

CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE MINUTES

March 18, 2013

Present: Committee Members Gail Funk, Wayne Harper, Peggy Brooks, Bob Wyatt and Cathy Gabany. Also present were Attorney Thomas Cloud, City Manager Patricia Jackson and Administrative Assistant Linda Walker.

Moderator Tom Cloud asked the committee members if, after reviewing the current Charter, there were any questions and/or concerns.

Mr. Harper said he noticed several “housekeeping” areas; also many references to “he” or “she” in the Charter. Member Harper also asked when Polk City changed its name from “Town” to “City”; he was advised in 2005.

Attorney Cloud spoke about some issues that can generally come up with charters; he noted that older charters usually contain more detail while the more modern charters are void of details.

Mr. Harper suggested looking into the possibility of districts; Attorney Cloud commented that was a good idea and then discussed how it worked (city-wide votes). Mr. Harper was concerned about a district not having anyone to run and that would be handled. Attorney Cloud advised geographic districts could be drawn up.

Mr. Harper then discussed his concern regarding past relationships with the Mayor and City Manager; however, City Council approved it. Attorney Cloud commented there was nothing about nepotism in the charter.

Mr. Wyatt expressed having districts is a good idea; however, his concern is getting someone to run. Attorney Cloud advised an effort would have to be made to draw boundaries that would make sense. Mr. Harper asked if the Supervisor of Elections would draw up the districts; Attorney Cloud commented the Charter Review Committee could look at the districts – look at the service area and look at the voting precincts. City Manager Jackson will contact the Supervisor of Elections Office regarding the service area and what is in the city; Attorney Cloud commented the city probably wouldn't extend past the service area. Mr. Wyatt asked if the districts would be by population or what; Attorney Cloud advised it does not have to be exactly perfect, but he will put some cases together. Ms. Funk commented it was a good idea on the surface, it is done by the number of registered voters; Attorney Cloud advised we would have to look at registered voters. Mr. Harper mentioned ethics and nepotism.

Ms. Funk commented she thought the committee would go through the charter section by section. Attorney Cloud suggested summarizing the big items, Xerox a copy of the notes and do a bullet outline for everyone.

Ms. Brooks referred to page 14 of the charter regarding public notices; City Manager Jackson advised notices are covered by State Statute. Ms. Brooks also mentioned council versus commission, verbiage of the real estate section and the city boundaries as to how frequent they are updated. Ms. Brooks agrees with the districts.

Other discussion took place as follows:

- Discussion then took place with the Attorney and committee regarding how the districts would be established, election of Mayor and Vice Mayor – whether the Mayor should be one of Council or entertain the possibility of the Mayor being elected as an at-large seat, which does not vote. It was mentioned this could remove the animosity that make take place when Council votes for a Mayor.
- The possibility of rotating the Vice Mayor position rather than the Vice Mayor being elected each year.
- Once a person is elected to the Council, it be mandated to attend training on what a Council does; usually a person elected for the first time doesn't know what all is involved. This should be done within the first year of taking office; there is also a second class available. If a person is serious about representing the people of Polk City, they should have some type of training.
- Would like to see council members with a list of organizations and/or committees they are on outside of Polk City. This was particularly mentioned of the Mayor position.
- Compensation needs to be discussed – the cost of living should not be automatic, but voted on. There should be equal pay.
- Page 7 needs to be cleaned up.
- Brief discussion about Roberts Rules of Order; Attorney Cloud recommended against Roberts Rules of Order – it is about 700 pages long. Attorney Cloud commented what currently is in place is tradition; what five people are willing to accept and process information. Attorney Cloud commented that Roberts Rules are for legislative bodies, and to think about this before it is put into a charter. Attorney Cloud feels it is good idea for Council to set their procedures.

After additional discussion of setting procedures, Attorney Cloud advised he would like for everybody to send in ideas of what to discuss to the City Manager, and the City Manager will distribute. The Attorney will also check into the procedural rules, but he thinks it is set by the elected officials.

The meeting was adjourned; the next meeting will be April 17th at 6:00 p.m.

Patricia R. Jackson, City Clerk