



advocated an alternate plan, not yet detailed, that Commissioner Mapps says he wants to put on the ballot later. Vadim's presentation went one minute beyond the time allotted to him.

At that point, President Elaine O'Keefe opened the meeting to questions. A woman identifying herself as Rachel asked, if this plan is defeated, would the Mapps plan be on the May ballot? Vadim answered yes – that he would “petition it onto the ballot”, if the Council does not put it there. Melanie responded that Mapps' plan is just an idea at this point, and not a guarantee – and remarked that a different set of rules apply to petition-gathered items on the ballot. A woman present asked Melanie how diverse the citizen membership of the Charter Commission was; she responded that it was quite ethnically diverse: All members are shown on the Charter Commission website; about 50% were technically “minority”. A woman asked how the proposed ranked-choice voting would work with a 25% victory margin; Vadim gave his understanding of the math involved; and Melanie explained how this math promotes proportional representation – and she reminded that, in many elections nowadays, less than 20% of the registered voters actually vote. A man present asked Melanie about Vadim's statement that no city has been successful with multi-member district representation; Melanie named several cities that have long had it. A man in the audience then used his question time to make a statement rather than asking a question.

Another man asked how three representatives of a city district could be held accountable in each of the four proposed districts, and Melanie explained how. However Vadim insisted this would still have to be worked out. A man present asked if the charter proposal passes, can the City Council still put something on the ballot to change an element of it that may not be working? Melanie said yes they can, and they have always had the ability to do that. A man arose to say that he finds ranked-choice voting hard to understand. Vadim replied that he finds it hard to understand also. A woman said that it may be necessary under the new charter plan for voters to be more discerning and take voting more seriously. A man asked by what margin did this charter plan pass the Charter Commission? Melanie responded: 17 to 3.

Rachel wondered why all this is in ONE ballot measure? Melanie responded that all these elements are designed to work together, to accomplish the most effective new form of city government. She added that in the many community Open Houses, the ranked-choice voting was preferred by 70% of the aggregate attendees of all Open Houses. Vadim stated that he feels the voters should have separate measures for the various elements of the plan. A man asked if any city is successfully using this system? Melanie responded yes – Cambridge, Massachusetts, for one – since 1940. David Dugan asked if there is a benefit in eliminating a primary election, as this form of ranked-choice voting would do. Melanie responded that there is always a much higher voter turnout in General Elections, so having the entire election complete in a General Election would have the advantage of obtaining the maximum voter participation. Vadim said he thinks primary elections help winnow candidates.

Elaine O'Keefe asked how the transition of city government would be implemented if the measure passes? Melanie said the Mayor could hire the new City Administrator right away; new Counselors elected in that election would have their normal two-year term, as the new system is being implemented, for which there is a timeline. Then they could run again for the new City Council at the end of their term, like anyone else. Implementation would be complete in November of 2024. A man asked how the City Bureaus would be reformed; Melanie said the Mayor's City Administrator would be involved in the reform process.

President O'Keefe announced that materials will be gathered on this subject in the next few days to place on the main SMILE website, with facts and opinions on this issue. She announced the featured programs at the next two SMILE General Meetings, and then adjourned this one at 8:57 p.m.