

**MINUTES OF THE  
WHITE BEAR LAKE CHARTER COMMISSION  
NOVEMBER 10, 2021**

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

In accordance with published notice, a meeting of the White Bear Lake Charter Commission was called to order by Chairman Tim Geck at 7:00 p.m. in White Bear Lake City Hall Council Chambers.

At roll call the following members were present: Mike Amundsen, Marc Aune, Scott Bill, Heidi Schmidt Boyd, Scott Costello, Tim Geck, Dale Grambush, Dillon Lang, Dan Louismet and Mark Sather. James Patrick Barone, Robert Hafdahl and Jim Berry were excused. A quorum was declared.

Staff present was Assistant City Manager Rick Juba. Mayor Emerson was in attendance at the beginning of the meeting to thank members of the commission for their work on behalf of the City.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

It was moved by Member **Lang**, seconded by Member **Louismet**, to approve the minutes of the meeting held September 8, 2021 with a spelling correction to line 3, paragraph 3 of page 2.

The motion carried unanimously.

**3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

It was moved by Member **Grambush**, seconded by Member **Bill** to approve the agenda as presented.

The motion carried unanimously.

**4. OLD BUSINESS**

- A. Review of Charter Section 4.13 pertaining to election of the Council Chair and correction of references in the Charter to “annual” municipal elections

Chair Geck summarized the Commission’s action on the topic at its last two meetings held September 9, 2020 and September 8, 2021. He also called attention to a memorandum from the City Manager forwarding the request of the City Council for consideration of a Charter amendment setting the term and election date of the City Council Chair, a draft resolution amending the election date and a memorandum from the League of Minnesota Cities to member Sather dated November 1, 2021, reporting information regarding the election date and terms of City Council Chair (or similar positions) in select Minnesota home rule cities.

Chair Geck also reported on a conversation with City Council member Dan Jones who initiated the requested amendment. He stated the Council's request was twofold; correct the Charter reference to "annual" City Council elections to "biennial" and changing the election date of the Chair to the first meeting of January of odd numbered years rather than the first meeting of January following a municipal election. Councilmember Jones' opinion was the amended reference to annual elections was a technical correction of obvious need, however, the change in the election date was mostly based on his opinion that holding the election at a time when all Councilmembers had served at least one year was preferable to the potential of having two newly elected Councilmembers selecting the Council Chair at their first meeting. Chair Geck stated he did not think Councilmember Jones felt strongly invested in the change of election date.

Member Sather summarized his report on the term and election dates of City Council Chairs, Vice Mayors, President Pro Tempore, and other positions selected by City Councils to serve in the absence of the Mayor in selected home rule charter Minnesota cities. He also referenced Minnesota statutes, section 412.121 pertaining to non-home rule charter cities which calls for election of an Acting Mayor at the first Council meeting of each year which is the only statutory reference he found.

There was considerable discussion of the merits of holding the Council Chair election at the first meeting following an election versus one year later as well as on the possible value of a one year term for the position as called for in M.S. 412.121. There was also an observation that the current practice seems to have served the City well and the need to correct the reference to "annual elections" in various sections of the Charter further amendments may not be warranted.

It was moved by Member Louismet, seconded by Member Amundsen to appoint a committee of Scott Costello, Marc Aune and Mark Sather to further review the Charter for references to annual elections and prepare an amendment resolution for the Commission's consideration at a meeting to be set for January 12, 2022.

The motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Member Louismet, seconded by Member Aune to ask the City Attorney whether the City may be bound by M.S. 412.121.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Geck sought and received consent to schedule a meeting on January 12, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in White Bear Lake City Hall.

Chair Geck recognized Heidi Schmidt Boyd and welcomed her to the Commission.

B. Redistricting

There was discussion of the status of redistricting plans being prepared by the state and county. It was acknowledged that the Charter Commission, acting as the Redistricting Commission, could not begin its work following the 2020 federal census until the state and the county plans are approved. Ward specific population totals are being calculated.

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

Nothing scheduled

**6. OPEN DISCUSSION**

Nothing scheduled

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Commission, it was moved by Member **Aune**, seconded by Member **Costello**, to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.

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Tim Geck, Chair

ATTEST:

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Mark Sather, Secretary