

Mike Will, Chairman, called the Charter Review Committee (CRC) meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members present: Donovan Cole, Talon Flohr, Darwitt Garrett, Dan Kaman, Nicole Lloyd, Christine Mack, Mike Meinzer, Chris Parthemore (arrived 5:50 p.m.) & Mike Will.

Members absent: Dennis Feltner, Andy Gundlach, Jennifer Washington and Conor Whelan.

Staff members present: Eric Wobser – City Manager and Kelly Kresser – Commission Clerk.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion of Dan Kaman and second of Mike Meinzer, the members voted to approve the minutes of the May 5 and May 19 meetings and suspend the oral reading. The Chairman declared the motion passed.

CURRENT BUSINESS

Section 2 – Form of Government

Upon motion of Mike Meinzer and second of Dan Kaman, the members voted to discuss the possibility of changing the structure of the city's government.

Discussion: Mike Meinzer said sometimes with the City Manager form of government, the Law Director and Finance Director report to the City Manager and one person is accountable. Dan Kaman asked what could change in the charter to make these positions report directly to the City Manager rather than the City Commissioners. Mike Meinzer said changing the form of government has been divisive in the past and Darwitt Garrett said if it is not broken, it should be left as it is. Darwitt Garrett said there has also been discussion about dropping the number of commissioners from seven to five. Christine Mack said the presentation on May 5 indicated the City Manager-Commission form of government is the most popular for cities of our size, works the best and there does not seem to be enough known about splitting the city into wards to consider it. Mike Meinzer said he agrees with the current number of commissioners at seven rather than increasing it to more (nine) or less (three).

Mike Will asked to table voting on this issue until there is discussion regarding Sections 17 and 18 of the Charter.

Section 3 – City Commission, Creation and Powers

Upon motion of Talon Flohr and second of Dan Kaman, the members voted to limit candidates to 12 years (or three terms) with the language remaining in this section specific to not allow persons to serve more than twelve years over a sixteen year period.

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Discussion: Talon Flohr said he understand the thought of getting more people involved with government, but this seems to create a lot of change for people who may be doing good work because they are forced to leave in the middle of things. Dan Kaman said the hardest part for the city employees is the changeover which occurs every time there is an election. Darwitt Garrett said the two-term limit is too short but he does not want to see someone in city government for 30 or 40 years either. Mike Will said term limits were popular with the public; Dan Kaman said there are less people each election running for office. Mike Meinzer said the idea may be to come in with fresh ideas, but he does not want this; he prefers the full-time staff develop plans and ideas. Eric Wobser said it is a constant balance trying to do what citizens want as well as doing what commissioners want and there is no system to balance this. Darwitt Garrett said he would be comfortable with a 16- or 20-year term limit. Christine Mack asked if it is realistic changing term limits or if they would be accepted by the public and to think about what would make the most sense to recommend for the ballot. Nikki Lloyd said she likes the idea of recommending change but does not know what the voters would be willing to approve.

Mike Will said he would like to have a final discussion with all of the members of the Charter Review Committee prior to presenting any issues to the City Commissioners. We are voting to put issues on a list of those to be considered by all of the members of the Charter Review Committee at their next meeting.

The Chairman announced the motion passed and will be discussed at the next Charter Review Committee specific to changing the terms to 12 years over a 16 year period with full membership of the Charter Review Committee.

Section 6 – Salary and Bonds

Upon motion of Mike Meinzer and second of Talon Flohr, the members voted to add health insurance benefits for the City Commissioners in addition to their salary.

Discussion: Eric Wobser said for the purpose of discussion, health insurance benefits currently cost \$9,000 per year for single coverage and \$23,000 per year for family coverage. Christine Mack said the commissioners are paid \$5,000 each year and doubling this package seems like a lot; federal health care is now available and this might not be as big of a draw for people. Dan Kaman said he wants business-minded people as commissioners and this would be a great perk for self-employed persons. Mike Will said it makes a huge difference to him whether this would be for single coverage or family coverage.

Yeas: Mike Meinzer, Darwitt Garrett and Donovan Cole, 3. Nays: Talon Flohr, Dan Kaman, Nicole Lloyd, Christine Mack, Chris Parthemore and Mike Will, 6. The Chairman announced the motion failed.

Upon motion of Donovan Cole and second of Talon Flohr, the members voted to discuss raising the salary for a City Commissioner to \$7,500 and increased each year thereafter for

inflation/cost of living based on the IRS rate, with a two percent cap for each year and at any point will not increase to over \$10,000.

Discussion: Donovan Cole said inflation has increased by 37.4% since 2000 which would amount to a \$2,200 pay increase or \$7,144 per year. Talon Flohr said he looked at the original charter which was \$400/year and if the salary were brought to today's rates, would amount to just over \$9,300; this is definitely something to look at. Christine Mack said while the civil servant in her hopes people do not run for office because of the money, more and better candidates could be attracted if the pay was higher. The current commissioners put in a lot of time and hold a very important office. Eric Wobser said the general fund budget is approximately \$19.6 million and he thinks raising the salary makes more sense than adding health insurance. Donovan Cole said there are probably people who think this position pays too little and it is not worth the time, but there are also people who will not be attracted because it pays only \$5,000. Chris Parthemore said the current commissioners may not be inclined to increase their own pay and Mike Will said this could be for future commissioners and could take effect at a specific time. Chris Parthemore said if this were tied to the IRS rates for cost of living increases, they are published each year and sometimes does not increase at all.

Nays: Donovan Cole, Talon Flohr, Darwitt Garrett, Dan Kaman, Nicole Lloyd, Christine Mack, Mike Meinzer, Chris Parthemore & Mike Will, 9. The President declared the motion failed.

Upon motion of Donovan Cole and second of Talon Flohr the members voted to increase the pay of the city commissioners to \$7,500 with a cost of living/rate of inflation increase each year thereafter and subject to a two percent cap for each year.

Discussion: Chris Parthemore said if there were a two percent increase each year, it would take 17 years to reach a salary of \$10,000. Christine Mack said this would have the potential for no one to ever reach \$10,000 with the *proposed* term limits in effect (12 years). Dan Kaman asked how the language would change for the President and Talon Flohr said this language should remain in the section so the President makes \$20 additional per week.

Yeas: Donovan Cole, Talon Flohr, Darwitt Garrett, Nicole Lloyd, Christine Mack, Mike Meinzer, Chris Parthemore & Mike Will, 8. Nays: Dan Kaman, 1. The Chairman declared the motion passed.

Section 9 – Clerk and Employees

Nicole Lloyd said making changes to this section also relates to changing the two sections pertaining to the positions of Law Director and Finance Director. Mike Meinzer said the salaries of all charter officer positions should be looked at and the Audit/Finance Committee provides checks and balances for the City Manager and the budgeting process. The person in the Commission Clerk's position used to be provided assistance with staff from the City Manager's office and position changes will have to be budget neutral; the Clerk's position does necessarily

need to be a full-time position. Darwitt Garrett said the Clerk is the community's contact for the City Commissioners. Dan Kaman said he is willing to do away with the Clerk's position if there is support for a full-time mayor as cutting this position would eliminate the full-time responsibilities of the City Commissioners; he could never have been a successful City Commissioner without the Clerk. This is a lifeline for the City Commissioners and should not be taken away. Mike Meinzer said questions about the city should be directed to the City Manager or his/her office.

Section 10 – Meetings

Mike Will said there are no proposals to change this section.

Section 12 – Legislative Procedure

Mike Will said he believes this section would perhaps change if the number of commissioners were proposed for change, but it has not been suggested, so there are no proposals to change this section.

Section 15 – Record and Publication

Mike Will said this came up as it relates to Section 16, but there are no proposals to change this section.

Section 16 – Price and Mode of Publication

Mike Will said this section pertains to advertising legislation in the newspaper and Chris Parthemore asked about making these documents available electronically. Mike Meinzer said the costs to advertise legislation used to be more significant and this section has been proposed for change before, but the Sandusky Register makes significant money because of it and always come out as opposing it. Chris Parthemore asked what the rates are for the city. Kelly Kresser said she researched the past five years and the costs to advertise codified legislation of a permanent nature was as follows:

2014	\$8,651.10
2013	\$2,554.20
2012	\$5,267.90
2011	\$9,289.50
2010	\$5,338.30

Kelly Kresser said over this five year period, the total spent for advertising was \$31,101. Previous Charter Review Committees have discussed printing legislation by title only so the first paragraph would be printed in the newspaper while simultaneously placing the information on the city's website, posting it at the Sandusky Library and sending out email blasts.

Mike Will said there are no proposals to change this section and it will remain as written.

Section 17 – Law Director and Assistants & Section 18 - Department of Finance and Audits

Upon motion of Mike Meinzer and second of Chris Parthemore, the members voted to strike Sections 17 and 18 from the Charter and allow the City Manager to hire the Law Director and Finance Director.

Discussion: Mike Meinzer said if the Law Director were reporting to the City Manager and there were some legal issue, they would have to contract this out, although the City Commissioners may not like this because information may not get filtered back to them. This may create an environment where the Charter Officers may be looking out for themselves. Talon Flohr said these two sections say a lot other than how persons are appointed to these positions and to keep the language (rather than start from scratch), but to change the reporting relationship to the City Manager rather than to the City Commissioners. The Ohio Municipal League sourcebook provides information concerning the City Manager/Council Plan and states the City Manager usually appoints major department heads such as a Law Director and a Finance Director. Mike Meinzer said the Audit/Finance Committee can do a fine job vetting the budget and the Commissioners can vote to hire someone to provide a legal opinion whenever they need one. There is too much dysfunction going on every day with three different charter members not working together and all trying to survive and keep their jobs; this is the nature of how Sandusky is structured. Darwitt Garrett said for clarification purposes, he understands this discussion taking place would be to reduce the number of charter officers from four to two and put the Finance Director and Law Director under the City Manager; these positions would be removed from the Charter and they would become Department Heads. Christine Mack said she does not understand the logic behind having four charter officers reporting directly to the City Commission. Christine Mack said it may make it possible for the Law Director and the Finance Director to potentially change more frequently if they reported to the City Manager. If the city were to have a poor or an inefficient City Manager, this may be different. Chris Parthemore said this might be true, but when someone is in a position for too long, this can create problems as well. Mike Meinzer said one of the problems in attracting decent City Managers is how our charter is written and because of our history and he does not see there would be higher turnover with a Finance Director or Law Director reporting to the City Manager. Nicole Lloyd said there is so much rift and this is where we run into problems and we would find a better working relationship and a more trustworthy team if these two positions were shifted to report to the City Manager. Darwitt Garrett said there was less cooperation and confusion with the Charter Officers with the last City Manager; he does not wish to change the reporting relationship for the Commission Clerk. Darwitt Garrett said according to the Charter, the City Manager prepares the budget while the Finance Director is in charge of the money and it makes sense to have the Finance Director be under the City Manager. Nicole Lloyd said we want checks and balances and some of the confusion about “whose fault is it?” would be eliminated. Talon Flohr said some people think the City Manager has so much power, but he does not have the resources around him, including these department heads, to do what is expected. Mike Meinzer said rogue employees could circumvent the City Manager by going to the Law Director or the Finance Director and this is creating all kinds of little dynamics of people pushing for

agendas while trumping the City Manager. Dan Kaman said he is for anything that makes “the buck stops here” work; our current form does not work. Mike Meinzer said he is not opposed to a strong mayor form of government, but we need to give the City Manager a chance by giving him the tools to do the job and this will help make that happen. Mike Will said if these positions were removed from the charter and made department heads under the City Manager, the language in these sections would be put into job descriptions.

The Chairman declared the motion passed.

Section 25 – Expenditures

Upon motion of Dan Kaman and second of Christine Mack, the members voted to mirror the Ohio Revised Code formula for spending appropriated funds.

Mike Will said information was provided by the Department Heads and several recommended mirroring the language in the Ohio Revised Code. All expenditures of \$1,000 or more must have verbal or written quotes; expenditures over \$10,000 must go through a competitive bid process. Dan Kaman said he agrees with matching the Ohio Revised Code for expenditures over \$25,000 but less than \$50,000. Mike Meinzer said there should still be an operating budget and a capital budget and anything purchased has to be appropriated. Christine Mack said the number has to do with whether quotations or competitive bidding are required and items are already in the budget. Mike Meinzer said items are budgeted so they are then tentatively approved, legislation is then written and brought to the commission to be voted on and read twice. Dan Kaman said if one company were getting every bid for every item, this would be noticed and people would speak up. Darwitt Garrett said he agrees this threshold should be raised to at least \$25,000, but is not comfortable with a \$50,000 threshold. Kelly Kresser said Aaron Klein had a family commitment today but would try to make himself available at the next meeting once scheduled to answer questions.

Yays: Donovan Cole, Talon Flohr, Dan Kaman, Nicole Lloyd, Christine Mack, Mike Meinzer, Chris Parthemore and Mike Will, 8. Nays: Darwitt Garrett, 1. The Chairman declared the motion passed.

Upon motion of Chris Parthemore and second of Donovan Cole, the members voted to table any further discussion related to Section 25 until the next meeting. The Chairman declared the motion passed.

Section 32 – Powers and Duties

Mike Will said there are no proposals to change this section at this time and it will remain as written. Dan Kaman said the language in (D) pertaining to the City Solicitor may need to be stricken.

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Section 50 – The Estimate

Chris Parthemore said this section might have to be reviewed because of the reference to the Finance Director. Mike Will said there are no proposals to change this section and it will remain as written.

Section 77 – Ordinances Continued in Force

Mike Will said there are no proposals to change this section and it will remain as written.

Section 78 – Continuance of Present Officers

Mike Will said there are no proposals to change this section and it will remain as written.

Section 87 – Review of Charter

Upon motion of Dan Kaman and second of Chris Parthemore, the members voted for the charter to be reviewed by a Charter Review Committee every six years starting in 2020, then every six years thereafter.

Discussion: Mike Will said there was discussion about revising the timeframe when the charter is reviewed as it costs more money to place issues on the ballot in an odd year as opposed to in an even year.

The Chairman declared the motion passed.

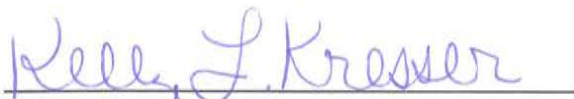
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Sharon Johnson, 1139 Fifth Street, said there is a budget, but there has to be provisions from the commissioners to spend over \$10,000. Sharon Johnson said a professional opinion should be provided by the Finance Director. Christine Mack said employees cannot spend a single dime without it being part their budget; this discussion is about competitive bidding. Sharon Johnson said past Charter Review Committees did not delay making recommendations to the City Commission for placement on the ballot.

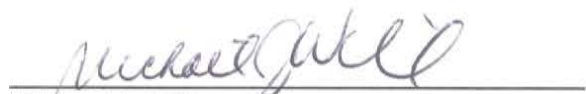
ADJOURNMENT

The Chairman declared the meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for: Tuesday, June 9 at 5 p.m.



Kelly L. Kresser, CMC
Clerk of the City Commission



Michael J. Will
Chairperson