

# Minneapolis Charter Commission Minutes

March 4, 2009 - 4:00 p.m.  
Room 317 City Hall, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Commissioners Present: Bernstein (Chair), Bujold, Clegg, Connell, Ferrara, Lazarus, Lichty, Metge, Remme, Rubenstein, Stade, Street  
Commissioners Excused: Dolan, Jancik  
Also Present: Lisa Needham, Assistant City Attorney

## 1. Roll Call

Chair Bernstein called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. Roll call was taken.

## 2. Adopt Agenda

*Lazarus moved adoption of the agenda. Seconded.*

*Bernstein moved to amend the agenda to consider Item 5 prior to Item 4. Seconded.  
Adopted upon a voice vote.*

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

## 3. Approve Minutes of February 4, 2009

*Commissioner Lazarus moved approval of the minutes of February 4, 2009. Seconded.  
Adopted upon a voice vote.*

## New Business

### 5. Consider holding public hearings regarding proposed Charter amendments relating to the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, the Board of Estimate and Taxation, and the governance of the City of Minneapolis, as proposed by Council Members Ostrow, Remington, and Samuels.

Bernstein thanked the members of the public for being present and explained that the Commission would be considering whether to hold public hearings regarding the proposed Charter amendments submitted by City Council Members Ostrow, Remington, and Samuels.

Clegg stated that it was apparent from many of the communications sent to the Charter Commission that there was a misconception as to how the Charter is amended. He explained the different procedures for amending the City Charter: 1) The Charter Commission can place a measure on the ballot which must pass by 51% of those voting on the amendment; 2) The City Council can place a measure on the ballot which must pass by 51% of those voting on the amendment. If the City Council places a measure on the ballot, it is reviewed by the Charter Commission but the Charter Commission does not have the power to change it; 3) Five percent of those who voted in the last

state general election can petition to put a measure on the ballot; 4) The City Council can approve a Charter measure by a 13-0 vote, which would amend the Charter without a vote by the citizens; or 5) The Minnesota Legislature can take an action that, in essence, supersedes and amends the Charter. Since he was certain that the City Council would not vote 13-0 to eliminate the Park Board, and to his knowledge there was no effort underway to amend the Charter at the Legislature, the proposed amendments would require a vote by the citizenry.

*Lazarus moved that the Charter Commission hold public hearings to allow public comment on proposed Charter amendments relating to the elimination of the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board and the Board of Estimate and Taxation, and relating to the governance of the City of Minneapolis, as proposed by Council Members Ostrow, Remington, and Samuels. Seconded.*

Bernstein opened the floor to public comments.

**a) Clara Fisher, 3019 North 4th Street**, stated that she was an employee of the Park Board. The parks are a big part of teenagers' lives, providing jobs, helping to reduce levels of violence, and giving teenagers a place to play sports and do their homework. Youth programs should not be the first thing to be cut.

**b) Lee Mier, 2315 Quincy Street Northeast**, stated that if the parks are lost, the teens will lose their summer jobs, which keep them out of trouble and help them gain experience to find other jobs. Some teens have a better relationship with the Park police than they do with the City police. They would like to keep that relationship with the Park Police.

Bernstein requested that speakers address the motion in front of the Commission, which was whether or not to hold public hearings to allow public comment on proposed Charter amendments relating to the elimination of the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board and the Board of Estimate and Taxation, and relating to the governance of the City of Minneapolis. He asked that speakers keep their comments germane to the motion.

**c) Lisa Beck, 4503 Pleasant Avenue South**, stated that she was opposed to holding the public hearings. The community hasn't called for a change. Ostrow states the amendments will create efficiencies and savings. Holding three or four public hearings will cost money. The City Council is busy with other important things, and public hearings would be a distraction and waste of money.

**d) Martha Allen, 4845 Xerxes Avenue South**, stated that this issue was discussed in the early 1980s and she felt it was time to begin that discussion again. While she loved the parks, she wanted the City to maintain them as well as possible and felt the only way that could be done would be through restructuring.

**e) Jeanne Andre, 4601 Washburn Avenue South**, representing the League of Women Voters, stated that the League had conducted a two-part study in 2005 and 2006 relating to government structure. Some of their recommendations supported

some of the proposed changes, but not necessarily others. However, the League believes in public discussion and that any issue worthy of consideration should be brought before the public. The League President was unable to attend, but had sent the following to be read before the Commission: "We would encourage adequate time for civic discussion of any proposed changes and would support a process which is open, accessible, and provides for substantial public comment and involvement." The League would be very willing to participate in any forums or any kind of educational activities the Commission decided to present to the public.

**f) Senator Patricia Torres Ray, 2916 43rd Avenue South**, stated that she was present to support the idea of maintaining an independent Park Board. However, she thought it was important that the Commission hear public opinion, and citizens need to be given that opportunity. She is currently Chair of the Parks and Trails Subcommittee in the Senate and would speak to her support of the existence of an independent Park Board if given that opportunity.

**g) Jon Stutelberg, 642 Jackson Street Northeast**, foreman with the Minneapolis Park system, stated that he was strongly opposed to any public discussion regarding eliminating the Park Board. Our park system has won national awards as the best park system in the country. If the City is in charge of the park system, it will become a low priority. Approximately 100 years ago, the Pillsbury family and others donated land to the Park Board to be used for public park land. He was not sure if it was legal to give the City Council control over that land, and he was also concerned that the City would start selling park property during this financial crisis.

**h) Robert Samolyk, 3832 17th Avenue South**, equipment mechanic with the Minneapolis Park system, stated that he was opposed to any public meetings regarding eliminating the Park Board because he didn't believe it was necessary. He had spoken with many of his neighbors who use the parks, and they are impressed and pleased with the maintenance of the buildings and grounds, as well as the friendliness of the staff and the safety provided by the Park Police. Turning over control of the park system to the City would be detrimental to the quality of life in the city of Minneapolis.

**i) Joe McGinness, 1811 University Avenue Northeast**, union representative with the Park Police Officers Federation, stated that from a police standpoint, the Federation was strongly opposed to holding the public hearings. However, if meetings are held, the Federation wanted to be at the table and part of the discussion. If the Park Board and the Park Police are eliminated, the parks and the public will suffer because the City police are already having a hard time covering what they need to do.

**j) Cheryl Luger, 4936 37th Avenue South**, stated that she never thought she would come before a public body and state that she was opposed to public hearings. However, having gone through the library situation, neighborhoods, and the attempt of the state legislature to eliminate the Board of Estimate and Taxation, she was opposed to holding public hearings regarding the elimination of the Park Board primarily for the reason that it is a consolidation of power.

**k) Mary Merrill Anderson, 1144 Cedarview Drive**, Vice President, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, stated that the Park Board had just gone through an extensive two-year process through its Comprehensive Plan where they talked to the citizens about the park system and its governance. Citizens overwhelmingly indicated their support for continuing the Park Board's governance and the services provided by it. Recently, when the Mayor presented his budget, he mentioned the top three things important to City residents: police, fire, and parks. She felt the citizens had already weighed in and stated that they want an independently elected Park Board to protect and preserve the park system. The Park Board works very closely with the city on a number of issues, and they have discussed efficiency and effectiveness. She felt there was evidence to prove that the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board has, in fact, been very efficient over its years of service, particularly the past six to seven years. There has already been a public discussion, and people have stated what they want.

**l) Carol Kummer, 4818 30th Avenue South**, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board Commissioner, stated that if the public hearings were held, the Charter Commission would hear a repeat of what was said today. Another approach might be to separate out the other issues and discuss those. The comments almost unanimously will be to keep the Park Board as it is.

**m) Harry Savage, 3228 Humboldt Avenue South**, stated that he was against the elimination of the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board. If the public hearings are held, the Commission will just hear more of the same; people are against the elimination of the Park Board. If the City Council takes over the parks, a developer could convince them to "condo-ize" the lakes. He felt the Park Board should be kept the way it is.

**n) Audie Gillespie, 3225 East 24th Street**, Local Laborers 363, Public Works and Park Board Laborers Union, stated that he was normally in favor of public hearings, but would like to stop this before it got to that point because the proposal is an unnecessary solution to a nonexistent problem. He attends the Park Board meetings and sees the community involvement, and sometimes strong opposition to some of the ideas the Park Board considers, but it is democracy at its very best. There is input and there is reaction at the Park Board meetings. To do away with something that allows such a forum would be a tragedy. Also, eliminating the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board and replacing it with an appointed administrator, would probably not result in much savings, since the city administrator's salary would probably equal the minimal compensation of the entire Board of Park Commissioners, and the administrator would have far less time and opportunity to listen to the community and react to the community's wishes.

**o) Judy Blaseg, 2416 West 42nd Street**, present on behalf of the Citizens League of Minnesota, read a statement from the Citizens League Board as follows: "Over the past 55 years, the Citizens League has looked at the structure of Minneapolis government at least three different times. Each time we have concluded that the City needs to develop clearer lines of political and policy accountability and efficiency. For example, a report in 1969 concluded that Minneapolis required major consolidation of functions between the Mayor's Office and the President of the City Council and a stronger role of the City Coordinator. The Citizens League has not studied this issue since then. However, it

appears that the underlying conditions that resulted in our conclusions 40 years ago remain the same. The Citizens League supports a thorough and genuine public conversation of all recommendations to improve the accountability and efficiency of Minneapolis city government."

**p) Council Member Diane Hofstede, Ward 3**, stated that she strongly supported community engagement and community participation. The items before the Charter Commission are very valid and important items. However, because of the budget crisis now being faced, the best use of time would be to have public hearings within the formats that already exist and within the context of the budget that the Council will be discussing. It was hard for her to imagine that there would not be discussion about how to reshape and reform our government. She did not, however, support a Charter amendment to eliminate an elected Park Board. It is clearly through the good work of the Parks, in conjunction with other boards and commissions, that we have the level of citizen participation that we have today. She encouraged the Commission to use the system that we do have to have the public discussion through the budgetary process and work with the legislature to deal with the very serious budgetary and pension issues that are before the city of Minneapolis.

**q) Annie Young, 2601 Cedar Avenue South**, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board Commissioner, stated that in two and a half weeks, a petition against eliminating the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board had received 300 signatures. Holding public hearings throughout the city will not be efficient, and the Charter Commission will hear the same things they have heard tonight. However, if the Charter Commission does hold public meetings, she requested that the discussion of the issues be separated and the Commission gather public comments regarding restructuring city government.

Clegg stated that in his view, the people opposed to public hearings were trying to stop public discussion not because there are not serious issues to be discussed, but because they were opposed to the substance of the amendment. However, in his time on the Charter Commission, the Commission had always solicited public opinion on proposed Charter changes even when they disagreed with their substance. That is the job of the Charter Commission. It won't be expensive to hold public hearings because the Charter Commissioners work for free. Public discussion should not be squelched; it should be encouraged. He stated that he would support holding public hearings on the issue. *(Clegg left the meeting at 4:45 p.m.)*

**r) Scott Vreeland, 2437 33rd Avenue South**, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board Commissioner, stated that his concerns were procedural issues. This is really about whether the Charter Commission wants to promote a bad idea. He asked if the Charter Commission would hold public hearings if he came to them with the idea that the City Council should be changed to a system similar to the Park Board with nine Council Members. Not all ideas should rise to the status of something that requires public hearings. The issue must have some kind of merit and support. This is an issue that doesn't have support at the Council, the Park Board, or in the community. If this measure is placed on the ballot and passed, would the Park Board Commissioners that are elected in the same election then have no job? What kind of statement is that for a well-working democracy? The Park Board was created because the City Council didn't

want the park system. The one thing that makes a great park system everywhere in the United States is a clear expression of purpose. The City has no clear expression of purpose related to the parks. This system was set up by the legislature. He questioned whether the Charter Commission had the legal right to consider this without additional legal work regarding whether the proposal overturns the work of the legislature.

**s) Paul Ostrow, Ward 1 Council Member**, stated that Council Members Samuels and Remington were both present and supportive of a public hearing process. Council Members Lisa Goodman and Scott Benson were also supportive of the proposals. As stated on the City's website, the purpose of the Charter Commission is to review and formulate Charter proposals and to solicit ideas from citizens, city staff, and elected officials. The Charter Commission has worked very hard over the past several years to improve the City's Charter, and that proposal is now moving through the City Council process. The Charter Commission is now charged with the task of soliciting ideas and input from citizens and city staff on the significant charter proposals that have been brought forward by himself and Council Members Samuels and Remington. He believed that the proposed Charter changes would result in a more transparent and accountable City government. They will increase efficiency in City operations and result in a stronger future for the park system. Tonight the question before the Charter Commission was limited to the importance of providing public hearings so the citizens could be fully informed about the proposals and be given a chance to weigh in on how they wish to be governed. Unfortunately, a petition widely distributed by the Park Board stated that he had requested that the Charter Commission eliminate the Park Board. He had made no such request, and the Charter Commission had no such authority. The only request that was made was that the Charter Commission hold public hearings and receive public comment about the proposals.

**t) Tom Nordyke, 38 Park Lane**, President, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, stated that there is a process for a more open and inclusive dialogue, and it is called an election. Those who would like to participate in that are welcome to do so and run on a plank that addresses some of the issues that are in front of the Charter Commission today. He did not feel it was the duty of the Charter Commission to use their authority to plunge the citizens of Minneapolis, during an election year, into a contentious discussion about the fundamental nature of the government without, at the very least, some indication that the people are in support of that debate. Not only does the Charter Commission not have that indication, but they have ample evidence that the people are simply not interested in digging this up yet again. As far as he knew, neither the Mayor, the City Council, nor the state legislature had asked the Charter Commission to weigh in on this. The petitioners in front of the Charter Commission, without a resolution from the City Council behind them, are only citizens requesting the Commission to consider something. The discussion should have started and ended weeks ago with the City Council's and the Mayor's refusal to take up this issue. The Charter Commission is not accountable to the voters. The role of the Charter Commission is considerably diminished when they cross the line into politics. He felt that if the Charter Commission moved forward with the discussion without being petitioned to do so by other duly elected units of government, they would be engaging in politics. He questioned moving ahead with the public dialog given the monies that would be spent, the animosities that would be created, and as Council Member Hofstede noted, distractions during a time of true crisis for both our city and our country. He encouraged the Charter Commission to

not move forward with public dialogue, and if they did so, to separate it out from the Park Board.

**u) Council President Barbara Johnson, Ward 4**, stated that she found this proposal to be a huge distraction. We are in the midst of dealing with one of the most severe budget crises the state and city has encountered, and to consider these proposals at this time seems counter-productive. Eliminating the independent Park Board would be a serious mistake. Some of the information that has gone out regarding the reason for the proposed amendments shows a lack of knowledge about the park system. Minneapolis is not the only City that has an independently elected Park Board. Hennepin County also has an independently elected Park Board: Three Rivers Park District. There are independent park districts across the country. In fact, there is an association of independent park districts, of which the Minneapolis Park Board and Three Rivers Park District are members. That independence has allowed all of those communities to have remarkable park systems. When marketing materials are sent out about Minneapolis, they are filled with images of our parks. We have a system that was created by the foremost landscape architects of their time. If we had not had the independent Park Board, we would not have seen the riverfront redevelopment in our community. The Park Board does not duplicate the city's engineering capacity; they don't have engineers. Minneapolis police officers do not have the resources to be able to do the surveillance and decoy work needed when there is a rash of incidents of cars being broken into around the lakes. The Park police and the City police work together all the time. The last Minneapolis police officer that was killed in the line of duty was a Minneapolis Park police officer that was assisting Minneapolis police officers in north Minneapolis on a chase. She encouraged the Charter Commissioners to listen to the citizens speaking tonight and not move forward with public hearings at a time when there are so many other challenges in the city.

**v) Father Michael O'Connell, 1723 Bryant Avenue North**, Pastor, Ascension Catholic Church, stated that in this time of financial crisis, the issues of transparency, accountability, and efficiency should be addressed and allowed the broadest possible public debate.

**w) Adam Fajteck, 2814 Colfax Avenue South**, stated that over the past several months he had had the opportunity to work with Council Member Ostrow on several of the Charter measures laid out today, and during that period spent a significant amount of time reviewing local government models of other U.S. cities. Today's proposals address the lack of accountability, the lines of authority, and overly bureaucratic layers that have plagued the City's governance. Because the implications of each proposal are so complex, further input is needed from residents in order to get the full scope of what this will mean for the city. It is in trying times such as these that opportunity can arise. A debate should be held on these issues now so that the city is ready to move forward when things are better. He urged the Charter Commission to continue the conversation by holding public hearings so every citizen is given the chance to shape the form of their government.

**x) Todd Klingel, 12120 Lucerne Trail, Lakeville**, President, Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce, stated that we are all looking at how to become more efficient, including

businesses. The business community would definitely not want parks to go away. They are a huge asset for this community. He requested that the Charter Commission hold public hearings and then make a decision based on knowledge.

**y) Council Member Ralph Remington, Ward 10**, stated that he wanted to rebut a comment made earlier by Park Commissioner Nordyke that he and Council Members Ostrow and Samuels were present as citizens. They were speaking as representatives of 35,000 people in their wards. It didn't mean that all 35,000 people in their wards hold that position, but a lot of people do and they have been hearing from a lot of people on this issue over the past four years and thought the issue should be discussed. The meeting tonight is not about whether parks should go away. Of course, parks should not go away and should not be deteriorated in any way, shape, or form. The proposals are about where park governance should lie and the meeting tonight is about asking people whether or not we should have a discussion to have a discussion about this. In a democracy, that is what we do; we try to be heard. Eliminating the Park Board as it exists now does not mean that it will eliminate the park system. People should be heard.

**z) Matt Moore, 5344 12th Avenue South**, President, Minneapolis Off-Road Cycling Advocates, stated that there is a process for citizens in Minneapolis who have a serious concern about their government — if 5% of the voters decide they want to create a petition and change the government, they can put that question on the ballot. He didn't think 5% of the citizens of Minneapolis would support eliminating the Park Board. He felt the proposed amendments were politically motivated, and he would like to see the Charter Commission stop the process now.

**aa) Arlene Fried, 1109 Xerxes Avenue South**, stated that she was supportive of Council Member Remington's comments about the positive nature of debate and exchange of ideas. That is democracy at work, and we are a democracy.

**bb) John Hartwicz, 3228 Humboldt Avenue South**, stated that at 72 years old, he had never appeared before the City Council which showed how important this issue was to him. He asked that the Charter Commission leave the Park Board the way it has been for the last 126 years, and encouraged the Commission not to hold any public hearings.

**cc) Carl Holmquist, 3109 Girard Avenue South**, representative of the CARAC Neighborhood, stated that there was strong support in his neighborhood for an independent Park Board. He was concerned about the timing, because the budget should be the number one focus of elected officials in the city of Minneapolis right now. However, he was always in favor of community involvement. He has worked with Chief Dolan who has 13 bosses, and the city administrator proposal would allow the Police Chief to have only one boss.

**dd) Aswar Rahman, 1727 University Avenue Northeast**, stated that his nation of Bangladesh was one of the most corrupt in the world because people aren't allowed to have their voices heard. He was in support of public discussion on the proposed

amendments. As a resident of Minneapolis, he was also in favor of public discussions. The people of Minneapolis will inevitably say that the Park Board must exist; that it.

**ee) Troy Parker, 4933 Penn Avenue North**, stated that the citizens of Minneapolis clearly are not supportive of the idea of consolidating these two forms of government. The City Council is pressed with many issues and will have little time to make sure that the parks are clean and safe. The Park Board assists community boards by allowing them space to meet and bring the community together. He requested that no further public hearings be held.

**ff) Starla Krause, 2300 Victory Memorial Parkway**, stated that she had appeared before the Charter Commission during discussions regarding the Minneapolis Library system, and she was aware of how much time public hearings involve. She did not feel that the Charter Commission should allow public debate since she would then feel obligated to attend, and she didn't have the time because there were other concerns in her community. The independent Park Board must be maintained.

**gg) Walter Dzedzic, 2727 Cleveland Street Northeast**, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board Commissioner, thanked the Charter Commissioners for their time and work and stated that, although the Charter Commissioners were not paid, nothing is free. There are utility bills and support staff that must be paid for each meeting. Why hold hearings on something that is not a problem? Park Board proponents will pack every meeting, and the Charter Commission will keep hearing what they heard tonight. Every survey of Minneapolis residents comes back saying the parks are the best thing about the city. The reason the Park Board is independent is because 126 years ago wealthy members on the Park Board bought property to be used for parks. No sooner did they buy it than the City Council sold it. The Park Board then went to the state legislature and became independent. Now there are strict rules regarding the sale of Park Board property.

Lichty stated that he rejected the notion that holding public meetings would be some sort of an annoyance. Although he thought the ideas brought forth by Council Member Ostrow would be roundly rejected, he planned to vote in favor of the public meetings, and he would attend the public meetings as a volunteer because he felt it important in discharging his duty as a Commissioner to hear the debate.

Rubenstein stated that she had initially planned on voting against holding hearings because she agreed with many of the speakers that in this time of crisis we have other things to concentrate on, and asking people to come out to speak seemed to be too much to ask when there was such a clear message both in the emails received and in the speakers tonight. But after listening to fellow Commissioners, she felt it would be a good idea to hold the hearings because it would put the matter to rest for a long time and she was quite sure the result of the public meetings would be support of keeping the independent Park Board. Prior to the public meetings, though, she requested that the Council Members proposing the amendments provide the Commissioners with more information about the basis for their proposals other than that it would be more efficient. The Charter Commission would require more data in considering the proposals.

Bujold stated that he would also vote in favor of holding the public hearings. Other issues will be entertained at the public hearings, such as changing the form of city government. Many like to stifle discussion on an issue that they believe passionately about. It may surprise people that many Commissioners, although they listen to testimony passively, may be in agreement. Democracy demands free and open expression.

Metge stated that she would be voting in opposition to holding public hearings. She had seconded the motion in order to open the floor to comments so the people who took their time to attend today's meeting had an opportunity to speak. However, she felt an issue as substantial as the elimination of the Park Board should be debated at the City Council level. It should be on an agenda, a matter of public record, and televised. If a request for public hearings came out of that process, she would put all her time into holding those public hearings. However, it needs to start at the City Council level versus the Charter Commission level. The Charter Commission is not elected; they are appointed and this is a very touchy issue.

Bernstein thanked everyone who attended the meeting. Citizens have a right to start these conversations whether they are elected officials or not, and the Commission needs to respect that.

*The motion to hold public hearings to allow public comment on proposed Charter amendments relating to the elimination of the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board and the Board of Estimate and Taxation, and relating to the governance of the City of Minneapolis, as proposed by Council Members Ostrow, Remington, and Samuels was adopted. Yeas, 9; Nays, 1 as follows:*

Yeas - Bujold, Connell, Lazarus, Lichty, Remme, Rubenstein, Stade, Street, Bernstein.  
Nays - Metge.

Absent - Clegg, Dolan, Ferrara, Jancik.

Street requested that the agendas for the public hearings break out the three issues separately since it was clear that the Park Board reform issue had far more vocal opposition than the other proposals, and he wanted to include debate about the other two portions of the proposal.

**Jon Olson, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board Commissioner**, stated that he expected a large turnout at the future meetings and suggested the possibility that the Charter Commission also have hearings on a ballot question suggesting that the Park Board become completely independent because he thought that issue would be coming forward as well, and it would save the Charter Commissioners time to hold the hearings at the same time.

Bernstein stated that if that is something that people want to talk about and an issue they want to raise, that would certainly be welcome at the public meetings.

Lazarus requested that the Park Board Commissioners not follow Commissioner Dziedzic's suggestion and pack all the meetings in order to allow other members of the public who don't have a bias to be heard on all the different topics.

*(Ferrara arrived at 5:45 p.m.)*

*Street moved that the Commission hold four public meetings and that the meetings be distributed geographically irrelevant of park district boundaries. Seconded.*

Adopted upon a voice vote.

Absent - Clegg, Dolan, Jancik.

Metge suggested that the meetings be scheduled so as not to conflict with other public meetings.

Bernstein stated that the meetings will be publicized on the City's website, and he was hopeful that the Star Tribune would also publish an announcement.

Connell requested that the record reflect that he was concerned that the public understand that this debate is not a single issue debate. He respected and thanked everyone who came out in support of the Park Board and the system as it exists now, but there are other substantive matters to consider that are at least equally as important as the Park Board matter, and he felt it was only fair to all that a discussion be held concerning those matters.

Lazarus stated that he didn't want to let an opportunity pass with so many member of the public present without letting them know that the Charter Commission had been working on revising the City Charter on a non-substantive basis and that goal had been achieved and the document was available on the Charter Commission's website. It is now moving forward before the City Council, and he hoped that the public would show their support for the very basic non-substantive changes to the City Charter by asking their City Council Members to vote in favor of those changes.

## Old Business

### 4. Charter Revision:

#### Update on visits with Council Members.

**Action Taken: Draft 12 of Revised Charter transmitted to Mayor and City Council.**

Former Commissioner Brian Melendez, was present and stated that Draft 12 of the Charter Revision had been transmitted to the City Council and the Mayor along with a copy of Bryan Garner's book, "Legal Writing in Plain English" which had been the style guide for the revision. The difference between Drafts 11 and 12 is in the two very slight technical amendments that were made at the last meeting: a) Adding a sentence in Article 7 about the ability of the Park Board and the City Council to jointly pass a Park Dedication Fee; and b) Changing the word "it" to "the law" in Section 1.3. There were no other changes between the two drafts.

Bernstein stated that the Charter Commission would request the City Council to hold a Study Session regarding the Revision.

Ostrow stated that at the March 6 Council meeting, there would be a motion to introduce these matters to the Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) Committee. So as of Friday, March 6, the revision will be officially in the Council process.

Annie Young, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board Commissioner, requested that the Park Board receive an update on the revision.

Bernstein asked that Ms. Young send him an email and he would schedule a time to attend a Park Board meeting.

## **New Business**

### **6. Discussion of future action of Charter Commission if Charter Revision does not receive unanimous vote by City Council.**

Ferrara stated that the revision process had taken several years. He had heard other Commissioners state that the Charter Commission can't do anything until this matter is resolved, but it may never be resolved. A Charter is a living document that will need amendments well into the future. The Commission needs to talk about and have a calendar and procedures in place for putting the revision on the ballot if it is not adopted by the City Council on a 13-0 vote.

Melendez stated that the transmittal letter states that if the City Council does not amend the Charter by ordinance, then the Commission proposes submission to the voters, and includes a 300 word summary.

*Street moved to adjourn. Seconded.*  
Adopted upon a voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:54 p.m.

Peggy Menshek  
Charter Commission Coordinator