

SUMMARY MINUTES

CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION – June 18, 2015

Chairperson Cleora Magee called this regular meeting of the Flint Charter Review Commission to order at 6:33 p.m.

Present: John Cherry, Brian Larkin, Cleora Magee, Victoria McKenzie, Charles Metcalf, James Richardson, Marsha Wesley and Barry Williams. Heidi Phaneuf arrived at 6:51 p.m.

Also in attendance: Deputy City Attorney David Roth, City Clerk Inez M. Brown, City Councilwoman Vicki VanBuren and Thomas Donnellan, the attorney who guided the Charter Review Commission in 1972.

Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Wesley led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Commissioners were informed that they would have minutes from the June 11, 2015, meeting prior to the June 25, 2015, meeting.

Roll Call

The recording secretary took roll call.

Public Comment on Agenda

R.L. Mitchell applauded Commissioners for inviting the Mayor of Pontiac to address the Commission.

REPORTS

1. Finance Committee

Ms. Wesley, the committee's chairperson, discussed a handout detailing the 2016 budget. She noted that expenses are divided into four categories: Consultants, Community Outreach, Communications and Supplies.

The category titled Consultants includes: a legal consultant, a municipal governance consultant who can provide training and guidance, communications, a facilitator for community meetings, an administrative assistant/clerk and money for travel and expenses. The total estimated cost for consultants is \$105,100.00.

Community Outreach includes marketing and notifications, and material and supplies, for a total cost of \$8,000.00.

The category titled Communications includes: video recordings, web site hosting and management, newsletters, printing and publishing, and mailings and postage. The total estimated cost is \$33,000.00.

The estimate for supplies – general office supplies and copying – is \$6,000.00.

The total estimated 2016 budget is \$152,100.00.

Mr. Richardson, who is also a member of the Finance Committee, went over some of the costs outlined in the budget. He noted that legal representation may be needed to assist with specific areas of the Charter, although he said he hopes that the City of Flint Legal Department will continue to help with procedural matters.

He added that when the current charter was adopted, the committee had the guidance of an official from the University of Michigan, at a cost of \$100 an hour for 32 hours a month.

Mr. Richardson said that the committee tried to estimate what it would cost to tell the community about meetings and how to market those meetings. He said the City of Flint's Planning Department, which held community meetings on zoning, used interns to call residents beforehand.

He said that costs for communications are estimates for the most part; however, he said copies of the current City Charter will cost \$15 apiece. And new Charters will cost between \$.57 and \$1.76 each, according to a handout provided by Ms. Magee.

Commissioners debated some of the expenses listed by the Finance Committee, but ultimately agreed that the budget was just preliminary and that any allocation received doesn't have to be spent.

Mr. Williams mentioned that Commissioners will receive a stipend for their work, which will also need to be represented in the budget. Ms. Magee said there may still be time to purchase Charters before June 30.

Ms. McKenzie said she felt that the budget needed to be "tightened" – that it should reflect a true cost rather than an estimate "so we know what we're spending." Mr. Richardson noted that adopting the budget as presented will allow the Finance Committee to move forward and figure out other sources of revenue. He added that Commissioners should act quickly to encumber 2015 funds.

Commission Motion

Mr. Williams, seconded by Mr. Richardson, made a motion to accept the budget as presented. Mr. Richardson, supported by Mr. Williams, amended the motion to: "accept the proposed budget as presented." Mr. Cherry, supported by Mr. Richardson, amended the motion to: "accept the proposed budget as presented but also add a line item of \$5,000.00 for stipends for Commissioners." The motion passed 6-3 by the following vote:

Brian Larkin – No
Cleora Magee – Yes
Victoria McKenzie – No
Charles Metcalf – No
Heidi Phaneuf – Yes
James Richardson – Yes
Marsha Wesley – Yes
Barry Williams – Yes
John Cherry – Yes

Mr. Williams, supported by Mr. Richardson, made a motion to accept the Finance Committee Report. The motion passed by the following vote:

Cleora Magee – Yes
Victoria McKenzie – Yes
Charles Metcalf – Yes
Heidi Phaneuf – Yes
James Richardson – Yes
Marsha Wesley – Yes
Barry Williams – Yes
John Cherry – Yes
Brian Larkin – Yes

2. Rules Committee

Ms. McKenzie, the committee's chairperson, said that the committee met today and discussed how to present proposals to the Commission. She said that Mr. Cherry will write out what was discussed and bring it to the next full meeting of the CRC.

Mr. Larkin, who is also a member of the committee, said that he envisions the need for a full meeting of the commission just to lay out the proposals and go through all the questions. Ms. McKenzie agreed, adding that each rule will need to be discussed so that everyone understands them. She said the process will be lengthy so she could not give a date on when the committee would have all of the proposals in place.

She added that the committee is studying the rules from the 1974 Charter Review Commission to see what's "viable for our Commission."

Mr. Cherry, supported by Mr. Williams, made a motion to accept the Rules Committee report. The motion passed by the following vote:

Victoria McKenzie – Yes
Charles Metcalf – Yes
Heidi Phaneuf – Yes
James Richardson – Yes
Marsha Wesley – Yes
Barry Williams – Yes
John Cherry – Yes
Brian Larkin – Yes
Cleora Magee – Yes

3. Outreach Committee

Ms. Phaneuf, the committee's chairperson, read from the minutes of the June 17, 2015, meeting. She said that the Public Outreach Committee supports the budget that was presented at their meeting, and that there was discussion on how to spend the \$10,000.00 budgeted for the FY2015. The group agreed through consensus that they supported spending the funds on printing 1,000 copies of the 1974 Charter for the public to use, and for training from the Michigan Municipal League.

She also read a statement that the committee proposed:

Guiding Principles for Public Outreach:

The City of Flint Charter Review Commission's Public Outreach process will be open to all Flint citizens. The Commission will ensure that public voices are recognized and that information is open and accessible to the public. The Commission will go to where the people are and will reach out to residents and businesses from all wards. The Commission will seek to engage and educate the community on the City of Flint Charter and will consider all ideas heard in the community.

Commissioners suggested that this statement be the guiding force behind the entire CRC, not just the Public Outreach Committee and that, as such, the first sentence should be changed to: ***The Charter Review process will be open to all Flint citizens.***

Mr. Larkin made a motion, supported by Ms. McKenzie to accept the statement prepared by the Public Outreach Committee, with the noted changes. The motion passed by the following vote:

Charles Metcalf – Yes
Heidi Phaneuf – Yes
James Richardson – Yes
Marsha Wesley – Yes
Barry Williams – Yes
John Cherry – Yes
Brian Larkin – Yes
Cleora Magee – Yes
Victoria McKenzie – Yes

Ms. Phaneuf also discussed a “Guide for Charter Commissions” prepared by the National Civic League, which each Commissioner received. She pointed to pages 15-23, which gives guidelines for Public Outreach. She also pointed to a section titled “Public Outreach” in an appendix to the binder provided to each Commissioner by the City of Flint Law Department.

She said her committee reviewed notes from the last Charter Review Commission meeting, and highlighted the first priorities for Public Outreach:

1. Website – we will use the City of Flint’s web site and work with the city to get it populated with information on the Charter Commission
2. Web domain name – the Charter Review Commission should have its own domain name such as www.cityofflintcharter.com
3. Facebook page
4. Email services – a general email and email services through a provider such as Constant Contact
5. Business cards
6. Video recordings of Charter Review Commission meetings – talk to Jason
7. Advisory Committee – we will need to define their role; this will be discussed further at the next meeting
8. Mailbox – at the City of Flint, City Clerk, Room 201C, 1101 S. Saginaw Street, Flint, MI 48502
9. Letterhead

The next meeting of the Public Outreach Committee is 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 24, 2015.

The recording secretary noted that letterhead for the commission has been created and that the city is working on a website.

Mr. Richardson made a motion, supported by Mr. Cherry, to accept the Public Outreach Committee report, with the noted changes. The motion passed by the following vote:

Heidi Phaneuf – Yes
James Richardson – Yes
Marsha Wesley – Yes
Barry Williams – Yes
John Cherry – Yes
Brian Larkin – Yes
Cleora Magee – Yes
Victoria McKenzie – Yes
Charles Metcalf – Yes

OLD BUSINESS

1. Potential presentations to the Commission

a. Mayor Deidre Waterman, City of Pontiac

Ms. Magee read a proposed letter to the Mayor of Pontiac, which thanks her for agreeing to speak at a CRC meeting. The letter poses a number of questions, including what process was used to contract and hire professional consultants, how did the city align and empower partners, how did the Michigan Municipal League help in the process and would she be willing to discuss how and why the draft Charter failed.

Ms. Magee stated that Ms. Waterman is unable to visit on Thursday evenings, when the full CRC usually meets, so she offered two alternative dates: 6:30 p.m. Monday, July 6, 2015, and 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, July 7, 2015.

During discussion, two questions were added: Where did they reach out for funding and is she willing to share any lessons learned. Ms. Magee noted that the letter will be mailed sometime next week.

b. Michigan Municipal League

Mr. Cherry said he spoke with Mary Charles, MML research consultant, about training for the CRC. She told him that the person who would conduct the training is Bill Mathewson, MML's General Counsel. The training, which can be scheduled at the convenience of Commissioners, runs from three hours to a half-day session, he said. Mr. Cherry added that any areas touched on in the Charter Handbook would be potential topics for discussion, and that the MML will customize the training based on what the Commissioners want/need. The fee is \$800 plus expenses.

Mr. Cherry suggested that Commissioners authorize Ms. Magee to schedule the training for some time in July.

After discussion on the subject, it was agreed to have the MML training during a weekday morning, as most Commissioners' agreed that their schedules are flexible. Ms. McKenzie noted that she would not be available July 12-15. The Commission, by consensus, authorized Ms. Magee to schedule the training.

2. Any additional business brought before the Commission

Mr. Cherry made a motion, supported by Mr. Larkin, to authorize the chair to make expenditures for the purchase of Charters, business cards and MML training. The motion passed by the following vote:

James Richardson – Yes

Marsha Wesley – Yes

Barry Williams – Yes

John Cherry – Yes

Brian Larkin – Yes

Cleora Magee – Yes

Victoria McKenzie – Yes

Charles Metcalf – Yes

Heidi Phaneuf – Yes

NEW BUSINESS

1. Review of upcoming Commission and Committee meetings

Ms. Magee asked that discussion about future meetings be tabled until the next meeting (June 25, 2015), when the meeting schedules for July and August can be reviewed.

This Charter Review Commission meeting was adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Janell Johnson, Secretary