

Minutes

Charter Review Committee

February 25 2010

The meeting was called to order at 5:36 pm.

Members in attendance were Nadia Aubrey, Daniel Canine, Ron George, Rob Moore, and Commissioner David Poulton.

Also in attendance was Assistant City Attorney Mark Liss.

It was confirmed that the earlier swearing in time of City Commissioners was on the list for potential 2010 proposals, and that a 4-year mayoral term had been moved to future consideration.

Motion by Commissioner Poulton, seconded by Rob Moore to approve the January minutes. The minutes were approved.

Ron stated that the committee needed to determine what proposals to include in the memo to CITCOM. He wants to include them in the process earlier and get their feedback. The scope of the committee could be determined by the responses received. He wanted to emphasize that they were not submitting anything for approval at this time, they were just deciding what to include in the memo.

The committee proceeded to discuss the potential 2010 proposals.

The first proposal is to formalize the process in the charter for the selection of the mayor pro-tem. The tradition has been that the mayor pro-tem is the highest vote-getter from the previous election.

Commissioner Poulton asked if there were provisions if something happened to both the mayor and mayor pro-tem. Mark replied that the committee could formalize the language in the amendment.

A lengthy discussion ensued as to specific language dealing with the mayor pro-tem and the autonomy of CITCOM, and the decision was made to move this item to future consideration until the committee had more information.

The second proposal is to swear in the incoming commissioners the Saturday after the election after the results are certified. This item was suggested by

City Manager Don Johnson during a recent visit. The committee was in agreement that this would provide for a smoother transition, and would be more helpful to have new commissioners be seated earlier. Mark stated that several nearby communities have such a format.

The next item is addressing the circumstances under which the mayor pro-tem acts in place of the mayor. There is a provision in the Charter where the mayor pro-tem assumes the mayoral office, but it relates only to short-term absences, and there is no plan of succession should the mayor resign. The committee felt this was an issue in the Charter that needs to be addressed.

The next item is allowing mid-term commissioners to run for mayor without resigning their seat. Mark stated that the current charter language was enacted in 1967. The committee felt that the current language could discourage an effective commissioner from running for mayor.

The next item was reducing the amount of petition signatures to get on the ballot from 500 to 250. Mark stated that the language was enacted with the idea that a high amount of signatures could be a substitute for a primary. He also related that CITCOM can change the amount of time to review signatures. It was noted that the City Clerk's office has requested this item.

Commissioner Poulton stated that he had some issues with this item. It was not difficult for him to obtain 500 signatures, and he was unsure how this would help the Clerk's office. Mark replied that each signature must be matched up with the registered voter records, and has the potential to reduce staff time.

After much discussion, it was suggested that perhaps the required number of signatures could be set by CITCOM every two years, or be based on population. It was also suggested that City Clerk Melanie Halas could be invited to the next meeting to provide background.

The next item would fill CITCOM vacancies with the 4th place finisher from the last election, provided that candidate received at least 10% of the total votes cast. The committee felt that this amendment would provide for greater expediency and more effective representation of the voters. Mark stated that the language could state that CITCOM has 60 days to fill a vacancy, then this could act as a trigger mechanism.

The items in the memo to CITCOM are:

- Move up the swearing in of new commissioners to the Saturday after the election
- Clarify the circumstances under which the Mayor Pro Tem acts in place of the mayor

- Allow mid-term commissioners to run for mayor without having to resign their seat
- Reduce the number of ballot nominating signatures from 500 to 250
- CITCOM vacancies filled by 4th place finisher from last election, provided candidate received at least 10% of total vote.

The memo will also ask commissioners if there any further Charter issues they would like addressed.

Meeting adjourned 6:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Rob Moore, acting secretary