

**Unapproved Meeting Minutes
Afton Charter Commission
August 14, 2008**

PRESENT: John Barclay, Bonnie Blackley, Lynn Farley, Michael Frichol, Thomas Giannetti, Rock Gjermo, Kenn Kopitzke, Kathleen McGinn, Daniel Oehlke, Patricia Snyder and Carol Wiessner.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair McGinn called the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL: Snyder performed roll call.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: McGinn moved to approve the July 10, 2008 Minutes amended as follows:

Item 5A. Status of Public Mailing – Paragraph Two - Add ***“Kopitzke objected to the change from 38% to double digit.”*** after the sentence “Discussion Followed”; and change the last sentence to read ***“In addition to disagreeing with the statement that there have been steep increases in lawsuits and legal fees, she stated that there was never a proposed 38% budget increase and she doesn’t believe that there is a non-productive and non-cooperative spirit hindering this CC.”***

Seconded by Kopitzke. Motion passed **(11-0)**.

4. TREASURER REPORT: Barclay presented a receipt for reimbursement of the cost of the initial mailing which he paid for by personal check. The introductory mailing costs included \$180.00 for a bulk mail permit, a \$180.00 yearly fee, and \$164.26 for 1199 pieces of mail that went out. Other costs such as paper and printing were provided by commission members at no charge. He reported that with the \$750.00 review fee charged by the LMC we will have an approximate remaining balance of \$230.00. Discussion followed to include possible solicitation of donations, borrowing ahead on next year’s allowance, disclosure of donations, the added expense to taxpayers due to the city not allowing use of their bulk mail permit, costs of special elections and other anticipated expenses.

Barclay suggested that instead of mailing out the completed charter, it might be more cost effective to send out a flyer and post it to the website stating that copies are available for delivery or pick up at future charter commission meetings and at city hall. Barclay and Farley stated that they had received positive feedback on the initial mailing. Giannetti questioned whether a special election in 2009 would be an option if the charter is not ready for the November election. Discussion followed.

McGinn presented an email from William J. Beck of the Northfield Charter Commission offering links to websites dealing with charter issues, and offered to either email or mail it to all commission members. McGinn will also follow up with Judge Schurrer as to the appointment of a replacement to fill the vacancy left by Mark Borgwardt.

5. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Subcommittee reports and discussion: Frichol presented the budget subcommittee's draft Chapter 8 – Taxation and Finances. He stated that the draft is based on the Minnetonka charter and that it includes wording from several of the dozen other charters that were reviewed, along with input from an ex-mayor. He reported that Sections 8.01 through 8.08 conform to the way the city currently operates, and that 8.09 and 8.10 provide for new mandates.

Section 8.09 requires that the city set aside a percentage of the total budget for special elections. Discussion included removing the word "contingency" and renaming the section "Special Election Amount in Budget", changing the recommended 5% to some lesser figure, the current costs of special elections, and a timeframe for when the funds may be transferred to another line item. Motion made and later withdrawn by Kopitzke and seconded by Gjermeo to require that 1.5% of the total budget is placed into this fund. Motion withdrawn as it was decided more information is needed.

Section 8.10 requires that the city must allocate a percentage of each budget to a special reserve fund until it reaches a target level of 40% of the total budget. Discussion included past and current budget reserve practices, LMC recommendations, what comparable cities do, whether 40% is the correct target level, how much should be set aside each year towards the fund, whether the reserve amount affects the city's bond rating, and what the reserve can be used for. A show of hands was requested to determine how many felt that a mandate should be required; 8 were for and 3 against.

Jane Pahl provided the commission with the current budget reserve and park fund figures and stated that the 2009 proposed budget includes a repayment of \$60,000 towards the reserve fund that was used to reduce the 2008 tax levy. She also said that it was her understanding that the reserve fund is intended to carry the city over until the next tax revenue payment and to handle any budget overages that arise.

Frichol stated that the remaining sections, with the exception of Sections 8.19 and 8.20 conform to the way the city currently operates. It was decided that Section 8.19 entitled "Community Investment Fund" be eliminated after some discussion of surplus money and collections of special assessments and Section 8.20 entitled "Revenue Enhancement" be left in for now. This section requires that the city prepare a yearly plan to increase its revenue base.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Web comments review – Frichol provided an accounting of how many hits the website has received and reported that it jumped considerably after the mailing. McGinn stated that she had no comments other than the above-mentioned email from Mr. Beck.

B. Charter Draft - . Frichol provided copies of draft Appendixes for Affidavits and Petitions on Initiative, Referendum and Recall. McGinn asked each subcommittee to finish up their work before the next meeting and highlight the differences in the proposed drafts to the way things are currently done by the city for comparison purposes. She stated that she would like to have the complete draft ready for review at the September 11th meeting. Review by the LMC will follow and the plan is to have the charter complete and on the ballot November 4th.

7. Wrap Up:

A. Next meeting dates - August 28, September 11, and September 25

B. Agenda Items - Subcommittee Reports and Discussion

C. Assignments -

- McGinn will forward the email from William J. Beck listing links for charter information and follow up with Judge Schurrer on filling the current commission vacancy.
- Snyder will confirm meeting dates with the church.
- Budget subcommittee to meet next Wednesday, August 20 at the home of Kopitzke.
- Bonding, Budget, and Comp Plan/Zoning and Land Use subcommittees to finish drafts and highlight changes.

8. ADJOURN: Motion to adjourn by Wiessner. Seconded by Barclay. Motion passed **(11-0)**. Meeting adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Pat Snyder, secretary