

NEWTON CHARTER COMMISSION  
Wednesday, March 16, 2016  
7:00 p.m. – City Hall – Room 211  
MEETING MINUTES

Present: Chair Josh Krintzman, Vice-Chair Rhanna Kidwell, Bryan Barash, Jane Frantz, Howard Haywood, Anne Larner, Karen Manning, Brooke Lipsitt, Chris Steele, Jose Morgan

Approval of minutes from February 10<sup>th</sup>, February 29<sup>th</sup> the minutes were approved with amendments. Motion made by Anne, seconded by Bryan. (9-0 for 2/24, 8-0-1 for 2/10, Steele abstained)

**Public Comment:**

Ernest Lowenstein, 57 Hyde St, made

1. In Article 3-3(b), the conjunction should be “or.”
2. Asked whether there is a difference between a temporary and interim appointment.
3. The phrase “from time to time” should be reviewed in reference to major reports to the City Council.

**Article 11 Straw Vote**

The Commission decided to table Article 11, Section 11 until it hears from present and past members of the Designer Selection and Review Committees.

In Section 4, Brooke said that recodification is a singular noun. The article was amended to reflect this edit.

The Commission decided to move Section 13 (Definitions) to Article 1.

In Section 12, the Commission decided to change “1/3 of the members of the body by written notice delivered in hand, electronically, or to the place of residence...” to read “by 1/3 of the body electronically or by hand...”.

In Section 11-12, the language “the most recent version of” was added to a reference to Robert’s Rules of order.

Brooke asked how the Commission should address resident Greg Smith’s request to include language in the charter that guarantees the freedom of speech. The Commission discussed the issue and decided that the Law Department should review the issue before we took action on it.

Brooke made a motion to accept the draft of Article 11 with edits. Brian seconded the motion. (9-0, motion approved.)

**Article 3 Discussion**

The Commission addressed the following issues:

- In 3-1: If the Commission decides to adopt a strong mayoral form of government, then there shall be a 4-year term in the office of mayor.
- In 3-2: Ask Chris and Josh to propose language regarding establishing the position of Chief Administrative Officer in the charter
  - Decided to delete the Citizen’s Assistance Officer position.
- In 3-3: Delete the section on Collector-Treasurer position, so that it is treated similarly to other mayoral appointments.
  - Look into prohibiting city employees from being appointed to commissions within the scope of their employment
  - Add transitional sections into the final report addressing expiration of temporary commissions
- In 3-4: No changes
- In 3-5: Addressed how to address a vacancy of a department head position becomes vacant for any reason (no motion or decision).
- In 3-6: Josh will inquire with city legal department whether the city draws any distinction between temporary, interim or any other non-permanent appointment.
- In 3-7: Rather than the mayor filing communications “from time to time” to keep the council informed of the city’s financial condition – require the mayor to file at least semi-annually.
- In 3-8: Add a reference to Article 2, where council has the right to re-consider an adopted petition within 24 hours of passage.
- 3-9: Previously addressed by commission
- 3-10: Previously addressed by commission
- The commission discussed various options for filling vacancies on boards and commissions. No final decision was made on this item.

### **Finances of the Commission**

On March 12, the Finance Committee voted to ask the Mayor to make an appropriations request for funding for the Charter Commission. Finance committee voted to adopt a resolution approving the funding request as it had come from the charter commission.

### **Commission Schedule**

The Commission will hold meetings on the following dates:

March 30: Public hearing (Council Chambers)

March 31: Public meeting with six Councilors about Article 2 (Council Chambers)

April 6: Deliberation on Article 4

April 12: Round table discussion with elected officials from other cities (Ed. Center)

### **Communications**

A designated space for the Charter Commission has been identified and will be available for use in a week's time.