



City of Blaine

Charter Commission

August 8, 2023 | 6:00 PM
Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Square Drive NE
Blaine, MN 55449

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM and members introduced themselves and shared their background.

2. Roll Call

Present: Chair Jeffrey Lester, Commissioners Ken Anderson, Ayman Khan, Stephen Berk, Alan Goracke, Jason Halpern, Jason Hartmann, Terri Homan, Dick Swanson, Arman Tagarro

Absent: None

Also Present: City Clerk/Staff Liaison Cathy Sorensen

Quorum present.

3. Open Forum for Citizen Input

No one appeared.

4. Approval of Minutes

- 4.1. 2023-344 Approval of Minutes of May 12, 2022
Sponsors:

Moved by Commissioner Hartmann, seconded by Commissioner Berk, that the minutes of May 12, 2022, be approved.

Motion approved 9-1, Commissioner Anderson abstained.

5. Old Business

- 5.1. 2023-345 Council Salary Review
Sponsors:

City Clerk/Staff Liaison Cathy Sorensen shared as directed by council the charter commission has been asked to annually review mayor and council salary data from comparable/surrounding cities and make any recommendations on possible adjustments for council consideration. She noted if any adjustments were recommended they would be

presented to council and if concurred an ordinance amendment would be processed that would be in effect after the next municipal election. She presented a recent salary survey for input.

Commissioner Anderson presented data he compiled that included comparisons based on consumer price index and shared his support for a salary increase based on factors that included complexity of local governments, lack of increase for 8 years, increased growth in city, and other factors.

Discussion was held on the population, council-city manager form of government, and roles of mayors in comparative cities and asked staff to provide further information on size of budgets and forms of government.

Commission consensus was to continue to review this topic with the goal of creating a mechanism for an increase such as mirroring cost of living increases for staff.

5.2. 2023-346 Potential Ward Structure Changes

Sponsors:

Ms. Sorensen shared that as part of the 2022 redistricting process council was supportive of the commission's recommendation to review potential amendments that would allow for the possibility of future ward restructuring as the city reaches full development. She reiterated the commission's reasons for possible restructuring that included five or six smaller wards that could potentially provide more neighborhood-based representation as opposed to the current three-ward structure then outlined factors staff used to determine both wards and precincts:

- 2020 census population
- projected population growth
- registered voters and estimated voters
- wards bounded by precinct lines, compact in area, and composed of contiguous territory
- wards equal in population as practicable within the required 5% population threshold
- polling place management

Ms. Sorensen presented draft language for Sec. 2.03(a). Wards for the commission's review and input.

Discussion was held on the benefits to move towards smaller wards as it could encourage candidates to run for office as smaller wards would be less costly to campaign in terms of door-knocking and campaign costs. The commission requested further information including registered voters and a sample map on how wards could be structured.

5.3. 2023-347 Councilmember Recall Process

Sponsors:

Clerk Sorensen stated council has directed the commission to consider charter language that would provide for a recall process for an elected councilmember. She shared language from other cities for the commission's consideration and requested feedback.

Discussion was held on how any recall petition would have to be presented from all wards if

city-wide and not just one neighborhood or development and requested the item be continued to the next meeting.

6. New Business

None.

7. Adjournment

Moved by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Berk, to table consideration of the agenda meeting topics to the next meeting.

Motion approved unanimously.

The next meeting will be held September 12, 2023, at 5:00 PM.

Moved by Commissioner Berk, seconded by Commissioner Anderson, to adjourn. Motion approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:16PM.