



**OFFICIAL MINUTES
CHARTER COMMISSION MEETING
ST. LOUIS PARK, MINNESOTA
January 10, 2018
5:30 p.m. – Community Room, City Hall**

1. Call to Order

Chair Maaske called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call and Attendance

Members Present: Maren Anderson, JC Beckstrand, Jim Brimeyer, Gary Carlson, Lynne Carper, Jim de Lambert, Terry Dwyer, David Dyer, Matthew Flory, Ken Gothberg, Sara Maaske, Erin Smith, and Henry Solmer.

Members Absent: Andrew Rose (absence excused), Ron Jarvi, Jr. (absence excused)

Others Present: Nancy Deno (Deputy City Manager/HR Director), Soren Mattick (City Attorney), and Melissa Kennedy (City Clerk)

Ms. Kennedy informed the Commission that Ron Jarvi, Jr. submitted his resignation effective January 10, 2018. She stated the position would be advertised and applications would be sent to the District Court for an appointment to fill the vacancy.

3. Approval of Minutes – December 6, 2017 Charter Commission Meeting

It was moved by Commissioner Carlson, seconded by Commissioner Brimeyer, to approve the minutes of December 6, 2017. The motion passed 13-0.

4. Old Business

a. Executive Committee Proposal on Public Process to be used for Proposed Charter Amendment related to Ranked Choice Voting

Chair Maaske opened the discussion by thanking the Charter Commission for their work and their commitment to thoroughly studying the concept of Ranked Choice Voting in order to make the best possible recommendation for all citizens of St. Louis Park. She stated the Charter Commission exists for a reason and they take their role seriously. The Commission has undertaken a thoughtful process to respond to the City Council's request to study and make a recommendation regarding Ranked Choice Voting. She stated the Commission welcomes and encourages respectful discussion and input, and they believe public process is important. She asked for patience from all those involved and interested in the topic so that the Charter Commission can continue their work and move forward as expeditiously as possible.

Chair Maaske explained the Executive Committee met on December 27, 2017 to discuss and develop a public process proposal for the commission's consideration. She asked the commission to provide feedback on the proposal.

Commissioner Brimeyer asked if the Executive Committee would develop a set list of questions for the expert panel event.

Chair Maaske stated the committee was hoping to get feedback from the commission on how that should be handled. She noted the preference would be for the commissioners to come up with the questions they would like to ask of the panelists.

Commissioner Gothberg questioned why only one meeting for public comment was proposed.

Chair Maaske explained given the charge and timeframe directed by Council, the committee felt the proposed process would allow the commission to gather input and make a timely decision. She stated it was thought the proposal would fulfill the commission's need for an adequate amount of input and information in order to make a thoughtful recommendation.

Commissioner Beckstrand stated it was important to remember that the Commission is being asked to provide guidance regarding a high-level policy decision, not to get involved in decisions regarding implementation. He noted the council's role was to focus on implementation. He stated he served on the Executive Committee and felt it was important to get some expert opinions and feedback to be able to look at the question from a holistic perspective so commissioners can get the information they need to make a policy recommendation.

Commissioner Carper asked where the Charter Commission derived the authority to implement Ranked Choice Voting.

Attorney Mattick explained that home rule charter cities are eligible to implement Ranked Choice Voting, statutorily, via a charter amendment. Under M.S. 410.12 there are different ways a home rule charter can be amended. In this instance it has been proposed to amend the Charter by ordinance. The ordinance amendment would require a unanimous vote of the council.

Commissioner Carper stated there was nothing in the Charter that directed the Commission to conduct a public process. He suggested that the Commission could recommend that the council hold multiple public hearings.

Commissioner Carlson stated beyond the public hearing requirement, statute also provides a reverse referendum trigger for any charter amendment done by ordinance.

Commissioner Gothberg asked how the Commission would advertise the public meetings to be impactful and to make sure they received input from a broad spectrum of people. He questioned if the meetings would be televised.

Chair Maaske stated the city has many different avenues of communication that could be used including social media, Park Perspective, NextDoor, and ParkTV.

Ms. Kennedy stated the meetings could be televised on ParkTV.

Commissioner Flory stated a neighborhood forum was scheduled in a few weeks and information could be distributed to neighborhood leaders.

Commissioner Brimeyer stated he was interested in the Q&A because he wanted to hear from people that have worked in or participated in an RCV election.

Commissioner Carper suggested finding someone to play devil's advocate.

Commissioner Carlson stated it may help to hear from election judges or candidates from Minneapolis and St. Paul.

Commissioner Solmer stated he was not sure what would be added by inviting elected officials. He noted he would like to have representatives from FairVote and the League of Women Voters SLP included on the panel.

Commissioner Flory stated he is most interested in making sure RCV works for St. Louis Park rather than a statewide policy. He added he wants to hear what is needed to make sure people are educated and prepared to make it work. He explained he was not opposed to improving the status quo, he simply wants to make sure it is right for the people of St. Louis Park.

Chair Maaske stated she would like to better understand the challenges of voters from St. Louis Park election judges and those who have worked at the polls in Minneapolis or St. Paul during an RCV election.

The Commission reviewed the list of potential participants for the Q&A event and felt it was a good representation of the viewpoints they were most interested in. The Commission also reviewed the options for the public process and discussed the number of meetings to be held.

Commissioner Brimeyer stated his preference would be to have a 3rd meeting to vote on a recommendation so he can think about what he hears at the Q&A event and the listening session.

It was moved by Commissioner Brimeyer, seconded by Commissioner Gothberg, to move forward with the public process as outlined in Option B and to direct staff to work with the Executive Committee to set meeting dates and secure panelists for the Q&A event. The motion passed 13-0.

Commissioner Beckstrand asked for further clarification on the use of the term “single transferable vote” in the proposed ordinance amendment.

Attorney Mattick stated the language is used by both Minneapolis and St. Paul. He noted he would look into it further and provide information for the next meeting.

5. New Business

6. Future Meetings

The Commission asked Ms. Kennedy to check on the date that was set for their annual meeting at their annual meeting in 2016. They advised staff to incorporate the business typically conducted at their annual meeting into an upcoming meeting agenda.

7. Communications

a. Public Communications received by staff since December 6, 2017 meeting

8. Adjournment

It was moved by Commissioner Gothberg, seconded by Commissioner Anderson, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 13-0.

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Melissa Kennedy, City Clerk