

Dear Charter Review Committee:

The Office of Community Involvement (OCI) would like to propose changes to section 12.40 of the Multnomah County Charter, regarding the timeline of the MCCRC and the selection process for members. The current language created several key challenges in selecting members and convening the 2021-2022 MCCRC:

- The specific dates and deadlines outlined in Charter provide very little flexibility for staff to design a community friendly application process or to provide more time for the MCCRC to conduct its review of the charter. Applicants had to wait up to seven months between submitting their application and learning if they had been selected, and we could not convene the committee any earlier than September 2021.
- Selecting members by Senate district requires significant staff capacity to engage state legislators, who aren't very familiar with the MCCRC and have limited time to deeply engage in application evaluation. The current approach also results in unequal representation across County districts. Due to the way senate districts overlay our County districts, 7 of our 16 members reside in District 1 (Northwest & Southwest Portland and the inner Eastside), while only 2 live in District 2 (North & Northeast Portland). One Senate District has only 1,600 Multnomah County residents, and identifying a member from that district was challenging. In addition, with applicants evaluated and selected by Senate District, there is no opportunity to consider the makeup of the whole committee in making appointments.
- The current language does not address how to handle vacancies on the committee, or allow for flexibility if an MCCRC member moves between districts during their term, which could disproportionately impact renters and others more likely to move residences.

We propose the following changes to the Charter:

- Change the MCCRC's first meeting from September to the preceding March, providing the committee with an additional six months of work time, and remove the specific dates for the application process
- Select MCCRC members based on County district, requiring four members who reside in each district for a total of 16 MCCRC members, and task the Office of Community Involvement with application outreach, evaluation and member appointment
- If a member moves from their County district after being appointed, allow them to continue serving on the committee as long as they remain a Multnomah County resident
- Provide a general process for filling vacancies, allowing the Office of Community Involvement to fill vacancies from the applicant pool if reasonable given the timing of the vacancy
- Change the language around the committee selecting a "chairperson" to more explicitly allow for different leadership structures such as co-chairs

OCI can work with the County Attorney's office to draft specific language that captures these changes, and present those to the MCCRC for consideration. We would also be happy to discuss the challenges and proposed changes with the MCCRC and/or a subcommittee, and look forward to working with the committee to improve this process for the future.

Thank you,

Office of Community Involvement