

Minneapolis Charter Commission Minutes

May 4, 2016 - 4:00 p.m.

Room 317 City Hall, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Members Present: Commissioners Barry Clegg (Chair), Dan Cohen, Todd Ferrara, DJ Heinle, Andrew Kozak, Jana Metge, Jeffrey Peltola, Andrea Rubenstein, Jan Sandberg, Lyall Schwarzkopf, Aaron Street

Members Absent: Commissioners Jill Garcia, Barbara Lickness, Toni Newborn, Matt Perry

1. Roll Call

Chair Clegg called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m., roll call was taken, and a quorum was present.

2. Adopt Agenda

On motion by Sandberg, seconded, the agenda was adopted.

3. Approve minutes of regular meeting of April 6, 2016

On motion by Heinle, seconded, the minutes were approved.

4. Chair's Report

The Chair stated a proposed 20-year funding agreement to support investments in neighborhood parks and street infrastructure had been brokered between the City Council and the Park & Recreation Board of Commissioners and approved by Mayor Hodges on April 29, 2016. A synopsis of that agreement was provided to all Commissioners.

The Chair informed Commissioners the proposed amendment related to voting thresholds for the Board of Estimate and Taxation had been approved by ordinance, with a unanimous vote of the City Council and approval by Mayor Hodges on April 29, 2016.

The Chair noted a citizens' campaign had publicly expressed its plans to submit a petition to amend the charter to increase the minimum wage in Minneapolis to \$15 per hour. In response to a question from the Chair, legal counsel indicated a special meeting might be required to accept the petition if it were submitted outside the Commission's schedule of regular meetings.

Public Hearing

5. 20 Year Neighborhood Park Plan Ordinance

The Chair opened the public hearing at 4:16 p.m.

Liz Wielinski, President of the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, thanked Commissioners for their consideration of the proposal to restore and maintain neighborhood parks as a potential ballot question. She said the Park Board was relieved with the brokered agreement for a 20-year funding commitment to address investments in both neighborhood parks as well as street infrastructure.

Mr. Cohen requested a financial analysis on the impact to the typical property owner resulting from the approved funding agreement. The clerk indicated a synopsis of anticipated year-by-year financial impact had been distributed together with copies of the ordinance and accompanying resolution that established the 20-year funding plan with the agenda packet.

Hearing no further public comments, the Chair closed the public hearing.

As there was no further need to consider a potential charter amendment addressing the neighborhood park funding proposal, the Chair indicated the matter would be deleted from the agenda.

Discussion

6. Classified Service Eligibility Register Ordinance

The Chair recognized Elizabeth Glidden, Vice-President of the Minneapolis City Council, who presented a proposal to amend the City Charter related to existing civil service provisions and the requirements for a service eligibility register, commonly referred to as the “rule of three.” Vice-President Glidden indicated the City Council hoped to address the proposed amendment by ordinance, with the concurrence of the Charter Commission, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes §410.12, subd. 7, and to substitute in lieu thereof modern policies and procedures by ordinance reflecting public sector best practices.

Chuck Bernardy, from the City’s Human Resources Department, explained that the “rule of three,” found in City Charter §8.5(d)(2), was originally enacted as a special law in 1978. It is a mechanism for employee selection that utilizes testing procedures to condense the total number of qualified, eligible applicants for classified positions. Mr. Bernardy said that roughly 1,600 of the nearly 3,500 employees in the City’s workforce—approximately 92 percent—are in represented positions subject to the “rule of three.” He said the practice of restricting hiring decisions to three candidates was outdated and not aligned with best practices in private or public sectors. Mr. Bernardy said the City hoped to eliminate the eligibility register as a charter requirement and to pursue, by ordinance, more modern policies and practices that would position the City Government more competitively in the labor market, including allowances for more modern practices, such as cultural competency, so that the City of Minneapolis could attract, develop, and retain the best workforce possible.

Brian Rice, attorney for the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, indicated that the Park Board was also subject to the “rule of three,” since the Park & Recreation District was also subject to the same rules with respect to personnel matters, and therefore recommended the proposed amendment be modified to enable the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board to determine selection processes for certifying eligible applicants for its employees, similar to what was requested for the City of Minneapolis. In response, legal counsel indicated that a drafting change reflecting this technical correction could be accommodated.

On motion by Ferrara, seconded, the proposal to eliminate existing provisions related to the classified service eligibility register, set forth in City Charter §8.5(d)(2), and to adopt by ordinance modern policies and provisions for selection processes to certify eligible applicants for classified positions, both by the City Council and by the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, was approved and referred to the City Council for its consideration by ordinance, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes §410.12, subd. 7.

Public Commentary

Jeff Strand, 5100 Thomas Ave. N, expressed concern that one of the funding sources included in the 20-year funding agreement for neighborhood parks and street infrastructure was the decertification of the consolidated Tax Increment Financing district, which had previously been used to providing funding for neighborhood programs. He encouraged the Charter Commission, if and as appropriate, to take up the issue of neighborhood funding, noting that he believed it was imperative for the City to identify secure and stable funds to support its neighborhoods once the TIF district was decertified.

On motion by Sandberg, seconded, the meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Submitted by Casey Joe Carl, City Clerk