

Home Rule Charter Commission Meeting Minutes
July 29, 2009
6:45 p.m.

Members Present: Loren Winter, Andrew Ellis, Sharon Whitehill Gray, Robert Wilson, Chris Russell, Tom Maher, John Clarke, Karen Keever, Steve Tallaksen, Chandler Johnson. Members Absent: Jay Jones, David Dupree, Clayton Hines.

Loren Winter Called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Loren Winter asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes, and if so would like a motion to approve them. Sharon Whitehill Gray made a motion to approve the minutes with a second by John Clarke. All voted aye. Motion passed.

Loren Winter asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Robert Wilson made a motion to approve the agenda with a second by Sharon Whitehill Gray. All voted aye.

Visitors:

Loren Winter introduced Richard Sheets from the Missouri Municipal League and stated that he was present tonight to speak and to any answer questions that the Commissioners had.

Richard Sheets stated that the Commission has already tackled most of the hard stuff, but would love to answer any questions that they had.

Loren Winter asked if there were any City's that failed at passing a Home Rule Charter. Mr. Sheets stated that only 2 have failed, one was for zoning issues and the other died by its own weight.

Loren Winter said that he had budget and voter apathy concerns. Mr. Sheets said that it was important to have support from the Mayor and City Administrator. Make sure to advertise in the papers, local as well as Springfield. Get businesses behind it also.

Brian Bingle asked if the Charter makes it to the ballot and the citizens vote it in, when do the things in the Charter become effective. After much discussion it was determined that the Charter itself would be in effect as of the following meeting, but the terms of office would take place the following April election. All Council members and the Mayor would have to run again at that time.

Chris Russell asked that to ensure growth, how difficult would it be to change anything in the Charter that needed modified in order to accommodate growth. Mr. Sheets stated that most cities formed a committee to review the Charter and make sure it is still relevant. This could be done every 10 years or so. John Clarke stated that citizens could also request an amendment to change the Charter.

Andrew Ellis asked if in the future it was possible to be present by web cam or some other device, how that affected the Sunshine Law. Mr. Sheets stated that the MML has already taken care of that by stating that to make a quorum you have to be physically present.

Loren Winter asked if the Charter is written and adopted can the State come back and say that something in the Charter is not allowed, does it get automatically removed. Mr. Sheets said that yes if they say you need to remove it.

Sharon Whitehill Gray asked if there was anything written in Nixa's Charter at this point that needed to be corrected. Mr. Sheets stated that it was just clerical errors that he noted and that it was always a good idea to get someone not familiar with the document to proof read the material.

With no further business, Chandler Johnston made a motion to adjourn with a second by John Clarke. All voted aye.

Chandler Johnston, Secretary Home Rule Commission