

# CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE

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## Minutes for Charter Members Meeting Thursday, May 3, 2007 7:30 a.m.

Charter Member Meeting started at 7:30 am

**Purpose:** Accumulation of research and recommendations for updates to the Charter.

**Session:**

Economic Development Conference Room

Roll Call: Sign -In sheet was sufficient.

- 1) Bernard Sargent
- 2) Nevin Bowers
- 3) Howard Scanlan
- 4) Dorothy Stratton
- 5) Ron Baker
- 6) Ken Seidner
- 7) Dennis Van Scoy
- 8) Kay Conrad
- 9) William Benz
- 10) Darcie Loreno

Everett Devaul and Elizabeth Hipp were absent.

Ken Seidner called the meeting to order at 7:30 am.

Ken Seidner: I apologize for missing the previous meeting. I think at this point, Have we heard from everybody? At this point, it is just a matter of trying to prioritize what we have talked about and going from there.

Kay Conrad: I would like to bring up a couple of questions and clarify. I am still not sure of the qualifications for the Finance Director. Is it strictly a matter of going to classes or in hours? Do they give you a certificate as apposed to a college degree?.

Howard Scanlan: I have asked Anna Tomasek to come up with a list, minimum qualification, now that wouldn't exclude anybody. Some kind of a minimum

qualification. What I want to know is, are we saying that a minimum amount of qualifications for a Finance Director's job is acceptable?

Ken Seidner: I think that is one of the things we can decide, one of the priorities we want to set up. We want to set down with 2-3 people and go over that a little bit further and decide what you want to recommend. Because whatever we do is just going to be a recommendation. You still have your copy from the previous committee's recommendations? How we arrived at our decisions was pretty much what we have been doing so far each meeting. The actual letter where there were 10 items we recommended to Council the last time. Out of that 10, maybe picked 3 to put on the ballot. We took the items one by one and then we voted on them. Then they got recommended. That is what we decided at that time we were going to hold it to 10. Pick the items and if we need further investigation we will appoint sub-committees. We will work on them. Anybody have any yea's or nay's , pros or con or how you want to go through this from here on? I am open to it?.

Dorothy Stratton: I would like another clarification: Can we just suggest that something is dealt with or do we have to say how to deal with it? For example it could be like the qualifications of the Finance Direction or do we have to make that decision or can we simply say to Council we recommend that some qualifications are needed for the position?

Ken Seidner: We make a recommendation and put what we think.

Dorothy Stratton: The other issue of concern would be the combining of the Health Department. We could just ask for the language so that can be considered rather than having to come up with a recommendation as to whether or not it should be done.

Howard Scanlan: I would recommend and let them investigate. They can give us all of the particulars on how much that they are going to save or lose. That actually can be done without a Charter Committee. They would have to change the Charter anyway. It could be done without the committee. I would recommend that they go into discussion with the County on that.

Ken Seidner: I agree with that because there again we could spend hours on something like that. They can accept it and the County can reject it.

Howard Scanlan: That would be a strong recommendation for them to go into a Special Session about it.

Ken Seidner: We will go on down the table. Anyone else with comments or questions?

Nevin Bowers: Last week was my first attendance. We were given assignment to come back with at least 10 possible recommendations of which I have prepared.

Ken Seidner: We can go down there on at a time. I will start. The things I think and want to make clear.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Making the Charter Gender Neutral.
2. Recommend changing to allow at least 2 outsiders (that was in the previous commission) to apply for the Fire Chief and Police Chief positions. Language in the Civil Service Commission to allow with regards to the Police Chief and Fire Chief from the outside
3. Recommendation and qualifications for the Finance Director Position. An Elected position. We talked about the Law Director and the Finance Director being appointed or elected.
4. Remove the information in the Charter for the Mayor to be a Safety Service Director position and have Council establish a new Safety Director, appointed by City Council.
5. Recommending language that would allow the combining of the City and County Health Depts. To be considered.
6. Clarifying language in Section 21. EMERGENCY Ordinances.
7. All elected officials are held at the same standard. (Mayor not allowed holding 2 elected offices).
8. Create a new position, City Manager position with qualifications.
9. Add a 5<sup>th</sup> Ward with New Councilperson, possibly have 2 Council –At-Large positions.
10. Develop Residential and Commercial Maintenance Code.
11. All Division Directors to live within the City of Ashland, (Recent ruling by Supreme Court stating you cannot do it).
12. City being primarily unionized, employees have the dual codes, Civil Service, Union- select one or the other.
13. Re-visit Term Limits. (Necessary or not necessary)

These are the combinations of all of the recommendations that were submitted by Charter Review Committee May 3, 2007.

Ken Seidner- The last time the actual recommendations were made, 1-10 were put on the ballot.

William Benz: The one thing that was brought to my attention by one of our Elected officials is when they are elected, it is very hard for the electorate to know how good a job the person is doing. The people who are in the government do know whether that person is doing a good job or not. And that is a pretty good point. So if you would appoint them, you would have some control over them. The one thing you can do is just not to re-elect them.

Ken Seidner: Something like that is a double-edged sword, it is like the Law Director, can he be pressured into making decisions that he shouldn't or the Finance Director, the same way that are independent. The Mayor may want

this, the Council may want that and the Finance Director can say we can't afford it. How will you cooperate and be able to get along? Same way the Police and Fire chiefs.

Kay Conrad: I would like to see a balance.

Ken Seidner: There has been years a lot of the Council positions have had only 1 person running.

Dorothy Stratton: It would be good to keep up with Council Strategic Planning.

Ken adjourned Charter Review Committee Meeting at 8:15 AM

Submitted by  
Valarie Bishoff  
Clerk of Council