

City of Excelsior  
Charter Commission

Minutes  
Thursday, March 17, 2011

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Lloyd Bratland call the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Charter Commission members present: Chairman Bratland, Commissioners Brokaw, Hartwich, Mueller, Leafer, Harrod, Finch, Norman, Bolles, and Viesturs.

Charter members absent: Caron, Fulkerson, Thompson, Crowe, and Wilson.

Also present: Mark Bowers, City Manager Kristi Luger, and Finance Director Joan Carlson

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

No additions or changes requested so Agenda approved as written ..

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES** from the March 1 2011 meeting

Harrod moved and Mueller seconded a motion to reissue two sets of past minutes that still were missing attached documents: 1) the Feb. 9 2011 minutes should have Mark Bowers written statement attached; and 2) the March 1 2011 meeting should be reissued with the attachment handed out at the meeting by Lucille Crowe regarding correspondence from Edward Cadman about MN Stat. 410.05, Subd. 4. Otherwise, no other changes to the minutes of March 1 2011.

Motion passes 10/0.

**5. PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

None. offered

**6. MEMBERSHIP**

A current list of charter commission members, and personal contact information was distributed by Chairman Bratland, who reminded everyone that the contact information was considered private and is not for public distribution. Mary Jo Fulkerson has submitted a letter to renew her term until 2015, and Heidi Viesturs has been officially appointed to the Commission.

**7. OLD BUSINESS**

**YEAR IN REVIEW**

Chairman Bratland distributed a handouts (attached) : 1) "Year in Review," which summarized the Commission's topics addressed and progress achieved since May 2010. Commissioners commented that this summary was helpful, and there were no corrections offered.

**WHAT IS OUR TASK?** A second handout was distributed After discussion the Commission members, concurred with Jim Norman's comment that it was a good statement.

A third handout was entitled "Talking Points" which outlined what benchmark steps or financial boundaries or financial reporting items had been addressed thus far, and what remained to be done. No commissioners yet had additions to this list.

The fourth handout was a draft statement of what the chairman had heard from many sources that the citizens wanted regarding a rolling 5-year financial plan, based upon his observations of meeting discussions and citizen input. There was extensive discussion on the language in the draft.

Chairman Bratland explained and clarified to the members three ways that new language could be inserted into the Charter.

Upon inquiry by Chairman Bratland, Mark Bowers addressed the Commission and answered questions. Bowers was asked if his petitioners would be comfortable if the changes were accomplished by City Ordinance only. Bowers expressed that the petitioners' preference was to have language inserted int the Charter, not just a city ordinance that could be changed by future councils. Bowers also expressed feeling encouraged by the Charter Commissions progress and efforts, but said that some of the wording in the handout about 5-year Rolling Financial Plans needed better definitions.

In response to a question from Peter Hartwich, Bowers said he felt the Commission had indeed done due diligence in regard to studying 5-year rolling financial plans. Commissioners Finch and Bolles expressed that they thought more due diligence and benchmarking work could be done.

Commissioner Viesturs suggested that dialogue start with the City Council members about proposed Charter changes. Bolles and Finch stated they generally supported the idea behind the motion but felt they wanted to finish more benchmarking steps in this subject matter.

**MOTION:** A motion was made by Harrod, seconded by Leafer, that included a friendly amendment offered by Viesturs and accepted by Harrod:

- The Charter Commission shall initiate a dialogue with city council members of proposed Charter language changes regarding the 5-year rolling financial plan; such dialogue to be accomplished before 31 March 2011; and
- The Charter Commission will ask the city council to adopt by ordinance, and insert into the Excelsior City Charter, that the City of Excelsior should

permanently maintain a timely, accurate, meaningful, narrated and all-inclusive, 5-year rolling financial plan;

- “All inclusive” is defined and means that the 5-year rolling financial plan shall include the city’s General fund, Enterprise funds, and Capital funds;
- “Meaningful” is defined as the report should reasonably accessible to the public, and have both a numeric spreadsheet as well as a narrative, and that such reports shall be set forth in language designed to be readily understood by the layperson.

**The motion passed, 8/2, with commissioners Bolles and Finch voting nay.**

Chairman Bratland assigned tasks to selected commissioners, to be completed and ready to report to the entire Commission at the next meeting:

- a) Commissioners Finch and Viesturs were assigned to conduct further diligence with more benchmarking about 5-year rolling financial plans with other charter cities. Finch said he would not be conducting the interviews or directing the questions to any charter city staff persons, but only to non-staff person of the charter cities. Commissioner Mueller requested and volunteered to accompany Finch and Viesturs to complete this benchmarking task;
- b) Commissions Viesturs and Bratland will together initiate a dialogue with the city council members about the proposed Charter language, with a goal to complete and report back to the Charter Commission by 31st March 2011.

#### **LINO LAKES – PHONE CALL**

Commissioners Brokaw and Bratland reported on their telephone interview with City of Lino Lakes Charter regarding the Charter bonding provisions which require voter approval. Brokaw said they interviewed only the city staff, who said the City had never used the bonding provision in the Charter, but had proposed projects under Section 8 assessments only. Lino Lakes staff felt the Charter was a guideline only, and that the staff did not like the bonding provision, because the citizens had voted against 3 out of 4 projects proposed under the assessment provisions. Bratland said he and Brokaw should and would continue to interview with charter members or elected officials instead of staff persons about these provisions.

#### **8. NEW BUSINESS**

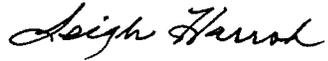
Next Agenda will address bonding and assessments in the Lino Lakes charter, also continued interviews with Lino Lakes charter members;

Next meeting scheduled for Thursday, March 31 2011, at 6 p.m.,

Leafer moved to adjourn, Mueller seconded. Motion passed, 10/0.

Adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Leigh Harrod".

Leigh Harrod,  
Acting as Recording Secretary for Jeannie Thompson

<b>YEAR IN REVIEW</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Topics Discussed</b>
May 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion on Membership to keep Charter Commission functional. Voted 7/0.</li> <li>• Elected Officers.</li> </ul>
Sept. 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion if Charter Commission should be active or responsive. Voted 8/0.</li> <li>• To be responsive. (Colleen – Crowe.)</li> <li>• Next Meeting – March, 2011.</li> </ul>
October 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Received Petition to give taxpayer a bigger voice.</li> <li>• 7 – 1 voted that Charter Commission wants to be responsive and should do due diligence.</li> <li>• Action Benchmark. Legality. Pro's &amp; con's by Staff.</li> </ul>
November 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determined Petition was legal and valid.</li> <li>• Work groups begin Benchmark process.</li> </ul>
December 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Had discussion on whether the commission should proceed with the Benchmarking. Voted 9 – 1 to proceed. M. J. Fulkerson voted No.</li> <li>• Revised Benchmarking steps.</li> </ul>
December 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long discussion of Minutes of December 1st. Several corrections were identified.</li> <li>• Long discussion on whether we have the right Benchmarking. Voted 10 – 2 to continue. Fulkerson and L. Crowe voted No. A. J. Wilson abstained.</li> </ul>
January 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda was challenged.</li> <li>• Vice Chair Crowe discussed legal options.</li> <li>• 5 Year Plan was discussed.</li> </ul>
February 9 <sup>th</sup> , 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mark Bower read prepared remarks.</li> <li>• Staff made Power Point presentation.</li> </ul>
March 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 Year Plan by Staff.</li> <li>• State Statute regarding Charter guidelines.</li> <li>• Began discussion on Bonding.</li> </ul>

## **WHAT IS OUR TASK?**

To conduct a fair and unbiased hearing that identifies and recommends financial boundaries and reporting, if any, that are better than those submitted by the Petitioners.

# TALKING POINTS

## 1. Reporting:

- **Annual (Submission of Budget) (Guidelines)** **T.B.D**
- **Long Term (5 or 10 Years)** **Done**

**2. Bonding Guidelines. (City Indebtedness)** **March 17<sup>th</sup>**

**3. Levy Boundaries. (Power of Taxation)** **Dec. 15th**

**4. Special Assessments. (Guidelines)** **T.B.D.**

**5. Emergency Debt.** **T.B.D.**

**6. Spending Limits. (Cap Council Authority)** **T.B.D.**

**7.**

**8.**

**It is felt that Excelsior, MN should maintain a timely, accurate, meaningful, narrated rolling all inclusive (General, Enterprise and Capital) 5-Year Plan.**