

# City of Camas

## Form of Government Committee Meeting

Monday, March 5, 2018, 9 am to 11 am

Meeting Notes

---

**Attendees:** Chair Nan Henriksen, Paul Dennis, Greg Anderson (phone), Doug Quinn, Lloyd Halverson (phone), Lynn Valenter and Lisa Schauer

**Staff:** Pete Capell

1. Introductions

2. Mission of committee

Look at the structure that would best suit Camas in the future without having a current crisis in leadership. A structure that has the highest probability to optimize good governance. Provide a report to Council upon completion.

3. Committee process and focus

Conversation and theory.

Take individual people out of the positions when looking at the structure.

Strong Mayor is a daunting position; difficult to do when working full time and raising a family.

4. Membership of committee

Mayor has invited Jim Short to participate; his response has not yet been received.

The current size of the committee is good.

5. Schedule of work

Plan to hold five meetings; on the first and third Mondays at 8:00 am and will last no longer than two hours. Last meeting planned for May 7, 2018, with report to Council during the second Council meeting in May or the first Council meeting in June.

6. Questions the committee would like researched

Why do other cities change their form of government?

What are the goals and vision of the City?

Provide link to City's Strategic Plan and Comprehensive Plan.

What is the level of turnover in each form of government?

7. Next Meeting

Greg to discuss the Council's vision for the future of Camas.

Why did other jurisdictions change their form of government?

9:00 am Tracy Burrows, Executive Director for MRSC to discuss the pros and cons of each type of government, while not being a proponent for either.

# City of Camas

## Form of Government Committee Meeting

Monday, March 19, 2018, 8 am to 10 am  
Meeting Notes

---

**Attendees:** Chair Nan Henriksen, Paul Dennis, Greg Anderson (phone), Doug Quinn, Lynn Valenter and Lisa Schauer

**Staff:** Pete Capell

### 1. Camas Vision – Greg Anderson

The Comprehensive Plan, completed in June of 2016, creates the vision for Camas. While it is an update, it is also consistent with past plans.

Addressing growth – some support, some oppose

Looking at Level of Service provided by City departments

What is the workload of the Mayor? Depends on the Mayor; how much they are comfortable delegating to others. Difficult for someone with a full-time job and raising a family.

### 2. Discussion with Tracy Burrows, Executive Director, MRSC

The preferred form of government depends on how your community wants to make decisions.

Most Council – Manager cities are medium to large cities

Mayor – Council form of government

- Highly visible leadership
- Depends on personality of the Mayor
- Mayor may have more clout on regional committees
- Mayor has veto power

Council – Manager form of government

- City Manager accountable to entire Council
- Carry agenda of full Council
- Council has more authority

Skills to get elected are different than skills to run a city.

You need to determine which form is going to be:

- Responsive to the community
- Create a better run city

How important is politics in your community?

Professional City Administrators are a hybrid

Most cities make the change due to problems in the city

3. Questions the committee would like researched

None at this time – contact Pete if you have a question or need some information

4. Next Meeting – Monday, April 2, 2018 8 am – 10 am in the City Hall Council Chambers

Each Committee Member will prepare a paper with their beliefs of the pros and cons of each form of government – Be prepared to discuss

# City of Camas

## Form of Government Committee Meeting

Monday, April 2, 2018, 8 am to 10 am  
Meeting Notes

**Attendees:** Chair Nan Henriksen, Paul Dennis, Greg Anderson (phone), Lloyd Halverson, Doug Quinn, Lynn Valenter and Lisa Schauer

**Staff:** Bernie Bacon

### 1. Committee Members discuss their pros and cons for each form of government

The committee held a lively discussion with significant involvement from all of the members. The summary of the discussion is as follows.

- No form of government is perfect. With the right people, any form will succeed and with the wrong people, any form will fail. The Committee is looking for a form of government that provides the greatest level of certainty of the best possible long term outcomes for the community.
- Both forms of government result in a lot of power in one position, either the Strong Mayor or the City Manager. The difference is that it takes up to four years to replace the Mayor and four votes to replace the City Manager.
- Camas has had stability in the City Administrator position. That is not the case in many cities, where a new Mayor wants to bring in their person for the position.
- The Council–Manager form of government requires an active, attentive and strong Council. They are responsible to ensure that the City Manager is carrying out their policy direction. Instead of a Strong Mayor form of government, it is a Strong Council form of government.
- A wider range of professional choices will be available in the selection of a City Manager. Some potential great candidates might look elsewhere rather than apply for a City Administrator position.
- It is critical for Camas that the Mayor for a Council–Manager form of government still be elected by the community. This is part of the overall recommendation. Even though the decision to elect the Mayor cannot be on the same ballot as the form of government decision, the Committee feels very strongly that both are needed to provide the best possible governance in the future. The elected Mayor by the people under Council–Manager form would help bridge the gap to having the voice of the people.
- The transition from the current to a new form of government is critically important. While the statute states that the change takes effect upon certification of the ballot, a transition plan and time to implement the changes will be critical to the success.
- The MRSC presentation indicated an increased cost to move to the Council–Manager form. That would be true if Camas had not had a City Administrator for so long. In Camas' case, there would be a slight decrease in costs due to a reduction in the Mayor's compensation.
- The citizens of Camas are very satisfied with current operation of the City. It will require some effort to educate the voters about why we should make a change, when the current system is not broken.

## **2. Questions the committee would like researched**

If the citizens approve the proposition the change to a council – manager form of government, how long will it be before the vote could be held to have a citizen elected mayor?

Why and where in the law does it state that we cannot, on one ballot, have a proposed change of government structure; and second, if we change the structure, should we adopt a directly elected mayor?

What's the transition time - details on the timing?

Will the council select an interim manager? Would the City Administrator be the interim City Manager until they select a City Manager?

## **3. Where does the committee go from here?**

Pete will begin compiling all of this information and draft something for the next meeting.

## **4. Next Meeting – Monday, April 16, 2018, 8 am – 10 am in the City Hall Council Chambers**

We could insert a 4/30 meeting if needed.

Suggest prepping an update to Council as soon as possible. Final Report could be drafted to present by the 5/21 meeting.

**City of Camas**  
**Form of Government Committee Meeting**  
Monday, April 16, 2018, 8 am to 10 am  
Meeting Notes

**Attendees:** Chair Nan Henriksen, Paul Dennis, Greg Anderson (phone), Lloyd Halverson, Doug Quinn, Lynn Valenter and Lisa Schauer

**Staff:** Pete Capell and Bernie Bacon

**1. Committee Members discuss their pros and cons for each form of government from the last meeting**

The committee reviewed the draft meeting notes for the past meeting and continued to discuss the pros and cons of each form of government. Comments were made about the detailed notes provided for the previous meeting. Committee Members clarified their previous comments, highlighted the key points and added additional points. The Meeting Notes will be updated based on their comments and brought back in summary form.

**2. Review of Materials provided over the last four meetings**

RCW 3A.02.120 states that a change in form of government will be effective upon county auditor issuing certification of election, if the majority of the votes cast supported the change. Therefore, if the council places it on the General Election ballot and it passes, the change would likely take place on the first meeting in December.

RCW 35A13.033 states the city council of a council-manager city may, by resolution, place before the voters of the city, a proposition to designate the person elected to council position one as the chair of the council with powers and duties set forth in RCW 35A.13.030. If a majority of those voting on the proposition cast a positive vote, then at all subsequent general elections at which position one is on the ballot, the person who is elected to position one shall become the chair upon taking office.

Pete interpreted the RCWs that we would become a council-manager city, if the measure passes, at the first meeting in December. If the resolution is passed by council, then we would have adequate time to get the measure on the February Special Election, which would establish the elected Mayor, well before the filing deadline in May.

An email was sent to Jim Doherty, from MRSC, last week to confirm, but have not heard back.

The council will select the manager, whether it is on an interim basis or as the regular manager.

**3. Discuss recommendation to Council.**

Lisa will prepare a draft portion of the recommendation describing why make the change now.

Nan will prepare a draft recommendation, based on material provided by Lisa and Pete.

The draft recommendation will be available on April 30<sup>th</sup> and distributed to the committee. A review meeting with some members of the committee will be held on April 25<sup>th</sup>.

The recommendation to the Council will be moved to June 4<sup>th</sup>, because Paul Dennis and Mayor Higgins are unavailable on May 21<sup>st</sup>. It will be at the 7 pm Regular Meeting.

**4. Next Meeting – Monday, May 7, 2018, 8 am – 10 am in the City Hall Council Chambers**

We hope to finalize the recommendation at that meeting.



**City of Camas**  
**Form of Government Committee Meeting**  
Monday, May 7, 2018, 8 am to 10 am  
Meeting Notes

**Attendees:** Chair Nan Henriksen, Paul Dennis, Greg Anderson (phone), Doug Quinn, Lynn Valenter and Lisa Schauer

**Staff:** Pete Capell and Bernie Bacon

**1. Review Meeting Notes from April 2<sup>nd</sup> and April 16<sup>th</sup>**

The Meeting Notes for April 2, 2018 and April 16, 2018 were approved with no revisions.

**2. Review Comparable Cities, Financial Information and Transition Plan Memos**

Comparable Cities – No changes

Financial Information – Minor revisions to the document

Transition Plan – add “Other action as determined by the Council” to the Prior to the election, Procedural/Protocol

**3. Review Draft Report to Council**

Nan recommended additional details about the of the Council – Manager form of government in the Timeline and Process section of the Report.

Lynn recommended a table on the first page for an overview/at-a-glance explanation, definition and differences of both forms of government.

It was recommended that a sentence be added to the Why Now section to discuss the window of opportunity we have now with the Mayor and at-large position will be on the ballot in 2019.

Add the following items to the attachments:

- MRSC - City and Town Forms of Government
- MRSC – Trends in City and Town Forms of Government
- Summary Views in Professional Management in Local Government by Lloyd Halverson
- RCWs for both forms of government

**4. Do we need another meeting to sign the final report and planning for a June 4<sup>th</sup> Council presentation?**

Nan will give the presentation

There will be a draft resolution in the packet.

No need for another meeting.