowances are as follows:

Mayor Stipend	\$36511
Annual Expense Allowance	\$ 6000
Annual Car Allowance	\$ 2400
Annual Technology Allowance	<u>\$ 1000</u>
Total Compensation	\$45911

Council Stipend	\$29848
Annual Expense Allowance	\$ 4000
Annual Car Allowance	\$ 2400
Annual Technology Allowance	<u>\$ 1000</u>
Total Compensation	\$37248

In follow-up discussion the group felt that a regular review of Mayor/Council compensation should be done every 4 off election years using this formula so that the base compensation remains in sync with prevailing economic conditions. This will be part of our recommendation to council.

Chair Braun then indicated he would be drafting comments for the June 15 meeting of Council and keeping them focused on our process and findings. He also noted that on our June 9th meeting we would discuss both council size and ways to increase voter participation.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned. Our next meeting will be June 9 at noon via zoom.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Schmitt', written in a cursive style.

Harvey Schmitt
Secretary

**Minutes for Raleigh City Council Study Committee
On Council Terms/ Salaries and Voter Engagement Participation
June 9, 2021 Meeting
12:00 PM via Zoom**

Attendees: Eric Braun Chair, Nervahna Crew, Catherine Lawson, Diana Powell, Harvey Schmitt, Ashton Smith, Justin Sutton, Robbie Rikard, and Eugene Weeks. Absent: Beth Trahos

City Staff: Robin Tatum, Stacy Lundy, Janie Richardson, Brandon Poole

Guest: Gerry Cohen

Meeting called to order by Chair Braun.

On a motion by Crew and a second by Rikard the minutes of the May 24th, 2021 meeting were approved as written.

Chair Braun opened the meeting with a review of our most recent meeting where we recommended stipend adjustments. He also noted that the interim report to council will be delivered on June 15 and all members of the committee were invited to attend.

Today's meeting was to review the status for city elections as a result of S722, data on voter turnout in Raleigh elections and how voter turnout is influenced by election timing. Using this background the discussion will be focused on ways to substantially increase voter turnout in Municipal elections. Other items to be discussed included voter engagement strategies and size of council.

The committee heard from Attorney Tatum who indicated that S722 (as approved by the Senate), will set back 2021 city elections to March to accommodate for proper district mapping, due to late release of census data. City Council has asked that a local bill be drawn to move the election to November 2022 to create certainty, allowing new districts to be redrawn with adequate public input, plan for a parks bond, hear from our committee and improve voter turnout. This led to a discussion around the voter participation impacts of a General election/even year cycle. Gerry Cohen Wake County Board of Election member presented data gleaned from elections for Wake County School System, Raleigh and Winston-Salem. The following is his report.

(While I am a member of the Wake County Board of Elections, this presentation reflects solely my own research and opinions/analyses)

Raleigh municipal elections were held in May of odd-years 1947-71, with a non-partisan primary in April to "narrow the field" if more than twice the number of candidates filed than were to be elected. The General Assembly moved the election to November of the odd-year effective in 1973, with a non-partisan primary in October. This system was used 1973-77, when a city council initiated home rule charter amendment moved the election beginning in 1999 to October with a November runoff if no candidate got 50%.

The accompanying spreadsheet shows turnout of Raleigh registered voters in elections 2014-2020, municipal, runoff, primary, and elections. The starkest contrast is between elections in

October/November of the odd-year and the even-year general election. For example, Raleigh had 51,981 votes cast in October of 2019 mayoral election, but 246,875* Raleigh voters cast ballots in the Nov 2020 election with a housing bond, almost five times as many voters.*

*(*note – all Raleigh totals in this document do NOT include the 1800 Raleigh registered voters in Durham County)*

The difference between odd-year October and November elections seems relatively minor, with 46,493 votes cast in October 2017 and 48,497 in the November 2017 runoff.

Turnout in even-year primary elections varies significantly with Raleigh voters, largely depending on whether or not it is a presidential primary. In the 2020 presidential primary there were 103,451 Raleigh votes cast, while the 2014 and 2018 mid-term primaries each had around 31,000 votes cast. (note that the 2018 primary has NO statewide races on the ballot, while the upcoming 2022 primary seems likely to have hotly contested US Senate primaries in both major parties.

If the next Raleigh election is held at the same time as the 2022 primary, in my opinion it is likely we will see a turnout greater than either the normal October Raleigh election and the usual mid-term primary.

Raleigh has used the primary as an election date just once in the last 25 years, with a May 1998 municipal bond issue. Non-partisan elections at the primary are the most common election method for NC school boards, with Durham and Orange County school boards on the 2022 primary ballot.

Other local elections show the same stark disparity in turnout between odd- and even-year elections. The Wake school board had staggered four-year terms through 2013 when the General Assembly switched to even years. For example the total votes cast in the 2011/2013 school board cycle for all nine seats was 110,797, while in the 2020 November election, 502,557 voters cast school board ballots, roughly the same nearly 5:1 ratio as for odd- and even-year Raleigh elections.

Winston-Salem similarly moved its city elections from odd-year to even year effective in 2016 – there were 15,354 votes cast for Mayor in November 2013 while there were 119,510 votes cast for Mayor in November 2020, a nearly 8:1 ratio.

An important factor to consider in this evaluation is that to move to even years requires General Assembly approval, but there has been a small but steady approval of such changes. In Buncombe County, Asheville and three smaller municipalities vote in the even year, as do all municipalities in Stanly and Surry Counties. Lincolnton and Winston-Salem also vote in the even-year.

In terms of the form of election, Raleigh with a home rule charter amendment could move the election from October to November, either as a plurality election or with an October non-partisan primary. In the even-year, an election at the primary could either by plurality or with a runoff, in even-year November it would need to be plurality (Note: since there is always an exception, Asheville will have a March 2022 non-partisan primary with a November 2022 election.)

I've also included in the Raleigh table below the percentage of votes cast by black Raleigh voters in 2014-2020 municipal and other elections as there is often interest in whether the composition of the electorate itself is substantially different depending on the election date.

WINSTON-SALEM
MUNICIPAL
VOTES CAST -- ELECTION
CHANGED FROM ODD TO
EVEN
IN 2016
FOUR YEAR TERMS

2009	10574
2013	15354
2016	94381
2020	119510

WAKE BOARD OF
EDUCATION
VOTES CAST
ELECTION CHANGED FROM
ODD TO EVEN IN 2016
PREVIOUS TO 2016 WAS
FOUR-YEAR STAGGERED
NOW TWO YEAR TERMS

2011 PLUS

2013	110797
2016	358361
2018	320322
2020	502557

Source: NCSBE

RALEIGH VOTER
TURNOUT

SOURCE WAKE
BOE

	ELECTION DATE	TOTAL_ALL	RACE_B	RACE_W	% BLACK
MID-TERM PRIMARY	05/06/2014	31,736	6,759	23,636	21.3%
MID-TERM GENERAL	11/04/2014	105,841	28,711	69,285	27.1%
CITY	10/06/2015	30,227	5,172	23,592	17.1%
PREZ PRIMARY	03/15/2016	92,313	21,720	62,888	23.5%
PREZ GENERAL	11/08/2016	177,561	45,991	109,821	25.9%
CITY	10/10/2017	46,493	10,862	32,601	23.4%
CITY RUNOFF	11/07/2017	48,497	13,577	32,005	28.0%
MID-TERM PRIMARY	05/08/2018	31,554	9,389	20,082	29.8%
MID-TERM GENERAL	11/06/2018	159,178	38,909	101,715	24.4%
CITY	10/08/2019	51,981	11,609	36,470	22.3%

PREZ PRIMARY	03/03/2020	103,451	24,604	66,738	23.8%
PREZ GENERAL	11/03/2020	246,875	57,094	139,278	23.1%

VOTERS IN CORPORATE
LIMITS ONLY

In follow-up discussion it was noted that voter turnout increased six to eight times in the general election cycle in Winston-Salem and nearly five times for the Wake County Board of Education.

Other than moving the election to even years, the Study Committee was not able to easily identify effective strategies that might yield significant shift in voter participation. Given the committee charge of identifying strategies to increase voter participation it was the consensus that holding local elections on even years is the most efficient and effective way to generate higher voter turnout.

The committee then began a discussion on voter education/engagement and surfaced strategies identified by the National League of Municipalities regarding advocacy, civic engagement staff, and equity and inclusion outreach. Since this was new material the group will review the source material links below prior to our next meeting:

https://www.nlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Census_Voting_Survey_Issue_Brief.pdf

<https://www.nlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/MunicipalActionGuideonRaceEquityinVoting.pdf>

There was also discussion around providing a nonpartisan/non edited voters guide as is done for Judicial races.

Statute for judicial voter

guide: https://www.ncleg.gov/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/HTML/BySection/Chapter_163/GS_163-278.69.html

It was noted that current cost for odd year elections is \$800,000 and going to a November/even year cycle will lower costs and could free up some money for the engagement strategies. Since the city has hired a consultant on engagement strategies Attorney Tatum was asked to circulate the final report to the committee prior to our next meeting.

It was also asked that appropriate city staff be invited to the next meeting to learn of current voter/citizen outreach and engagement tactics so that the committee did not have to reinvent them.

The committee then spent some time on the question of council size. There were a variety of interests noted: having an odd number of councilors to have a natural tie breaker, keeping the size even so as to encourage more compromise and cooperation, increasing district representation, increasing at large representation, keeping the council a manageable size, keeping districts a manageable size, and the associated costs of adding councilors. There was at this point no clear sense of consensus and the topic will be discussed at the next meeting.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned. Our next meeting will be June 23 at noon via zoom.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Schmitt', written in a cursive style.

Harvey Schmitt
Secretary

**Minutes for Raleigh City Council Study Committee
On Council Terms/ Salaries and Voter Engagement Participation
June 23, 2021 Meeting
12:00 PM via Zoom**

Attendees: Eric Braun Chair, Nervahna Crew, Catherine Lawson, Diana Powell, Harvey Schmitt, Ashton Smith, Justin Sutton, and Beth Trahos. Absent: Robbie Rikard, Eugene Weeks

City Staff: Robin Tatum, Stacy Lundy, Janie Richardson, Brandon Poole

Meeting called to order by Chair Braun.

On a motion by Smith and a second by Powell the minutes of the June 9th, 2021 meeting were approved as written.

Chair Braun opened the meeting with a review of our most recent meeting where we began our review of possible engagement strategies and council size. He also reported on the presentation of the interim report which went well with a few questions on compensation. He also reported on the passage of S722 which is on the Governor's desk for signature. The legislation would set the next Council election to November of 2022 consistent with the committee's recommendation to improve voter turnout.

Today's meeting was to continue to discuss voter engagement strategies and size of council. Committee members engaged in a conversation about their views of ideal councils, voters, barriers to voting and eliminating those barriers.

Some of the characteristics of Council mentioned were: representative of the city's demographics; collaborative; understand their role; good communicators; represent their constituent perspectives; and strategic.

Characteristics of voters included: informed; have trust in their elected officials; be curious about the city and its direction and vote regularly.

Barriers to voting included: job and childcare conflicts; lack of familiarity with city direction/issues; not knowing when and where to vote or not knowing where to find out; and transportation to the polls.

The committee then began a review of possible strategies to engage voters. The following were discussed:

- A voter guide similar to the ones done for judges including a form to request and absentee ballot, mailed to all eligible voters
- Automatic voter registration (currently not allowed under North Carolina law)
- Fare free transportation to polls (currently available on city bus system)
- Better city website visibility with a wide variety of voter resources including a simple way to find polling places and dates. The committee recommends a separate landing page for voter engagement resources.

- Interactive website identifying district representatives for members
- One stop voting locations over a longer time for polls to be open
- Using public access TV (Raleigh Channel) to provide voter information and candidate forums
- More candidate forums including having the city commit resources to sponsor and stage candidate forums
- Use of text messages to encourage voters to get to the polls. The city could use its e-mail system or that of the county to execute
- Have the city's community engagement staff make voter engagement a priority part of their responsibilities.
- Create a public private initiative to give employees time to vote on election day
- Promote free transportation available on election day
- Use PSA signage where possible to encourage voting on election day and early voting

Acknowledging that some efforts may already exist the committee asked for representatives of city staff be at our next meeting to review current strategies and tactics.

The committee then engaged in a discussion around the size of council. The limit according to North Carolina law is 12 and the average size of councils around the state is 10.3. The average among the large cities in NC is 7.9 and 8.8 without Raleigh in the group. The conversation covered the benefits of district representation vs. at-large. There appeared to be openness to some increase in size but no clear decision. The group was divided in its initial discussions regarding odd or even council size. There was some gravitation to reviewing the following options at our next meeting;

- A. 9 members with addition of a district representative
- B. 9 members with addition of an at-large representative
- C. 10 members with the addition of 2 district members
- D. 10 members with the addition of 1 district and 1 at-large
- E. 10 members with the addition of 2 at-large
- F. 11 members with the addition of 3 district representatives
- G. 11 members with the addition of 2 district and 1 at-large
- H. 11 members with the addition of 1 district and 2 at-large
- I. 11 members with the addition of 3 at-large

In reviewing the council's time schedule to take action on these recommendations (in a timely manner) the committee's work should be concluded in the next two meetings.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned. Our next meeting will be July 14th at noon via zoom.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Schmitt'.

Harvey Schmitt
Secretary

**Minutes for Raleigh City Council Study Committee
On Council Terms/ Salaries and Voter Engagement Participation
July 14, 2021 Meeting
12:00 PM via Zoom**

Attendees: Eric Braun Chair, Catherine Lawson, Diana Powell, Harvey Schmitt, Justin Sutton, Beth Trahos, and Eugene Weeks. **Absent:** Nervahna Crew, Robbie Rikard, Ashton Smith
City Staff: Robin Tatum, Stacy Lundy, Janie Richardson, Brandon Poole **Guest:** Gerry Cohen

Meeting called to order by Chair Braun.

On a motion by Lawson and a second by Trahos the minutes of the June 23rd, 2021 meeting were approved as written.

Chair Braun opened the meeting with a review of the previous meeting on proposed engagement strategies and council size. Today's meeting was to continue the discussion and hear from staff on questions posed regarding engagement.

Janie Richardson reported to the group the following

1. What does the City currently do regarding outreach for election information? What about candidate information?
 - *City will promote the election and encourage people to vote via the City's website, social media (examples included Twitter, Facebook and Nextdoor) at public meetings, and media outreach*
 - *Nothing is currently done by the City as it relates to candidate information*
2. How many people are currently reached via city text system?
 - *There are 2 Different Text Systems*
 - *Everbridge – This is for emergency communications and for public utilities notifications only.*
 - *150-200K people in the Public Utilities database*
 - *GovDelivery – This is a subscription-based communications method. Anyone can sign up for over 249 different topics. Users can sign up with their email or cell phone number. Not all topics have a text message based alert system.*
 - *To encourage use of a voting specific topic, Communications can develop a campaign to run during the summer across social media and other outreach methods to encourage subscriptions.*
 - *202,000 active users, averaging approximately 2 topics each (mix between email and text)*
3. Do we have a way to know if those groups overlap?
 - *Not applicable as Everbridge cannot be used without consent of citizen.*
4. Are there legal or other issues with using those to make citizens aware of an upcoming election?

- *Consent is required for the communications.*
5. What renter communication methods can we utilize?
 - *The City doesn't have specific methods to contact renters, but the City does target community organizations, such as churches and non-profits for things such as information regarding rental relief and other community programs.*
 - *Nextdoor is also an option, as it has 154,000 subscribers and the City can geotarget the advertised information to a certain zip code or radius around a certain location.*
 6. What languages does the City use on engagement efforts?
 - *Primarily English and Spanish. The City website can translate into most languages using Google translate module. Through the Strategic Plan, and through latest census data and legal regulations, the City is putting together more guidance around this.*
 7. Is there a known communication mode that generates a high response from citizens?
 - *The highest engagement and response is from sharing info on the City website and social media.*
 - *City website traffic hits are increasing and they were up to 11-12 million last year.*
 8. Can the City fund and mail a non-partisan voter guide to residents?
 - *Yes, but the City cannot expend funds to endorse candidates so the particular format of a voter guide, forum or advertisement should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to ensure compliance with this restriction.*
 9. Can the City fund candidate forums across the City?
 - *Yes, but see above.*
 10. Can the City pay to advertise such forums to encourage community participation?
 - *Yes, but see above*

The Committee discussed each of these items as they were presented and offered several expanded suggestions on recommendations from the June 28 meeting and several new suggestions for the report.

1. The City's website should have a dedicated space for voter engagement with a separate landing page.
2. Where appropriate it would be useful to place separate tabs links to voter engagement information throughout the website
3. Since the city is currently seeking consent from users to receive information on various committees and initiatives there should be several places where they should be able to request information on upcoming elections (e.g. polling places, early voting, districts, general candidate information)
4. While there was some conversation around coordinating candidate forums the group felt that publishing a list of candidate forums might be helpful both for coordination and voter engagement.

5. The group was open to the city sponsoring a candidate forum(s) provided the format did not put the city in an awkward position of highlighting issues or priorities that would create a bias for any particular candidate(s).
6. The committee was very supportive of a printed and electronic voter guide
7. The committee felt that activating voter engagement strategies and tactics should be a priority for the City Manager and the Manager should determine the best way to staff that effort.

Gerry Cohen member for the Wake County Election Board outlined how the county would coordinate with the City for the now newly adopted 2022 elections. He noted the county would be sending out new voter cards to reflect the new districts and voting locations. They would also be coordinating early voting arrangements. They will lead/coordinate with the City on general voter communication for 2022.

The committee then engaged in a discussion around the size of council. Building on June 28 meeting conversations the committee discussed whether to recommend odd or even sized council. The consensus among those present was for an odd number to avoid council stalemates. Chairman Braun said he would discuss with committee members not in attendance to determine if there was consensus. He will report at the next meeting.

In the discussion around size of council it was noted that some support from the public had been offered for more district councilors in order to make the districts smaller to increase citizen access. The committee did not feel they could find a rationale to increase the number of district seats to coincide with some specific (limited) population size. (i.e. each district should have no more than "x" population.) This strategy would be challenging given that the City is growing quickly and there would be no way to sustain a formula cap over time without violating the state mandated cap on council size (12.) In addition the committee did not feel growing council to any significant degree was helpful from the position of governance and it would place additional budgetary and administrative strain on the City. The committee gravitated toward 9 members with the additional member being a district representative. At our next meeting will discuss and attempt to find consensus on council size and make-up.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned. Our next meeting will be July 28th at noon via zoom.

Respectfully submitted



Harvey Schmitt
Secretary

**Minutes for Raleigh City Council Study Committee
On Council Terms/ Salaries and Voter Engagement Participation
July 28, 2021 Meeting
12:00 PM via Zoom**

Attendees: Eric Braun Chair, Nervahna Crew, Catherine Lawson, Diana Powell, Robbie Rikard, Harvey Schmitt, Ashton Smith, Beth Trahos, and Eugene Weeks. Absent: Justin Sutton

City Staff: Robin Tatum, Stacy Lundy, Janie Richardson, Brandon Poole **Guest:** Gerry Cohen

Meeting called to order by Chair Braun.

On a motion by Weeks and a second by Smith the minutes of the July 14th, 2021 meeting were approved as written.

Chair Braun opened the meeting with a review of the previous meeting on proposed engagement strategies

1. It should be a council and staff priority as well as Wake County in its election leadership roll
2. City Manager should appoint appropriate staff resources to the task
3. Create a landing page for voter information
4. Where appropriate it would be useful to place separate tabs links to voter engagement information throughout the website
5. Since the city is currently seeking consent from users to receive information on various committees and initiatives there should be several places where they should be able to request information on upcoming elections (e.g. polling places, early voting, districts, general candidate information)
6. Continue free transportation to the polls
7. City sponsored printed and electronic voter guide
8. Use Go Raleigh busses to provide GOTV information
9. Use city managed kiosks to promote voter engagement
10. Use utility and Parks newsletters to disseminate election information

As well as other items mentioned and agreed upon at previous meetings.

The group had also discussed council size. Discussion centered on having an odd number of councilors to facilitate action and avoid even numbered votes and stalemates. The group had gravitated to adding one additional member with debate continuing on whether it should be a district representative or an at-large council spot.

Chair Braun also noted a correction to our interim report. It stated that the city covered 47 sq. miles in 1973 and now it is 211 sq. mi. The actual size now 147 sq. mi. The other 64 sq. mi. (to reach 211 sq. mi.) represents the land in the city's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)

<https://cityofraleigh0drupal.blob.core.usgovcloudapi.net/drupal-prod/COR22/SESAETJFAQ.pdf>

The ETJ is likely to come under city control over time putting additional logistical (time and space) challenges for councilors seeking to remain connected to their growing constituent base. This information was gleaned from the Raleigh Databook

<https://cityofraleigh0drupal.blob.core.usgovcloudapi.net/drupal-prod/COR22/2019DataBook.pdf>

The committee then engaged in a lengthy discussion around the benefits of an additional district or at-large representative.

Given the growth of the city, the interest of council in improving citizen engagement, and feedback from the public the group felt that an additional district representative would help address these issues without making council unwieldy. There was discussion supporting an at-large council seat to advance total city thinking/focus rather than a narrower district bias. In follow-up discussion the group felt that the 4-year staggered terms would support a balance between long and short term focus by voters and councilors without needing an additional at-large seat.

At conclusion the committee supports a single new district seat.

Chairman Braun indicated that he would draft a final report for the committee to review at our August 11 meeting with hopes of making final adjustments and reaching agreement on the report then or at an Aug 25th meeting should it be needed.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned. Our next meeting will be August 11th at noon via zoom.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Schmitt', written in a cursive style.

Harvey Schmitt
Secretary

**Minutes for Raleigh City Council Study Committee
On Council Terms/ Salaries and Voter Engagement Participation
August 11, 2021 Meeting
12:00 PM via Zoom**

Attendees: Eric Braun Chair, Diana Powell, Robbie Rikard, Harvey Schmitt, Ashton Smith, Justin Sutton, Beth Trahos, and Eugene Weeks. **Absent:** Nervahna Crew, Catherine Lawson,
City Staff: Stacy Lundy, Janie Richardson, Brandon Poole **Guest:** Gerry Cohen

Meeting called to order by Chair Braun.

On a motion by Weeks and a second by Rikard the minutes of the July 28th, 2021 meeting were approved as written.

Chair Braun opened the meeting with a review of the proposed recommendations to council to determine if there were any unsurfaced issues, concerns or comments. There were none.

Chair Braun then reviewed the specific suggestions for voter engagement. Weeks encouraged use of the Raleigh City TV (RTN) as a way to get messages out and supported using the utility bills to help reach those who do not have computer access. Schmitt offered that we should mention the savings generated by moving to even year elections and those savings should be reinvested in voter engagement strategies. Guest Gerry Cohen estimated that there would be significant cost savings (hundreds of thousands of dollars) though he did not have a hard number. These issues will be added to the final report.

Chair Braun noted that he felt council should take the committee's recommendations in whole (as a complete package) and not implemented partially. The committee wants to encourage council to hold both a big picture focus and a district sensitivity and that is most likely tied to enacting all of our recommendations. There was general concurrence

Chair Braun indicated that he would redraft a final report based on today's meeting and any additional feedback from committee members. Adoption of a final report will take place at the Aug 25th meeting. Conditions permitting, we may have an in person get together as all of our meetings have been virtual. **All members were encouraged to plan to be at the Sept 7th Council meeting when our report will be presented.**

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted



Harvey Schmitt
Secretary

