

City of Norton
CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION
Wednesday, March 7, 2007

The Charter Review Commission (CRC) of the City of Norton, Ohio, convened for a public meeting in Norton City Council Chambers. Chairperson Barbara Vimont called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

I. ATTENDANCE:

PRESENT: Barbara Vimont, Gene Becker, Robert Daymut, Christopher Judge, Megan Booth, Sue Ringkor

ABSENT: Charles Campbell

Chairperson Vimont stated that there have been issues regarding the CRC that she wanted to clarify before discussion began on the agenda items.

Ms. Vimont said that one of the issues was concerning a memo from Mayor Kernan to the CRC members which was given to the Media before the Committee had a chance to address it in a meeting. She said that she would appreciate the chance for the CRC to address issues before they are presented to the Media and before the citizens are upset.

Ms. Vimont then explained that the memo was reflecting back to their first meeting. She reminded the Commission that the Mayor felt they should be able to complete their review within a 12 month period and he gave valid reasons for this time period. She said that the CRC was not going to immediately stop their review, but that they are in the process of trying to complete their work. Ms. Vimont explained that the Norton CRC has a more flexible time allowance compared to other local CRC's, who are only allowed about five months to complete their work.

Chairperson Vimont reminded the audience that this was only a review; the CRC can not stop violations of the Charter; they only recommend changes. If City Council approves the recommendations, only the citizens of Norton can put them into place with their votes. Once voted into effect, it is then up to the citizens, elected Council members and anybody who has anything to do with the City, to uphold the Charter and make sure it is not violated. Ms. Vimont added that the ultimate vanguards of the Charter are the citizens.

Ms. Vimont thought that Council and citizens might not be receiving complete information because of how the CRC resolutions are being presented on the Council agendas. She said that the CRC wants to make sure that Council and the citizens receive the correct information.

Ms. Vimont stated that the last CRC held press conferences in the Shirley L. McGuire Community Center around election time for public education. She felt this would be worth consideration since there might be a few amendments on the November, 2007 ballot.

II. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES:

A.) Minutes from Wednesday, February 7, 2007, Meeting:

The Commission reviewed the minutes from their Wednesday, February 7, 2007, meeting and Chairperson Vimont called for a motion. **Mr. Gene Becker moved to approve the minutes of Wednesday, February 7, 2007, as submitted; seconded by Mr. Robert Daymut. ROLL CALL: Mr. Becker-Yea, Mr. Daymut-Yea, Ms. Megan Booth-Abstain, Mr. Christopher Judge-Yea, Ms. Sue Ringkor-Yea, Ms. Vimont-Yea. The motion passed 5-0-1, approving the minutes as submitted. The minutes were signed and processed accordingly.**

III. OLD BUSINESS:

A.) Amendments to CRC Resolutions:

1.) Section 6.02(B), CRC Resolution No. 06-2006-(Ord. 82-2006):

Chairperson Vimont explained that Council returned CRC Resolution No. 06-2006 for clarification of the terminology and reference to the Comprehensive Plan. She suggested changing the language within the resolution to 'official Comprehensive Plan' for consistency. Ms. Booth said she would bring a draft amendment to the next meeting.

The audience was concerned that a large amount of taxpayers' money paid for the Comprehensive Plan and yet they could not view it before Council makes a decision. In addition, there are no minutes to view from the Citizens Working Group meetings.

Ms. Vimont said that Councilmen represent residents, which is how our government works, so they should consider what is best for the citizens when considering the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Booth suggested placing language in the Charter that would allow citizens to view the Comprehensive Plan before it is approved by Council. Mr. Judge said that our government is set up so that residents can voice their opinions to the elected officials who represent them.

2.) Section 5.04, CRC Resolution No. 07-2006-(Ord. 83-2006):

Chairperson Vimont stated that Council also returned CRC Resolution No. 07-2007 for amendment. She explained that the CRC simplified the language for the Department of Law with this resolution. In the process of doing that, however, language about the Law Director providing legal opinions in writing was eliminated. One of the reasons for the elimination was because that is one of the standard job duties of a Law Director. Ms. Vimont explained that since that time a written legal opinion was requested by Council and they were refused, so they requested that language be placed back into this proposed amendment. She recommended rescinding of the resolution and asked the members for their opinion. After discussion, the Commission decided to amend it so Ms. Vimont said she would work on the amendment and bring it back for review at the next meeting.

3.) Sections 1.02-1.05 & 3.03, CRC Resolution No.10-2006-(Ord. 08-2007):

Chairperson Vimont stated that Council wanted clarification of CRC Resolution No. 10-2006. After discussion the Commission decided that the resolution was clear but the explanation of it on the Council agenda needed clarification. Ms. Vimont said that she would attend the next Council meeting and explain the CRC's opinion of this resolution. She also said she would contact Ms. Karla Richards, Clerk of Council, regarding who writes the explanation of a resolution on the Council agendas.

B.) Special Assessment Equalization Board:

Chairperson Vimont presented a proposed new section addressing the Special Assessment Equalization Board. The Commission discussed a rotating board and different ways of expressing terms and the length of them. They also discussed a stipulation of not allowing any elected or appointed officials or members of any Boards or Commissions to serve on the Special Assessment Equalization Board. The Secretary suggested that the proposal would need a section number. The Commission believed it would belong in Article VII. Ms. Vimont said that she would revise the proposed section for review at their next meeting.

V. NEW BUSINESS:

A.) Proposed Section regarding service on the Boards and Commissions:

Chairperson Vimont presented a proposed section regarding elected officials removed from their positions by the citizens being ineligible for service on any Boards and Commissions for a period of time. The Commission discussed the proposal and decided on some changes. Ms. Vimont said that she would make the changes and bring them back to the next meeting.

B.) Section 4.05:

The Commission discussed Section 4.05 because of the resignation of Mr. Claude Collins, from the Administrative Officer position. The audience wondered how long Norton could be without an Administrative Officer. They also were concerned that some of the duties have been delegated to other appointed officials within the City that do not live within the City. They felt that if the Mayor could not perform the work of the Administrative Officer then the President of Council should be placed in that position until a replacement is found. The Commission said that the intent of the Charter is that an Administrative Officer would be in place within 90 days vacation of that office. They, however, felt the language needed to be clarified.

C.) CRC Resolution No. 01-2007-(Ord. No. 09-2007):

Chairperson Vimont stated that there was a question from Council regarding CRC Resolution No. 01-2007. They wondered if the CRC intended this resolution to state that Charter amendment recommendations from the CRC does not need action by the Council. After discussion, the Commission agreed that the intent for this resolution was that any recommended amendment would be sent to Council for it's information only and then go straight to the ballot, which would give more strength to the citizens. Ms. Vimont said that she would attend the next Council meeting and give an explanation.

D.) CRC Resolution No. 04-2007-(Ord. No. 95-2006):

The Board discussed the merging of the Cemetery Board and Park and Recreation Board and whether or not the members would be merged or just the duties. The Board agreed that they intended for at least one of the Cemetery Board members to be added to the merged Boards. Mr. Judge said he would review this resolution for discussion at the next meeting.

VI. ADJOURNMENT:

Chairperson Vimont announced that the next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, April 4, 2007, at 6:00 p.m. The topics for the agenda will be as follows: 1.) Amendments of CRC Resolution No. 06 & 07-2006; 2.) Special Assessment Equalization Board; 3.) Section 4.05; & 4.) Proposed service on B/C section. Ms. Vimont requested the CRC to review the Charter once more for any needed amendments to discuss at the next meeting. With no further business coming before the Commission, Chairperson Vimont adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Barbara Vimont
Charter Review Commission ~~Chair/Vice-Chair~~

Gene Becker
Charter Review Commission ~~Vice-Chair/Member~~

4/11/07
Date

**CITY OF NORTON, OHIO
CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION
ATTENDANCE RECORD**

The following members were present at the Hearing of the Charter Review Commission,

Held on: **Wednesday, March 7, 2007**

Barbara Vimont

Barbara Vimont

Gene Becker

Gene Becker

Megan Booth

Megan Booth

Charles Campbell

Robert Daymut

R D

Christopher Judge

[Signature]

Sue Ringkor

[Signature]

Signed

Cynthia J. Hughes

Stenographer

**Distribution: Mayor
CRC Files**