

# Minneapolis Charter Commission Minutes

Regular Meeting  
Wednesday, February 2, 2005

Commissioners Present: Bernstein, Thaden, Bujold, Clegg, Dolan, Dziedzic, Klassen, Lichty, Metge, Ferrara, Theurer

Commissioners Absent: Collier (excused), Lazarus (excused), Melendez, Ponsford

Also Present: Assistant City Attorney Burt Osborne

Chair Bernstein called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m., in Room 317, City Hall, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

## 1. Roll Call

## 2. Adopt Agenda

*Thaden moved to adopt the agenda.* Seconded.

The motion was adopted upon a voice vote.

## 3. Minutes of December 1, 2004 (postponed 1/5/04) and January 5, 2005.

[Minutes of 12/1/2004](#) and [Minutes of 1/5/2005](#)

*Motion to approve the minutes of December 1, 2004 and January 5, 2005 (with a typographical correction).* Seconded.

The motion was adopted upon a voice vote.

## 4. Minneapolis Charter Commission 2004 Annual Report

[Charter Commission 2004 Annual Report](#)

*Motion to adopt the 2004 Annual Report and to transmit the report to the Chief Judge.*

Seconded.

The motion was adopted upon a voice vote.

## 5. Minneapolis City Charter (re Reform):

Request Minneapolis Charter Commission to conduct public hearings to collect ideas for Minneapolis Charter reform, beyond the scope of current "non-substantive" revisions.

Staff report: [Charter Commission Public Hearings](#)

Blue ribbons were distributed to the Commission members as recognition of the call from the Legislature for establishment of a "Blue Ribbon Commission" to look at the issue of Charter reform.

Chair Bernstein reported that there is a proposal for a bill at the Legislature (Senate) relating to the matter of Charter Reform.

Assistant City Attorney Burt Osborne indicated that he has a draft copy of the bill and he described that it calls for creation of a "Minneapolis Commission on City Government" and lists the tasks that would be assigned to the group for study over a three year period with a report to the Charter Commission on their findings. It appears that most of what the group would consider would be better taken care of by the voters. He will forward a copy of the proposal to all Commission members.

Chair Bernstein remarked that Senator Linda Higgins has told him that she is not interested in the formation of a "Blue Ribbon Commission" as she sees the work most appropriately before the Minneapolis Charter Commission.

Ferrara noted that much of the Commission's work to date has focused on formulating non-substantive revisions to the Charter; this charge toward government reform seems to call for a major change of direction in the Commission's focus. He also noted that a resolution was referred from the City's Council's Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) Committee. Has that been adopted by the City Council and how will the Commission be considering that resolution?

Chair Bernstein responded first on the matter of the non-substantive revisions. He is aware that there are differing views among City Council members, with two stating outright that they will not support the changes, others thinking the work of the Commission was well done and others still wanting the Commission to look instead at the government structure issue. From them (the City Council) comes the request that the Charter Commission hold public hearings to receive input on reform.

Ferrara asked if that would assume that the Commission will not pursue the non-substantive revisions.

Chair Bernstein noted that the Commission has basically postponed further consideration of the revisions until June.

*Chair Bernstein, in regard to the resolution referred by the IGR Committee, moved that the Charter Commission shall conduct public meetings beginning in April and continuing probably through the summer. Seconded.*

*Clegg moved to amend the motion by adding that a small working group of the Commission be established to set a schedule for the public meetings. (Commissioners Clegg, Ferrara, Bujold and Bernstein and Assistant City Attorney Burt Osborne volunteered for the task.) Seconded.*

The motion to amend was adopted by unanimous consent.

The motion, as amended, was adopted upon a voice vote.

6. Minneapolis City Charter (re Redistricting):

*Subject matter* of ordinances amending the Minneapolis City Charter relating to redistricting, amending: a) Chapter 1, Section 3 relating to City and Ward Boundaries: Thirteen Wards; b) Chapter 2, Section 4 relating to Officers--Elections: Election (By Ostrow - Referred to IGR from the City Council 11/21/03)

*Intergovernmental Relations Committee Action of 1/11/05: Refer back to Minneapolis Charter Commission for further discussion in the broader scope of City Charter reform.*

*Staff report: [Charter amend Chap 1 Sec3 and Redistricting timelines](#)*

Thaden moved that the subject matter of Item 6 be rolled into Item 5 of this day's agenda. Seconded.

The motion was adopted upon a voice vote.

7. 6th Draft to City Charter Revisions:

Update on meetings with elected officials; public hearing schedule

*Staff report: [Charter Revision 6th draft](#); [Charter Revision 6th draft-relined](#); [Moir letter Library Board of Trustees Letter](#);*

*[Park Board comments](#); [City Attorneys comments](#); [Summary of Charter Changes](#); [Charter revision timelines](#)*

*Action Taken by the Commission on 1/5/04: The reporter will report back to the Charter Commission by June 30, 2005 with the best and final draft; Commissioner Dziedzic will consult with Steve Ristuben on whether or not the discount for publishing Charter amendments could be extended past the deadline of December 31, 2005; Public hearings postponed until after the final draft is presented*

Thaden reported that, for the public hearings on the revisions that were postponed, several commissioners did attend but no one came to speak.

Ferrara asked if the Commission has considered making changes to the revisions related to the expressed concerns of the two Council Members that have said they are opposed? It has been the Commission's position to accommodate the recommendations of other jurisdictions.

Chair Bernstein explained that Council Member Zerby has said he is strongly opposed to taking any items currently in the Charter and transferring them to the Code of Ordinances; Council Member Lane has said he is not comfortable with the process (but did not outline any specific objections) and that he feels the changes are substantive. The Commission certainly has tried to make accommodations as changes have been suggested, however, there must be a point when the line is drawn and the recommended revisions are considered final.

Bujold noted that suggestions from the City Council are distinct, however, since the Council would be voting on the changes.

Dziedzic noted that she spoke with Assistant City Clerk Steve Ristuben about the offer from *Finance & Commece* to publish the revisions at a discounted rate; he will work on getting an extension on that offer.

**New Business**

Chair Bernstein offered thanks to former Charter Commissioner Clerk Jan Hrcir. He'd like the Commission to put together some type of recognition.

*Motion to adjourn.* Seconded.

Motion adopted upon a voice vote.

Julie Bartell  
Charter Commission Clerk