

# Minneapolis Charter Commission Minutes

May 4, 2011 - 4:00 p.m.

Room 317 City Hall, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Commissioners Present: Clegg (Chair), Dolan, Ferrara, Gerdes, Johnson, Kozak, Lazarus, Lickness, Metge, Peltola, Rubenstein, Sandberg, Schwarzkopf

Commissioners Excused: Connell, Stade

Also Present: Burt Osborne, Assistant City Attorney

## 1. Roll Call

Chair Clegg called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. Roll call was taken.

## 2. Adopt Agenda

*Lazarus moved adoption of the agenda. Seconded.*

Adopted upon a voice vote.

Absent - Connell, Stade.

## 3. Approve minutes of regular meeting of April 6, 2011

*Lazarus moved approval of the minutes of the meeting of April 6, 2011. Seconded.*

Adopted upon a voice vote.

Absent - Connell, Stade.

## 4. Chair's Report

Clegg had received permission from the Minnesota Historical Society to reproduce Chapter 1 of Iric Nathanson's book, *Minneapolis in the 20th Century*, which he distributed to Commissioners. While he recommended the entire book, Chapter 1 was specifically about the history of the Minneapolis City Charter. The book is available at the Minneapolis Public Library or for purchase at book stores and online.

Clegg reported on the status of the legislative redistricting.

Clegg reported that he had attended a meeting with County and City representatives to discuss three software options for redistricting. Two were Maptitude products and the third was a freeware version which doesn't have the functionality the Redistricting Group would want for comparing communities of interest. Hennepin and Ramsey Counties, the Legislature, and the Secretary of State all use one of the Maptitude products.

The appointments of Commissioners Clegg and Stade expired May 1, 2011. Commissioner Clegg reported that he had been reappointed. Commissioner Stade's vacancy remained open while the Judge was checking references.

## Discussion

### 5. Report from Advisory Group Selection Committee:

**Report on interviews held on April 7, April 11, April 12, April 27, and May 2.**

Sandberg reported that ten additional applications were received after the deadline was extended to April 29. One person has rescinded his application. There are now a total of 31 eligible applications. The Commissioners received a one-page report listing the candidates and their wards and neighborhoods, as well as a listing of the current Charter Commissioners and their wards. As a group, the 31 applicants represented all thirteen wards and are younger and more

ethnically diverse than the current Charter Commission. Commissioners interested can review audio tapes of the interviews by contacting the Clerk's Office. Three interviews are scheduled on May 9. The Committee planned to bring a slate of recommended candidates to the next Charter Commission meeting. The full Charter Commission will make the final selection.

Metge noted that she had sat in on one of the interview sessions and the committee has done a stellar job, especially the chair.

Ferrara invited Commissioners to attend the meeting on May 9. He also hoped that as soon as possible after the Advisory Group is formed, the legal department would begin educating both the Commission and the Advisory Group and a tentative calendar would be developed.

Rubenstein noted that Commissioner Schwarzkopf had sat in on all of the meetings, as well. All applicants have been engaged, interesting, and wonderful people. The interview process has been one of the most satisfying processes she has participated in.

#### **6. Communication Committee:**

##### **Discuss membership of Charter Commission Communication Committee.**

Clegg stated that Commissioners Ferrara, Johnson, and Sandberg had indicated that they were interested in serving on the Communications Committee; however, Ferrara and Sandberg requested that they not begin serving until the Advisory Group Selection Committee work was complete. The final membership will be determined at the June meeting, and he requested that anyone else interested in serving on the committee notify him before that meeting.

#### **7. Recommended Principles for Redistricting:**

##### **Consideration of amendments to Redistricting Principles.**

Clegg stated that the proposed amendments to the Principles for Redistricting dealt with instances in the principles that were inconsistent or errors in accordance with the Charter, as well as minor grammatical clean up and clarification. Chair Clegg, Assistant City Attorney Carol Bachun, and Commissioners Schwarzkopf and Lazarus had signed off on the proposed changes.

Peltola noted that at the last meeting it was decided that the phrase "city-wide meetings" would be changed to "public meetings". Clegg stated that, with the Commission's consent, he would make that change.

*Schwarzkopf moved approval of the proposed amendments to the Redistricting Principles, as amended to replace the phrase "city-wide meetings" with the phrase "public meetings" throughout the document. Seconded.*

Adopted upon a voice vote.

Absent - Connell, Stade.

#### **8. Role of Student Interns in the Redistricting Process:**

##### **Report by Commissioner Rubenstein.**

Rubenstein stated that Professor Schultz and the students who had expressed an interest in the redistricting process had requested some type of job description. The proposed job description was before the Commission for their consideration.

Peltola suggested that it be clearly noted on the job description that the students were working at the direction of the professor, be it Professor Shultz or a professor at another college or university, and that the job description be labeled "sample".

Clegg suggested inserting the phrase "subject to the direction of the professor" at an appropriate place somewhere in the job description.

Schwarzkopf was concerned that if there was a lawsuit, a lawyer might be able to use the student's paper to attempt to build a case against the decision of the Redistricting Commission.

Clegg stated that he did not share that concern because the student report would be basically two pieces: (1) citations from the public record; and (2) the student's opinion.

Sandberg stated that anyone could attend all the meetings and take notes and be subject to discovery by attorneys involved in a lawsuit.

*Ferrara moved approval of the job description, as amended with the appropriate insertion of the phrase "subject to the discretion of the professor". Seconded.*

Adopted upon a voice vote.

Absent - Connell, Stade.

## **Old Business**

### **9. Plain Language Charter Revision:**

#### **Presentation by City Attorney's Office to take place at June 1 meeting.**

Assistant City Attorney Osborne stated that the Plain Language Charter Revision will be discussed again at the May 12 Committee of the Whole meeting, which is why it had been suggested that the presentation be delayed until the June Charter Commission meeting.

Clegg clarified that the point of the Committee of the Whole review of the Plain Language Charter Revision was to get the benefit of the opinion of all stakeholders, including the City Council, Park Board, City Attorney's Office, and City departments. If the Commission places the Plain Language Charter Revision on the ballot in 2012, they would like to have the support of as many stakeholders as possible. Following the Committee of the Whole review, some Commissioners will discuss the proposed changes with former Commissioner Brian Melendez.

## **Public Commentary**

There was no one present wishing to address the Charter Commission.

*Lazarus moved to adjourn. Seconded.*

Adopted upon a voice vote.

Absent - Connell, Stade.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Peggy Menshek  
Council Committee Coordinator