

**Charter Review Committee
June 29, 2011 Meeting Minutes**

I. Attendance

Carol and John were excused from the meeting. All other committee members were present for meeting.

II. Minutes

Minutes from June 8, 2011 meeting were read, and accepted by the committee.

III. Tim Paluf

Can add the sentence “there by creating staggered terms” to the question and charter amendment.

The Board of Elections likes to tinker with the language of the questions and they will work with Tim Paluf on any changes to the questions.

§5.02 the committee prefers to keep the language simple.

§4.03 prefer both sections with removing the full-time language only.

IV. Procedure from Here

Need to attend the next committee as a whole meeting on July 5, 2011 at 8:00 p.m. Tim gives the counsel the draft language of the committees proposed changes. Dan will be present for the meeting, all committee members are welcome to attend. Committee remains in effect until Election Day. Council can ask/make suggestions but can’t change what committee voted on.

V. Residents Addressed Committee

Mr. Schmidt – he was on the original committee that made changes to the charter. Had a letter from council dated June 1966 that objected to all the changes proposed by the committee.

In 1966 all council were at large with four year terms and Mayor was a four year term.

At the time council was going door to door meeting constituents. Committee felt that two years is a good thing for accountability. Three members of council left within six months of election. He believes a drawback to four year terms could end up with a majority appointed council.

Council objected to creating wards and not leaving all positions as at large.

Council objected to no board of zoning or appeals, Mayor change to two year term and director of law not appointed by mayor without council approval.

The committee of 15 split up the city and went door to door to speak to residents about the proposed changes. Those who supported the changes received reminder calls.

He does not believe that four year term is good for a city of this size. Population: village had to be over 5,000 to create a charter. Took a census and determined population was 5,500 or 5,600 so enough for a charter.

City park was a hotly contested issue in 1966 and was built in 1970. Reasoning that a lot time campaigning and less time on government affairs and staggered terms with roll over every two years allows for consistency and continuity, he disagrees.

All elected out of office at one time is a downside to the current system. Four years is a serious time commitment. Two years is more agreeable. He believes that there is no perfect solution to the term limit issue.

Mr. Dombek expressed appreciation for Mr. Schmidt coming and sharing his thoughts.

Tom Hughes – addressed committee next.

He believes that it would benefit the committee to have meetings recorded so comments and notes are accurate. He will send each the committee members a synopsis of his statements from the previous meeting and wants them attached to the minutes from this meeting.

Where did the idea for two year versus four year terms come from? Just the committee or outside influences? Mr. Dombek responded that it came from the committee.

Campaigning is less than 60 days from the filing deadline. He has not received any campaign material from council since the last election. How campaigning has changed. Time to work on budge is a falsity. Budget is created by the mayor and approved by council. Campaigning all year long is not true.

Brecksville has four year council terms and all are at large positions with the same power. Four candidates on each ballot at election time. Candidate with the lowest number of votes gets a two year term so they run again in two years. Residents have four people to elect every term, which is not a bad idea especially if they are all at large positions.

He does not think the committee really understands the change recommending to the charter. Campaigning really is not the issue. Change has been turned down by the voters each time it has been placed on the ballot.

Proposed change is incumbent friendly not voter friendly. If the incumbent deserves to be re-elected then they will be re-elected.

The language being voted on tonight, was it provided to the voters prior to tonight's meeting? Is the language complete?

Mr. Dombek responded that if the committee felt the need to have another meeting to address any possible language changes then a meeting would be called.

Mr. Hughes believes that the full committee should be present to vote so that all members can provide input.

Mr. Hughes was advised that the all proposed language changes were made available to the public via the meeting minutes where the specific changes were discussed and copies of all proposed language changes were attached to those minutes. Additionally an article was in the Sun Messenger about the committee and the proposed changes.

Mr. Hughes thinks the committee should have had a public forum meeting after the final ballot language was approved. Documents should be available for review and then have a public hearing prior to voting on the language.

VI. Final Committee thoughts

Council meeting is July 5, 2011 and would like as much of the committee present as possible.

Mr. Dombek will let Carol and John know so they can attend if possible.

Mr. Dombek thanked the committee for all of the discussion, disagreements and opinions and feels that all members were heard. All committee members agreed that were all able to express opinions.

Very thorough review of the charter and proposed amendments. Only proposing changes, it is up to voters to decide on the changes.
Everyone has opinions, we have to do the best we know how and people make their own decisions.

Highland Heights notes article will be within the Mayor's report. The ballot language will be in notes; Law director's notes will have the language. The ballot language will be printed in the Sun Messenger. Mayor is okay with a special mailing to the residences if the committee wants to do a mailing.

VII. Next Meeting

Next meeting will be scheduled if necessary.

Approved:

Dan Dombek, Committee Chair