

CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

January 6, 2020

The Charter Review Commission met at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building Council Chambers on the 6th day of January, 2020, and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted in the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray 48 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL.

PRESENT:

Ms. Aisha Ali
Mr. Trey Bates
Mr. Doug Cubberley, Vice-Chairman
Ms. Carol Dillingham
Mr. Jim Eller
Mr. Jim Griffith
Mr. Tom Hackelman
Mr. Greg Jungman
Mr. Richard Stawicki
Mr. Bob Thompson, Chairman
Mr. Bryan Vinyard
Ms. Shon Williamson-Jennings

ABSENT:

Mr. Kenneth McBride
Mr. Kevin Pipes

STAFF PRESENT:

Ms. Kathryn Walker, City Attorney
Ms. Brenda Hall, City Clerk

City Attorney Kathryn Walker said City Council in its meeting of April 23, 2019, adopted Resolution R-1819-66 creating a Charter Review Commission to complete a targeted review of the City of Norman Charter highlighted those items and current recommendations from the Charter Review Commission as follows:

- Review of Article II, Section 1, to consider increasing the monthly stipend provided for the Mayor and Councilmembers.
 - CRC Recommendation: The Mayor shall receive an annual stipend of [\$8,100 - \$11,700] for his or her service per annum, payable monthly beginning with the mayoral term that begins in 2022. Each of the Councilmembers shall receive an annual stipend of [\$5,400-\$7,800] per annum, payable monthly, beginning with the terms that begin in 2022. The Mayor, with the consent of Council, shall appoint a five member Compensation Commission to determine and set the appropriate monthly stipend for the Mayor and each of the Councilmembers based on the consumer price index, the City's overall budget, and other relevant factors every three years thereafter. Said Compensation Commission shall be appointed every three years and any monthly stipend increases approved by the Commission shall not become effective until the following Council or Mayoral (as applicable) term.
- Consider adding language to Article II, Section 1, of the Charter adding reimbursement for cell phone expenses as additional compensation received by City Councilmembers.
 - CRC Recommendation: No changes recommended. CRC felt this was more appropriately characterized as a policy change and did not require a change to the Charter.

- Review of Article II, Sections 2, 5, 6 and 14 to consider whether the term of office for Councilmembers should be changed from two to three years and whether the term of office for Mayor be changed from three to four years.
- Review of Article II, Section 2, to consider whether the term of office for Councilmembers and Mayor should expire on the last Tuesday of the month in which a runoff election is held or scheduled to be held.
 - CRC Recommendation: Beginning in 2023, move to three year terms for Council members and beginning in 2024, terms will begin on the first Tuesday following certification of the election results
- Consider adding language to Article II, Section 10, of the Charter that would require a sitting Councilmember to resign their position at the time he or she files for another City, State or Federal elected office.
 - CRC Recommendation: No changes or additions to current Charter recommended.
- Consider adding language to Article II, Section 10, of the Charter that would require a candidate for City Council to reside in the Ward in which he or she seeks election for a minimum of six months prior to filing for said office.
 - CRC Recommendation: No changes or additions to current Charter recommended.
- Review Article II, Section 11, to consider whether to allow partisan elections for municipal office.
 - CRC Recommendation: No changes or additions to current Charter recommended.
- Review of Article II, Section 22 to consider allowing the outgoing Councilmember creating the vacancy to appoint his or her successor, unless such vacancy has been created due to removal from office as a result of proceedings by a Court of competent jurisdiction, or whether to delete language allowing Council to appoint a successor and instead require a special election to be called for the purpose of filling such vacancy.
 - CRC Recommendation: Vacancies in office are filled by a majority vote of the remaining members of Council after appointment and recommendation of one candidate from a Selection Committee made up of 5 residents of the ward for this vacancy has or will occur. If a vacancy is not filled within 60 days, Council shall call a special election to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term. (underlined portion new language)
- Review of Article VII, Section 2, to consider whether the City Attorney should be appointed and subject to removal by the City Council.
 - CRC Recommendation: Model City Attorney appointment after the City Manager appointment language in the Charter - position would become an at-will position appointed by a majority of Council and could be removed with 5 votes of Council
- Consider adding language to the Charter related to the appointment and removal of a City Auditor that would be a full time employee of the City of Norman and appointed and subject to removal by the City Council.
 - CRC Recommendation: No changes or additions to current Charter recommended.
- Consider adding language to the Charter that would establish consequences should the provisions of Section 2-103 of the City's Code be violated.
 - CRC Recommendation: No changes or additions to current Charter recommended.

Other items not yet considered include the following:

- Article XVI, Section 2 – requiring Council to consider a resolution calling for a vote of the electorate to increase City utility rates under certain conditions
- Consider adding language to the Charter to establish a Resident or Community Bill of Rights
- Article VI, Section 1 – increasing number of members of the Norman Regional Hospital Authority from 9 to 11
- Consider adding language to require a vote of the electorate for any TIF > \$5 million
- Review potential loopholes used to skirt the Open Meeting Act
- Review executive session restrictions and provide recommendation on appropriate limits of use versus overly expansive such that it provides cover to skirt the Open Meeting Act
- Revisit relationship between NRH and the City for equitability of benefit versus burden to the respective parties
- Examine the ward boundary creation process

Chairman Thompson opened the floor to public comments.

Robert Huskey - *Filling Vacant Council seats* - asked who will make the appointments to the committee.

Paul Arcaroli - felt extending the same replacement process for vacancies to include Council seats where the incumbent is not running.

Anne Gallagher - *Term Expirations* - the first Tuesday after declaration is too soon - she felt more time is needed for a smoother transition.

Resignation Before Filing for Another Elected Office - felt when a seated councilmember is running for another office their current position as councilmember lags. She felt they should resign their position for run for another office.

Requirement to live in the Ward for which Election is Sought for a Minimum of 6 months - supports the six month requirement

Filling Vacant Council seats - supports proposed language

TIFs over \$5 Million Requiring Vote of Electorate - supports electorate vote

Jayne Crumpley - *Term expirations* - too soon – Councilmembers need more time to get orientated

Resignation Before Filing for Another Elected Office - felt like the councilmember who chooses to fund for another elected office should resign their council seat. She felt there was too much conflict of time

Requirement to live in the Ward for which Election is Sought for a Minimum of six months - supports six months

Partisan Elections - felt council election should remain non partisan

Filling Vacant Council seats - supports proposed language

Consequences for Violations of the Ethics Ordinance - felt citizens often feel there are conflicts and question how the specific councilmember would present the people

TIFs over \$5 Million Requiring Vote of Electorate - supports electorate vote

Steve Ellis - *Term Expirations* - supports earlier seating but questioned three year terms and what election is considered the municipal general election for purposes of initiative and referendum petitions

Cynthia Rogers - *Term Expirations* - said sometimes people run on an issue that often gets settled before they are seated. She felt removing the lame duck issue would be good.

Consequences for Violations of Ethics Ordinance - felt councilmembers could be required to provide full disclosure of business dealings

TIFs over \$5 Million Requiring Vote of Electorate - supports electorate vote

Chairman Thompson - encouraged people to attend the Charter Commission meetings and felt they could benefit from hearing the discussion and debate amongst the Commission when making their recommendations.

Public hearings will continue quarterly with the next hearing being in April.

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint presentation entitled, "Charter Review Commission – Bob Thompson, Chair"

The public meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.