

**CHARTER COMMISSION
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Charter Commission conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, November 21, 2017, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Joseph Field
 Commissioner Susan E. Anderson
 Commissioner Mark Barrows
 Commissioner Ben Deemer
 Commissioner Joshua Fuhreck

Members Absent: Commissioner Jim Bendtsen
 Commissioner Jennifer Leistico
 Commissioner John Niederhaus
 Commissioner Chad Sivertson

Also Present: City Administrator Kurtis G. Ulrich
 City Clerk Jo Thieling
 Mayor Sarah Strommen

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Field called the regular meeting of the Charter Commission to order at 6:50 p.m.

CITIZEN INPUT

None.

APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Barrows seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Field, Commissioners Barrows, Anderson, Deemer, and Fuhreck. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Bendtsen, Leistico, Niederhaus, and Sivertson.

APPROVE MINUTES

Motion by Commissioner Deemer, seconded by Commissioner Barrows, to approve the following meeting minutes as presented:

- 1) Regular Charter Commission Meeting dated October 19, 2016

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Field, Commissioners Deemer, Barrows, Anderson, and Fuhreck. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners: Bendtsen, Leistico, Niederhaus, and Sivertson.

COMMISSION BUSINESS

5.1 Introduce New Charter Commission Members

City Clerk Thieling stated that two new members have been appointed to the Commission, Joshua Fuhreck and Jennifer Leistico. She welcomed Commissioner Fuhreck and noted that Commissioner Leistico was unable to attend this evening's meeting.

5.2 Elect Chair and Vice Chair for 2018-2019

Chairperson Field stated that it is time to appoint the Chair and Vice-Chair for the 2018-2019 term. He noted that he is currently the Chair and Commissioner Deemer is the current Vice-Chair and opened the floor for the elections.

Motion by Commissioner Deemer, seconded by Commissioner Anderson, to elect Commissioner Field to serve as Chair for the Charter Commission for years 2018-2019.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Field, Commissioners Deemer, Anderson, Barrows, and Fuhreck. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Bendtsen, Leistico, Niederhaus, and Sivertson.

Motion by Commissioner Barrows, seconded by Commissioner Anderson to elect Commissioner Deemer to serve as Vice-Chair for the Charter Commission for years 2018-2019.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Field, Commissioners Barrows, Anderson, Deemer, and Fuhreck. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Bendtsen, Leistico, Niederhaus, and Sivertson.

5.3 Receive Presentation of an Update Regarding the City's Strategic Plan

City Administrator Ulrich referenced the balanced scorecard which is used to measure the success in attempting to reach the desired goals which lead to the specific goals and tactics in the strategic action plan. He reviewed the four focused goals of which the scorecard is used to measure action towards. He reviewed the different methods the City uses to measure and survey satisfaction levels. He provided highlights from the area of continued financial responsibility including maintaining the current AA+ bond rating, maintaining a stable tax base, and continued economic development efforts. He highlighted the elements of customer satisfaction and stated that the City will continue to conduct resident surveys every two years, noting that the responses from 2016 continue to improve from the answers received in 2014. He noted that the response rates for police and fire were reviewed and the response time decreased in 2016 from the response rates of 2015. He stated that the reliability and locations for the water system has been

improved, which increases the fire rating of the City. He provided information on infrastructure and road improvement.

Chairperson Field asked for additional information on the road rating.

City Administrator Ulrich noted that the City hires a third party to rate the road conditions, using a set of criteria, to provide an objective opinion.

Commissioner Deemer asked the number of miles of unpaved road remaining in the City.

City Administrator Ulrich estimated about four miles of unpaved road remain in the City. He noted that Public Works continues to discuss the topic.

Commissioner Anderson stated that she had heard comments that the thickness of road was not adequate in some areas and asked if that issue had been resolved.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that is a constant issue that the City is attempting to fix. He stated that the City has invested in new technology which allows the City to know the pavement thickness before beginning road projects and better plan for costs. He stated that the only thing the City can do at this time is better plan for projects to ensure that the desired standard is being met. He reviewed the metric of providing 70 percent business satisfaction in regard to economic development and police satisfaction. He stated that staff averages 12 to 15 business visits per year which helps to obtain input and assists in retaining and expanding local businesses. He reviewed the metric in regard to plan review timelines and noted that because of the heavy development load this year there were times when that timeline was not able to be met. He stated that the City will be adding a Senior Planner, which will assist in response time, along with the ability to use the new e-permit review and submission.

Chairperson Field asked the growth rate for new construction in the past year as compared to the previous years, and whether this is anticipated as a bubble or expected to continue.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that he does not have the figures in front of him. He stated that the revenue as of last month was already at 126 percent of the projected figure. He noted that he could follow up to provide additional details.

Commissioner Deemer stated that in the past when there was a stable growth rate, a moratorium was then put in place which slowed the rate. He noted that he has not seen a moratorium in the past 15 years.

City Administrator Ulrich confirmed that there are no moratoriums planned. He stated that if the City plans development well and follows a process up-front, there can be continual and steady growth rather than unplanned or disrupting growth. He reviewed internal metrics of measuring customer satisfaction including an employee survey.

Commissioner Barrows referenced the fire response time and asked if the fire department is mainly composed of volunteers.

City Administrator Ulrich confirmed that there are two full-time positions and the remaining members of the department are paid on-call/volunteer. He stated that there are some members of police and public works that are firefighters and can respond during the day. He noted that members of local business are also firefighters and could respond during the day, along with the mutual aid the City receives from other communities.

Mayor Strommen stated that City Administrator Ulrich has presented the outcomes and successes. She noted that the strategic plan helps to provide focus. She stated that the focus of the City Council has been to maintain a stable tax rate, noting the challenges in doing that with a growing community. She stated that the increased tax base helps the City to invest further in the community. She stated that the Council has lengthened the timeline that the budget is reviewed, not only working on an annual budget but also projecting five years into the future and ten years into the future for the capital improvements. She stated that this allows the City to not only maintain a stable tax rate for the year but into the future. She stated that under the connected community item, Highway 10 has continued to be a focus. She reported that the City of Anoka was awarded \$20,000,000 for the Thurston and Fairoak interchanges, which will also help Ramsey as the Ramsey residents traveling on Highway 10 have to pass through Anoka. She stated that public safety is a focus of the smart citizen goal, along with citizen participation. She provided information on the citizen police academy which began the previous year. She stated that she continues to be proud of the police department, especially in the climate of the past year. She referenced effective organization and stated that one of the strong elements of that item is ensuring that the City is staffed appropriately. She stated that because staff cannot simply be added everywhere, the Council and staff have aimed to add staff in strategic value-added positions. She stated that the strategic plan is used by staff every day and by the Council when they continue to make decisions. She thanked the Commission for allowing her time to speak tonight.

Chairperson Field thanked staff and Mayor Strommen for providing this update tonight. He stated that he continues to focus on Highway 10, noting that the Armstrong interchange has been a success, but it would be nice to see continued improvements. He stated that one of Ramsey's strengths is its trail system and its ability to be close to the metro area but still feel like it's further away.

5.4 Approve Year End Activity Letter to Chief Judge for Years 2016 and 2017

City Clerk Thieling reviewed the staff report, noting that an annual report reflecting the activities of the Charter Commission must be submitted to the Chief Judge of the Tenth Judicial District. She stated that a draft summary letter was attached to the case for years 2016 and 2017 for the Commission to review, provide comments on, and approve. She stated that the 2017 activity report will be amended to include the actions taken tonight with regard to the Commission terms.

Motion by Commissioner Deemer, seconded by Commissioner Barrows, to approve the year-end annual report letter for 2016 and submit the report to the Honorable Douglas B. Meslow, Chief Judge of the Tenth Judicial District.

Further discussion: Chairperson Field noted that this only applies to the letter reflective of 2016. He stated that perhaps the 2017 letter should not be sent in until after the end of the year.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Field, Commissioners Deemer, Barrows, Anderson, and Fuhreck. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Bendtsen, Leistico, Niederhaus, and Sivertson.

Chairperson Field stated that he prefers the letter format over sending minutes.

5.5 Review Charter Commission Member Terms

City Clerk Thieling reviewed the staff report and noted that the following Commission members have terms that expire in December 2017: Susan Anderson, Ben Deemer, John Niederhaus, and Chad Sivertson. She asked for input from the members with expired terms as to whether they would like to continue to serve. She noted that she will follow-up with the members of the Commission that are not present tonight.

Commissioner Deemer stated that he will request reappointment.

6. COMMISSION / STAFF INPUT

6.1 Other

City Administrator Ulrich stated that he has talked with City Clerk Thieling about the election process. He noted the recent City Council resignation and the special election process that must be followed, which is lengthy and costly. He stated that the State statute would allow for appointment to a vacant position with less than two-year left in a term while the current Charter states one year or less. He stated that he would like the Commission to review that statute in 2018 and make a recommendation on whether the Charter should be amended to address that statute.

Commissioner Anderson noted that there is a currently seated Councilmember that is running for the vacant position in the special election; if he is elected to that seat then the City would have to have another election to fill his currently held position.

City Administrator Ulrich noted that the City would not have to hold a special election and would be able to align that with the general election in the fall. He confirmed that there would remain a vacant position on the Council for that period of time.

Chairperson Field stated that he is understanding that the Charter is currently more restrictive than State law and therefore the recommendation would be to review the statute and determine if the Charter should be amended to match the statute. He agreed that this item should be placed on a future agenda.

Chairperson Field expressed condolences to Commissioner Anderson on the loss of her daughter.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Deemer, seconded by Commissioner Barrows, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried. All present voted in favor.

The regular meeting of the Charter Commission adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Ann M. Thieling
City Clerk

Joseph J. Langel
City Attorney

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.