

BLUE RIBBON ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, March 7, 2018
5:30 P.M.

Committee Members Present: Drozdowski, Schwarz, Hanner, Champlin, McIlroy, Andrews, Antaya, Helmboldt, Burlison, Burton, Settles, Whitfield, Weaver, Tomak, Fortney, Johnson, Moreno, Squires (via conference)

Committee Members Absent : Godfrey

Others Present: Jill Steele, City Attorney: Rebecca Fleury, City Manager: Vicki Houser, City Clerk

Call to Order: Dr. Schwarz called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

Public Comment :

Steve Johnkoski, Bedford Township resident, expressed appreciation for rearranging the room, also suggested ways to increase citizen engagement.

Andrew Eldridge expressed concern with low voter turnout, suggesting ways to increase resident participation. Mr. Eldridge also stated he had been told city employees feel they cannot voice opinions to City Commissioners at meetings.

Dr. Schwarz commented about voter turnout for all elections. Dr. Schwarz also noted city employees could voice opinion at commission meetings.

Comm. Helmboldt informed attendees of the Public Transportation Committee meeting on March 13, 2018.

Mark Richards, 110 Minges Circle, commented about young membership on the committee.

Ms. Fleury informed the committee that the city posted information on tonight's meeting on social media all week and on the city website, also noting AccessVision was taping the meeting to be posted on their website.

Mr. Andrews commented that item 6 of the resolution establishing the committee includes topics the committee feels relevant, expressing his belief the committee could discuss any topic.

John Kenefick, 234 South Ave., attended last meeting, commented about the rules of order and the meeting minutes.

Attorney Steele, responding to Mr. Kenefick's comments, stated Dr. Schwarz polled the committee on the subject, noting a vote is not required when there is not a motion or support. Ms. Steele provided additional clarification to Mr. Kenefick's comments.

Approval of Minutes: Mr. Moreno, supported by Ms. Settles, made a motion to approve the February 21, 2018 meeting minutes.

Yays: Drozdowski, Schwarz, Hanner, Champlin, McIlroy, Antaya, Helmboldt, Burlison, Burton, Settles, Whitfield, Weaver, Tomak, Fortney, Johnson, Moreno, Squires

Nays: Andrews opposed.

Motion approved .

Statement of Purpose: _ Charter - Structure of Government

Attorney Steele provided a presentation, detailing the purpose of the city charter, with a comparison between a municipal corporation and a business corporation. Attorney Steele noted a city charter sets out the structure of municipal corporations as the articles of incorporation do for a business. Attorney Steele noted the standard provisions in a city charter included the election of the governing body, the terms of office, mayor, wards, financing, utilities, city departments, rapid transit system, along with other provisions. Attorney Steele also made other comparisons between a municipal corporation and business corporations, such as ordinances and by laws, resolutions and resolutions, and policies and policies. Attorney Steele noted the City charter must be approved by the Michigan Attorney General to ensure it complies with State statute and the Home Rule City Act.

Mr. Whitfield confirmed the Committee's role was to make recommendations to the Commission.

Mr. Burelson asked the City Attorney to assist the committee when determining whether items are relevant to the committee's role and responsibility.

Ms. Fleury stated she would take any concerns or ideas that were outside of the committee's responsibility to the City Commission.

Attorney Steele stated she wanted to ensure the committee has the time to attend to the items the Commission has assigned.

Dr. Schwarz agreed the City Attorney should determine if the topics were part of the committee's responsibility, ensuring the committee stayed on track.

Attorney Steele confirmed she would continue to ask how a topic relates to the charter to ensure it is within the committee's charge, stating a topic may include discussion of how a change may result in higher voter turnout.

Prior Meeting Business

- A. **Survey Draft:** Ms. Fleury requested the committee discuss any changes they would like made to the resident survey so that they could provide it to the community.

After committee discussion and recommendations, Ms. Fleury agreed to complete changes to the citizen survey. Ms. Fleury also agreed that in addition to posting the survey on the City website and social media, the draft survey would also be sent to residents with the water bills.

Committee members agreed the purpose of the survey was to collect residents' responses, noting they would simply be gathering information, and that the information received was not a mandate, as it would be a sampling of residents' opinions, not all residents.

Committee members discussed other measures and strategies to obtain resident input, including community conversations. Committee members also noted Commissioners should attend the local NPC meetings to receive input or to conduct conversations.

Ms. Drozdowski, supported by Mr. Moreno, made a motion to include the discussed changes to the draft survey.

Ayes: Drozdowski, Schwarz, Hanner, Champlin, McIlroy, Burleson, Burton, Weaver, Tomak, Fortney, Johnson, Moreno, Squires

Nays: Helmboldt, Andrews, Antaya, Settles, Whitfield.

Motion Approved.

B. Pros & Cons Worksheets : Mr. Burleson stated he was unable to open the worksheet, requesting the document be sent in a different format. Clerk Houser agreed to send the worksheet as a PDF document.

New Business

A motion was made by Mr. Whitfield, supported by Mr. Hanner, to discuss and come to a resolution on one of the charter amendments the committee was responsible for.

After committee discussion, Mr. Whitfield withdrew his motion, and Mr. Hanner agreed to its withdrawal.

A. Consideration of Charter Amendments

- a. **Selection of Mayor and Vice Mayor** - Not discussed
- b. **Length of Commission Terms** - Not discussed
- c. **Gendered Charter Language :**

Committee members recommended the charter language not only be gender neutral, but to be completely ungendered.

Mr. Andrews, supported by Mr. Johnson, made a motion to make the charter language gender neutral. After discussion, Mr. Andrews amended his motion, supported by Mr. Johnson, to make the charter language ungendered.

All yes, none opposed. Motion approved.

- d. **Other Relevant Charter Amendments** - Not discussed.

A motion was made by Mr. Burleson, supported by Mr. Andrews, to allow committee discussion prior to adjournment to honor the item on the agenda. All yes, none opposed. Motion approved.

Committee members discussed future meeting schedules, particularly the first week of April, noting this was the time local schools were out for spring break. Attorney Steele suggested the committee discuss future meetings at the March 21, 2018 meeting.

Mr. Andrews tendered his resignation from the Blue Ribbon Advisory Committee.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 21, 2018 at DPW Multi-purpose Room, at 5:30 pm.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:07 p.m.