

**Ogdensburg Charter Review Commission**

**August 8, 2017**

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Chairman Bean called the meeting of the Ogdensburg Charter Review Commission to order and asked the Secretary to call the roll:

Present: Chairman Bean, Commissioners Basta, Kendall, Loffler, McNamara, McRoberts, Pearson, Pitcher, Putman and Wilson

Absent: Commissioner O'Brien

Excused: Commissioner Cilley

City Staff: Kathleen Bouchard, City Clerk  
Cathy Jock, Deputy City Clerk  
Coralee Barrett, City Manager's Secretary  
Michael Farrell, Fire Chief  
Andrew Kennedy, Police Chief  
Andrea Smith, Director of Planning and Development  
Suzanne Arquette, City Assessor

Guests: None

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

1. Chairman Bean made a motion to amend the July 11, 2017 minutes to remove Commissioners O'Brien, Pitcher and Pearson from being listed as present, and add Commissioners Basta, Putman and Wilson to be listed as present, and Commissioner Loffler seconded the motion.

The vote to amend the minutes was:

CARRIED, AYES ALL

2. Commissioner Pearson made a motion to accept the amended July 11, 2017 minutes, and Commissioner Loffler seconded the motion.

The vote on the minutes as amended was:

CARRIED, AYES ALL

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OLD BUSINESS

1. Commissioner Loffler made a motion to amend §C-5(c), City Council; Mayor, Election and term, by establishing non-successive, twelve year term limits for the offices of Mayor and City Council, and Commissioner Wilson seconded the motion.

Chairman Bean asked if Commissioner Loffler intended Mayor and City Councillor to be separate offices with respect to the term limits, and Commissioner Loffler said yes. Commissioner Loffler explained if a member of Council cannot make progress within twelve years, it is time for new people and new ideas. Commissioner Loffler said it might be easier to find candidates too because they would not be forced to run against an incumbent. Chairman Bean said he has discussed this suggestion with Mayor Ashley and several City Councillors, and they are in agreement. Commissioner Basta said he agrees with the term limits, and Council members would be motivated to express their honest opinions during their final term.

Commissioner Putman said he did not accurately understand the purpose of this Charter Review Commission and had hoped these meetings were to discuss changes to improve the City. Commissioner Putman said he feels this is a waste of time. Commissioners Wilson and Basta disagreed. Commissioner Loffler recommended Commissioner Putman organize a committee to brainstorm ways to improve the City. Commissioner Basta asked if Commissioner Putman would be willing to serve and seek peers for that type of committee. Commissioner Putman said he would consider it.

The vote was:

CARRIED, AYES ALL

2. Commissioner McNamara made a motion to amend §C-100, Charter Review Commission, to remove language “December 31, 2017” and “ten-year”, and replace with “December 31, 2023” and “six-year”, and Councillor Loffler seconded the motion.

Commissioner McNamara said a review of the Charter is the only mechanism taxpayers have to make suggestions, and ten years is too long to wait. Commissioner McNamara explained although Council ultimately decides what changes will be made to the Charter, shortening the period of time between reviews would give the Charter Review Commission more credence. Commissioners Loffler, Wilson and Kendall agreed.

The vote was:

CARRIED, AYES ALL

3. Chairman Bean made a motion to amend §C-5, City Council; Mayor, to mandate City Councillors be elected by election district in which they reside and the Mayor be elected at large, and Commissioner Basta seconded the motion.

Chairman Bean asked if everyone received the researched information on this topic. Secretary Kathleen Bouchard said it was emailed to all Commission members. Chairman Bean explained in smaller communities people tend to vote for the popular person instead of who will do the best job. Chairman Bean said election by district would result in the selection of the person voters in each district want to represent them.

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Secretary Kathleen Bouchard provided the Commission with the total number of registered voters in the City and in each district. Commissioner Kendall asked what would happen if a district did not have an eligible candidate. Chairman Bean said someone would be appointed. Commissioner Loffler said this new process could be phased in as Council seats become available by filing seats by district in numerical order. Chairman Bean said seats could also be filled based on the district of the exiting Councillor. Commissioner Kendall asked if only residents of District 1 would vote for the candidates in that district. Chairman Bean said yes, and everyone would vote for the Mayor.

The vote was:

AYES: Chairman Bean, Commissioners Basta, Loffler, McNamara, Pearson, Pitcher, Putman, Wilson

NAYS: Commissioners Kendall and McRoberts

CARRIED, 8 TO 2

NEW BUSINESS

1. Chairman Bean asked if anyone had any other recommendations. Chairman Bean asked Commission Secretary Kathleen Bouchard to prepare a complete list of proposed changes for review by the Commission.

2. Commissioner Pearson asked if the Charter Review Commission will make a presentation of the proposed changes to Council. Chairman Bean said yes, and Council can ask questions of Commission members.

3. There was a consensus to hold the next Charter Review Commission meeting on September 5, 2017 at 6pm at City Hall.

On a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned.