

City of Norton
CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION
Wednesday, June 6, 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 6:03 p.m.

I. ATTENDANCE:

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

ABSENT: Robert Daymut, Charles Campbell

ALSO PRESENT: Mike Lyons, Law Director
Brenda Hlas, Councilperson, At-Large

II. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES:

A.) Minutes from Wednesday, May 2, 2007, Meeting:

The Commission reviewed the minutes from their Wednesday, May 2, 2007, meeting and Chairperson Vimont called for a motion. **Ms. Megan Booth moved to approve the minutes of Wednesday, May 2, 2007, as submitted; seconded by Ms. Sue Ringkor. ROLL CALL: Ms. Booth-Yea, Ms. Ringkor-Yea, Mr. Christopher Judge -Yea, Mr. Gene Becker-Yea, Ms. Vimont-Yea. The motion passed 5-0, approving the minutes as submitted. The minutes were signed and processed accordingly.**

III. OLD BUSINESS:

A.) Norton Charter Review Commission Summary:

Ms. Vimont presented an updated version of the Norton CRC Summary. The CRC reviewed the following items from the summary:

1.) Article II-The Mayor:

a.) Section 2.01-Election and Term:

Ms. Vimont reported that an addition of a third paragraph regarding a run-off election was scheduled for it's first reading in Council on Monday, June 11, 2007.

b.) Section 2.02-Qualifications:

Ms. Vimont said that the proposed revision of Section 2.02-Qualifications, was approved by Council and will appear on the November 2007, election ballot.

Mr. Becker questioned if Council would be considering making the mayoral position full-time instead of part-time. Ms. Vimont said not at this time. Ms. Brenda Hlas stated that Council could pass legislation to make a full-time mayoral position but it could be changed with each new Council. Therefore, she felt that this issue should be handled by the CRC. After discussion, the Commission decided not to consider this issue. Mr. Judge noted that the City of Tallmadge is similar

in size to Norton and they have a full-time Mayor and Administrative Officer and have divided the various director duties between the two positions.

There was discussion regarding temporary absence of a Mayor not being a part of mayoral qualifications. Mr. Mike Lyons said that if a Mayor was found unqualified, he/she would be removed and not able to be reelected. If a Mayor is temporarily absent, however, the President of Council can preside until the Mayor is present again.

2.) Article III-The Council:

a.) Section 3.04-President and Vice President:

Ms. Vimont stated that the proposed revision pertaining to the Council's organizational meeting date was currently before Council as Ordinance 40-2007.

b.) Proposed Section 3.14-Ward Meetings:

Ms. Vimont reported that Council rejected the proposed Section 3.04-Ward Meetings.

3.) Article V-Administrative Departments:

a.) Section 5.04-Department of Law:

Ms. Vimont informed the Commission that the revised language for Section 5.04-Department of Law, was currently before Council with the first reading on Monday, June 11, 2007.

Mr. Lyons commented on the additional language in the last paragraph of this proposed amendment. He said that he was not sure of the intention of the last sentence in particular. It seemed that it requested judgement beyond that of a Solicitor's Charter responsibilities. They were to make only editorial or typographical corrections for clarification. Mr. Lyons said that it seemed this language called for changes that might create contradictions throughout the Charter. He added that even if this type of language was in the Charter he would not make those types of revisions without a vote by the people. He said that he would probably suggest that Council eliminate this proposed language. There was discussion regarding various examples of the CRC's intent for this revision. Mr. Lyons said that the language may not be harmful but it may be misleading. He said that he wanted to inform the CRC about this issue before bringing it before Council.

4.) Article VI-Boards and Commissions:

a.) Section 6.02(B)-Planning Commission and Zoning Procedure; Powers and Duties:

Ms. Vimont said that the proposal for Section 6.02(B)-Planning Commission and Zoning Procedure; Powers and Duties, was returned to the CRC, it was revised and re-submitted to Council and was rejected.

b.) Section 6.05-Park and Recreation Board:

Ms. Vimont explained to the Board that CRC Resolution 04-2007 was a proposal to merge the Park and Recreation Board and the Cemetery Board and was approved by Council. She said that the CRC, however, failed to state in the proposal that all members of both boards should also be merged for an eight-(8) member board. Therefore, she requested Council rescind this resolution, but the request was denied.

5.) Article VII-Special Boards and Commissions:

a.) Proposed Section 7.02-Assessment Equalization Board:

Council rejected the proposal to add section 7.02-Assessment Equalization Board to the Charter.

6.) Article IX-Initiative, Referendum, Recall and Removal:

a.) Proposed Section 9.05-Disqualification of Service:

Proposed Section 9.05-Disqualification of Service, was rejected by Council.

B.) Schedule meeting for publicizing amendments on November ballot:

After discussion the CRC decided to meet on Wednesday, September 12, 2007, at 6:00 p.m. to strategize communication to educate the public on the Charter Revision items that will be placed on the November, 2007, ballot. Ms. Vimont reminded the Commission that Mr. Ross Staadecker, Barberton Herald Staff Writer, offered to place an article in the Barberton Herald regarding these items.

V. NEW BUSINESS:

A.) Amendment for Non-Partisan Elections:

Ms. Vimont said that the CRC was asked to consider an amendment to make Council and Mayoral elections non-partisan. She stated that the previous CRC addressed this issue and she introduced Mr. Mike Meden from the previous CRC. The Commission discussed that a non-partisan election meant that a specific party would not have to be declared by the candidates. Mr. Meden said that the top three candidates in the primary election would move onto the general election. He said that it made sense for a municipality government to have non-partisan elections. He felt that it might help decrease political disputes between neighbors. Ms. Vimont said that she would research the last revised Charter and more information regarding non-partisan elections and bring a proposal to the next CRC meeting.

B.) Audience Comments:

1) **Ms. Charlotte Whipkey, 4624 Albert Avenue, Norton, Ohio 44203**, approached the Commission and stated that she had discussed with other residents that the people have not fared well with any of the CRC issues that were proposed for their benefit. Council approved the issues that dealt mainly with the Administration. She believed that a five-year wait for the next Charter review was too long. Ms. Whipkey suggested changing the five-(5) year length to two (2), but no more than three (3) years apart. There was discussion regarding initiative petitions. Ms. Vimont asked the Commission if they wanted to consider an amendment regarding this issue. They agreed it would be a good idea. She said she would bring a proposal to the next meeting.

VI. ADJOURNMENT:

Chairperson Vimont announced that the next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, September 12, 2007, at 6:00 p.m. The topics for the agenda will be as follows: 1.) Communications for public education of proposed amendments on the November 2007 ballot; 2.) Possible Non-partisan amendment; and 3.) Possible timeframe amendment for the assembling of a Charter Review Commission. Ms. Vimont asked Mr. Judge to prepare comments and suggestions for the next CRC, he said he would. With no further business coming before the Commission, Chairperson Vimont adjourned the meeting at 6:56 p.m.

Barbara J. Vimont
Charter Review Commission Chair ~~Vice-Chair~~

Sue Reed
Charter Review Commission ~~Vice-Chair~~ Member

9/12/07
Date

**AUDIENCE ATTENDANCE RECORD
CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION**

The following individuals were present at the Meeting of the Charter Review Commission held on Wednesday, June 6, 2007.

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NOTE: PLEASE DO NOT USE A P.O. BOX FOR YOUR ADDRESS

NAME ADDRESS CITY ZIP

Charlotte Whipkey 4627 Albert Ave Norton

44203

Brenda Hias 2205 Frashure Dr OA 44321

Michael Medow 3177 Chev. WASS Rd. Norton

Signed

Cynthia J. Hughes
Stenographer

A SIGNED ORIGINAL OF THIS DOCUMENTATION SHALL BE FILED WITH THE CLERK OF COUNCIL.

**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, June 6, 2007**

Barbara Vimont

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Gene Becker

Gene Becker

Christopher Judge

[Signature]

Sue Ringkor

[Signature]

Robert Daymut

[Signature]

Megan Booth

Megan Booth

Charles Campbell

[Signature]

Signed

Cynthia J. Hughes

Stenographer

**Distribution: Mayor
CRC Files**