



City of Blaine

Charter Commission

August 12, 2025 | 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 by Vice Chair Goracke at 6:00PM.

2. Roll Call

PRESENT: Chair Jeffrey Lester (arrived at 6:05PM); Commissioners Al Goracke; Jason Hartmann; Ken Anderson; Jason Halpern; Abdi Hussein; Terri Homan; Arman Tagarro; Ashton Ramsammy (arrived at 6:10PM); and Trace Ludewig.

ABSENT: Commissioners Ayman Ali Khan; Nyle Zikmund, Tom Doran, and Jasen Howard

ALSO PRESENT: City Clerk Cathy Sorensen

3. Approval of Minutes

3.1. 2025-448 Approval of Minutes

Sponsors:

Commissioner Tagarro noted the attendance was not fully visible in the final draft and requested that it be corrected prior to final approval.

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Tagarro, to approve the minutes of the May 13, 2025, minutes as corrected. Motion adopted unanimously.

4. Open Forum for Citizen Input

No one appeared.

5. New Business

None.

6. Old Business

6.1. 2025-145 Charter Amendment - Councilmember Salary Review

Sponsors: Cathy Sorensen, City Clerk

City Clerk Sorensen recapped the discussion held at the July council workshop regarding the proposed amendment regarding council salaries. She noted that some council preferred the original amendment presented by the commission but there still seemed to be general consensus with the updated language. She said council did suggest one change to include "A review of salaries..." instead of "Council will review salaries...". Commissioner Anderson outlined his memo regarding additional changes to the amendment that he felt better clarified the metric used for cost of living adjustments, which the commission discussed at length.

Motion by Commissioner Goracke, seconded by Commissioner Hartmann, to recommend the proposed charter amendment as presented:

Sec. 2.07. Salaries.

The monthly salary of each of the councilmembers and the mayor shall be established by ordinance. A review of salaries of mayor and councilmembers will occur in June of every odd numbered year and any adjustments should be based on the prior two years of cost of living adjustments consistent with those provided to staff and established by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and found in annual data of percent changes in Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), unadjusted 12 months ending in April of each respective year. The mayor and councilmembers, in addition to the above salaries, shall be paid a reasonable sum for each day and their reasonable expenses incurred while traveling outside the city on the city's business.

The motion was adopted unanimously.

Ms. Sorensen said she would bring forward the proposed amendment to a public hearing as outlined in statute and inform the commission as to those meeting dates.

- 6.2.** 2025-175 Review of Proposed Charter Amendment - Council Recall
Sponsors: Cathy Sorensen, City Clerk

This item will be discussed at an upcoming meeting.

- 6.3.** 2025-176 Review of Proposed Charter Amendment - Ward Redetermination
Sponsors: Cathy Sorensen, City Clerk

This item will be discussed at an upcoming meeting.

- 6.4.** 2025-168 Discussion of Other Sections of Charter for Possible Review
Sponsors: Cathy Sorensen, City Clerk

The commission suggested that the commission consider increasing the amount of contracts the city manager is allowed to sign off on without council approval. Discussion was held regarding history of past amounts which was increased from \$10,000 to \$20,000 in 2015 then increased to \$50,000 in 2019 and the importance of setting up the new city manager for success. The commission requested that this topic come forward at a future meeting in September and include a survey of other charter cities' amounts for comparison and review for a possible recommendation. Commission consensus was to schedule this topic for discussion at a meeting on September 23 at 6:00PM.

7. Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Goracke, seconded by Commissioner Ramsammy, to adjourn the meeting at 6:49PM. Motion adopted unanimously.