

The meeting of the 2013 Charter Review Commission was held on Wednesday, August 7, 2013 City Hall, 815 Washington St, Reading, PA 19601, Penn Room. The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by Rosemary Frank-Vitale.

Members of the Commission present were: Mmes. Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz and Ann Sheehan, and Messrs. Thomas Anewalt, David Cituk, Randy Corcoran, Frank Denbowski, Mike Reese, and John Slifko. Carl Geffken and Mayor Vaughn Spencer were not present. Also present were Paul Janssen, Carol Beyer, Managing Director, and, Charles Younger, Solicitor.

**Public Comments/Visitors:** None

**Receive and Adopt the Minutes of July 24, 2013.** A number of the members' names were misspelled in the minutes. Mr. Janssen noted that they would be corrected. Upon motion of Mr. Cituk and seconded by Mr. Corcoran the minutes of July 24, 2013 were unanimously approved pending the correction in the spelling of the members' names.

**Selection of Facilitator** – Ms. Frank-Vitale opened nominations for Facilitator and noted that prior to the Commission being constituted properly the members present had nominated Paul Janssen, Director of the Center for Excellence in Local Government at Albright College as the facilitator for the Commission. Ms. Frank-Vitale further noted that it would be appropriate to confirm that appointment now that the Commission was properly constituted. Upon motion of Ms. Sheehan and seconded by Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz the appointment of Mr. Janssen as the Commission Facilitator was unanimously approved.

**Discussion of process to secure public input outside of Commission Meetings** – Ms. Frank-Vitale noted that in reviewing the 2003 Commission report there was significant public comment. The discussion centered on different alternatives to getting the work of the Commission out into the community and not relying on the public attending meetings. The Commission members will be working on developing FAQ's with consolidated agreed responses for questions. These will also assist with standard talking points for members to use. Next the discussion centered on different venues to reach the general public as follows: BCTV and BCTV.ORG, Neighborhood Meetings, a Newspaper AD, WXAC and WEEU, and the Conference of Churches. The options will be refined in coming meetings. Mayor Spencer and Eron Lloyd, Special Assistant for Policy and Sustainability, arrived at this time.

**Discussion of design of survey to solicit input from interested organizations on Charter issues** – Mr. Janssen noted that he had placed this item on the agenda to see if there were organizations who interacted with the City, who might have suggestions regarding Charter amendments based on their interaction with the City. The Commission members present agreed that this could be a valuable tool as the Commission receives its recommendations in the coming weeks. Mr. Janssen stated that he would begin to develop the survey shortly for Commission review. He further asked if Commission members could develop and submit potential organizations who could either attend a meeting or receive a survey when approved.

**Presentation on City of Reading Administration Recommendations for the Charter Review Commission consideration.** Mayor Spencer and Mr. Lloyd made a joint presentation on the Administration recommendations for the Charter Review Commission's consideration. The details of the report are attached by reference and will be made part of the full report, however, there were two priority recommendations:

- Repeal or significantly restrict legislative use of the Administrative Code.
- Designate separate solicitors for the legislative and executive branches.

Additional Considerations included:

- Filling of Vacancies on Council
- General Powers and Duties (*the current clause defaults power to Council if not specifically delineated*).
- Citizens' right to be heard (*the current clause places specific controls on public comment*).
- Procedures (*deals with procedures for introducing ordinances to Council*).
- City Clerk (*seeks to clarify the role and responsibilities of the position of City Clerk*
- Filling the Vacancy in the position of Mayor.
- Powers and Duties of the Mayor (*Clarify the Mayor's discretion in hiring his staff where council approval is not required*).
- Deputy Mayor (*clarify the "Acting-Mayor" alternatives the Mayor could have when traveling away from the city and the Managing Director is not present also*)
- Temporary Managing Director (*clarify the process for naming a temporary Managing Director*).
- City Auditor (*clarify the qualifications for a new City Auditor, based on the 2012 referendum*).
- Correct a typo in section 503
- Vacancy (*clarifying vacancy procedures for other elected City Officials*)
- Department of Public Works/City Engineer (*clarify qualifications for the Director*)
- Department of Administrative Services (*Review of the appropriateness of the job scope*)
- Membership (*currently citizens may serve on only one board – should multiple boards be allowed if they are not in conflict*)

**Continued discussion on Charter Issues which members would like to review** – There were none at this time.

There was no public comment.

It was noted that there should be a direct invitation to the Charter Board to attend the September 4, 2012, Charter Review Commission meeting. Mr. Janssen noted that he would work with Ms. Frank-Vitale and Mr. Lloyd to execute an invitation.

There being no further business, upon motion of Ms. Sheehan and seconded by Mr. Denbowski and by a unanimous vote the meeting was adjourned at 8:05.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul Janssen, Facilitator

2013 Charter Review Commission

Meeting Agenda

August 21, 2013

6:00 – 8:00 PM City Hall

- I. Call to Order
- II. Receive and Adopt the Minutes of August 7, 2013
- III. Public Comment
- IV. Continued discussion on options to secure public input outside of Commission Meetings and FAQ's
- V. Continued discussion of design of survey to solicit input from interested organizations on Charter issues.
- VI. Presentation on City of Reading City Council recommendations for the Charter Review Commission consideration.
- VII. Continued Discussion on City of Reading Administration Recommendations for the Charter Review Commission consideration.
- VIII. Initial discussion on Commission member Charter items for review.
- IX. New Business
- X. Citizen Comments
- XI. Adjournment