

Roll Call	<p>A special meeting of the Kalamazoo City Commission was held on Monday, June 9, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room at City Hall.</p>
	<p>COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Mayor Bobby Hopewell Vice Mayor David Anderson Robert Cinabro Don Cooney Barbara Miller Jack Urban</p>
	<p>COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Stephanie Moore</p>
	<p>Also present were City Manager Jim Ritsema, City Attorney Clyde Robinson, and City Clerk Scott Borling.</p>
Commissioner Excused	<p>Commissioner Urban, seconded by Commissioner Cooney, moved to excuse the absence of Commissioner Moore. With a voice vote the motion passed.</p>
Miscellaneous Communications	<p>An opportunity was given for miscellaneous communications, but no communications were offered.</p>
Presentation on Proposed Charter Amendments	<p>City Attorney Clyde Robinson presented proposed charter amendments that offered options for the direct election of the Mayor and staggered terms for City Commissioners. City Attorney Robinson distributed and reviewed a chart showing the various options as well as documents entitled <i>Charter Amendment Summary</i> and <i>2014 City Charter Amendment Decision Tree</i>. Copies of these documents and City Attorney Robinson's PowerPoint presentation were filed with the papers for the meeting.</p>
	<p>In response to a question from Commissioner Miller, City Attorney Robinson stated the proposed charter amendments in his presentation were not in any particular order or rank. City Attorney Robinson stated the November ballot would be long, and it would be better to wait on the housekeeping issues until the next Municipal Election.</p>
	<p>In response to a question from Commissioner Cinabro, City Attorney Robinson stated the Attorney General would evaluate the ballot question itself and provide a recommendation to the Governor.</p>
	<p>In response to a question from Commissioner Urban, City Attorney Robinson stated the question of how to select the Vice Mayor was one for the Commission to discuss, and explained the options were whether the voters or Commissioners should select the Vice Mayor. City Attorney Robinson described how the cities of Portage and Battle Creek selected their Vice Mayors, and he shared his perspective on the process from his experience in Battle Creek.</p>
	<p>Commissioner Cinabro expressed support for direct election of the Mayor, four-year staggered terms for Commissioners, and the election of the Vice Mayor by voters. Commissioner Cinabro stated he liked proposed amendment 2014-2c as described in the <i>Charter Amendment Summary</i>. Commissioner Urban expressed support for proposed amendment 2014-</p>

2a as described in the *Charter Amendment Summary*, with secondary support for proposed amendment 2014-2c. Commissioner Urban suggested it was important for the Mayor and Vice Mayor to work well together, and the selection of the Vice Mayor by the Commission would allow for this consideration.

Commissioner Cooney expressed support for proposed amendment 2014-2c as described in the *Charter Amendment Summary*.

Commissioner Miller expressed support for proposed amendment 2014-2 as described in the *Charter Amendment Summary*. Commissioner Miller stated she did not like a four year term for the Mayor, as the Mayor needed to be responsive to voters.

In response to a question from Vice Mayor Anderson, City Attorney Robinson stated proposals 2014-2a and 2c would require the City Commission to address the issue of whether Commissioners could run for Mayor and Commission at the same time.

Vice Mayor Anderson stated his principles for evaluating the proposed amendments included keeping the changes simple ensuring elected officials were responsive to the changing needs of the constituents. Vice Mayor Anderson suggested something be built into the proposed amendments to encourage responsiveness to voters.

Commissioner Urban noted that sitting Commissioners who ran for Mayor would be able to raise issues every two years instead of every four years.

Vice Mayor Anderson stated there might be less of a focus on municipal elections if only half of the City Commission positions were on the ballot.

Commissioner Miller reminded everyone that voters would have the final say on any charter amendments proposed by the Commission.

Mayor Hopewell expressed support for staggered Commission terms, direct election of the Mayor, and consistency of the Mayor's term with Commissioners' terms. Mayor Hopewell stated the dynamics of policy making had really changed, and Commissioners needed to be able to focus on the issues. Mayor Hopewell stated it was important for the City Manager to know there was consistency on the Commission. Mayor Hopewell indicated he did not have a strong opinion regarding the selection of the Vice Mayor.

Commissioner Cinabro stated that as a former Commission appointee, it was a challenge when there was significant turnover on the Commission, and he stated responsiveness to voters needed to be balanced with the need for continuity and the complexity of the issues facing the community. Commissioner Cinabro noted that four-year terms might make running for City Commissioner more attractive.

Commissioner Anderson stated staggered Commission terms and a two-year Mayor's term would give the three other Commissioners who were in the middle of their terms a "free shot" at the Mayor.

Presentation on  
Proposed Charter  
Amendments (cont'd)

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Amendments (cont'd)

Commissioner Urban stated he was not sure if he supported the ability of mid-term Commissioners to run against the Mayor.

City Attorney Robinson clarified that the Incompatibility of Offices Act came into play when a person took office while already holding another office.

When Mayor Hopewell invited citizens to comment on the proposed charter amendments, the following people addressed the City Commission:

Mark Fricke, City resident, thanked Commissioners for discussing the way City residents elected the Mayor, Vice Mayor and Commissioners. Mr. Fricke recommended the Commission keep the process simple and consistent for voters and proposed four-year terms for both the Mayor and Commissioners. Mr. Fricke noted City voters were disenfranchised by having their vote diluted and by having to choose between voting for a Mayor or voting for Commissioners. Mr. Fricke predicted the separate election of the Mayor would lead the City to better define the role of Mayor.

City Attorney Robinson reported Portage City Charter required sitting, mid-term councilmembers to resign when they decided to run for Mayor.

Mayor Hopewell thanked Commissioner Miller for keeping this issue in front of the Commission.

City Attorney Robinson stated he would try to have the appropriate resolutions to the City Commission by the second meeting in July.

Citizen Comments

Next, an opportunity was given for general citizen comments, but no comments were offered.

Commissioner  
Comments

Finally, an opportunity was given for miscellaneous comments and concerns of City Commissioners.

Commissioner Urban noted that Commissioners had expressed support for proposed charter amendments 2014-2a, 2014-2b, and 2014-2c.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott A. Borling  
City Clerk

For City Commission approval on August 18, 2014

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Bobby J. Hopewell, Mayor  
Dated: August 18, 2014

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