

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE HOME RULE CHARTER COMMISSION OF THE
CITY OF NIXA, MISSOURI**

NIXA CITY HALL

August 2nd, 2022 6:00 P.M.

The Home Rule Charter Commission meeting was called to order by Chairman Mark Hartsock. Attending Commissioners were Kiri Horne, Ruth-Ann Maynard, David Larsen, Greg Anderson, Karen Keever, Charlotte Stapleton, and Andrew Carl. Attending staff were Cindy Robbins, Nick Woodman, Drew Douglas, and Rebekka Coffey. The absent staff was Jimmy Liles.

Hartsock addressed Commissioner Dingus' resignation from the Charter Review Commission due to moving districts. Hartsock said nominations for a replacement to Dingus' position were being discussed. Hartsock stated a new co-chair selection would be made once Dingus' position was filled.

Hartsock called for a motion to approve the July 5th, 2022, commission minutes. Anderson made a motion to approve the minutes, with Larsen seconding and all Commissioners voting aye.

Hartsock opened the public hearing for comments and reminded members of the audience that the discussion should be related to Articles 7-9, and comments should be limited to five (5) minutes.

Ron Sanders, 976 Glen Oaks Dr., discussed the idea of expanding the City Council with more seats or general seats/at-large seats. Sanders provided positives and negatives to these options.

Hartsock asked which article or section this topic would be covered under, with Sanders responding section 9.4. Hartsock stated he felt this topic might fit better under Article 3. Woodman said that if at-large council members were allowed more than Article 9 would have to be rewritten. Hartsock asked when a city would consider at-large council members, with Woodman responding that it would depend on what the commission decided for the requirements. Keever asked what an at-large council member would mean, with Woodman responding with the difference between Council members elected for specific districts and at-large council members being elected by the City as a whole. Anderson said expanding the Council would be inevitable as the City grows but questioned if it was necessary currently.

Hartsock stated Council can call for a Home Rule Charter review at any time but it must be done every 10 years. Hartsock said if the review and suggestions are done right, then revisions would have to be made often. Hartsock stated that the Charter doesn't want to be vague, not to limit power but still allow for growth.

Sanders discussed section 9.4, the potential changes that could be made to section 9.4, and what would be best for the citizens and their council district representation. Hartsock clarified that section 3.2(c) discusses Council requirements for representation.

Keever asked for more time to look into at-large council members, and Hartsock stated the topic would be placed on the next agenda as a discussion item. Keever discussed the benefits of having

at-large Council members, with Woodman stating the Mayor is elected at-large. Discussion followed regarding at-large Council members.

Carl stated the model MML Charter had come commentary on the same topics as Article 3. Carl discussed Nixa's growth and said the commission should look at what is best for the City but make sure that every district is even.

Robbins stated the issues that can arise from at-large Council members would be the possibility of unequal representation of the City. Further discussion was had on at-large Council members.

Carl asked about the Council district boundaries that were just approved, with Woodman responding. Staff provided information on census data and how it was used to make the district boundary maps voted on by Council.

Sanders discussed Nixa's further growth and what would happen to the Council districts as the City grows.

Larsen asked questions about new development on the east side of Nixa, and if the City's population hit a certain level, additional districts would be required, with Woodman responding. Discussion followed about the current Council districts and the addition of more districts in the future.

Hartsock stated that further discussion about Council districts should occur at future meetings. Hartsock said adding Council districts could be tricky Charter changes. Hartsock discussed at-large Council members and charter language changes that would need to occur.

Sanders suggested a committee look at the pros and cons of at-large Council members, with Hartsock stating the Home Rule Charter Commission was the committee and further discussion would be needed. Hartsock stated the topic of at-large Council members would be brought back to the next meeting.

Maynard asked if Council representation has to be even within the districts, with Woodman responding no. Woodman said that currently, the Mayor breaks tie votes, and that should probably be kept depending on the size of the Council.

Hartsock asked if there were any further questions on Articles 7-9. Woodman asked for clarification on a direction for what information the commission would like to see at the next meeting, with Hartsock responding to bring back how smaller cities use at-large Council members and the pros and cons of at-large Council members.

Keever asked to discuss section 8.6. Keever questioned why all the Council minutes are not currently available online. Coffey provided information on the availability of Council minutes and the City's website. Douglas provided additional information about the City's website.

Hartsock discussed the previous review of the Charter and the changes made regarding the technology that is used. Additional discussion was held about Council minutes and data available to the public and how that information is made available.

Legal Update and Discussion:

Woodman started his presentation on rank choice voting. Woodman had the commission participate in a hands-on demonstration and provided information on rank choice voting.

Maynard asked if rank choice voting would work best with a large pool of candidates. Woodman discussed rank choice voting, jungle primaries, and the current voting system. Woodman stated he hadn't found much information on if rank choice voting is legal in Missouri but is still researching the topic. Woodman said the County Clerk is the voting authority and isn't sure how they would handle it. Discussion about rank choice voting and elections followed.

Hartsock stated that citizens had approached him about discussing rank choice voting and read some of his notes on rank choice voting.

Sanders discussed his views on rank choice voting.

Hartsock stated that Nixa doesn't limit the number of candidates that can run for office. Hartsock provided his views on rank choice voting and discussed section 9.3.

Woodman stated that St. Louis is considering rank choice voting and would be doing this via an ordinance. Woodman said the citizens of St. Louis are petitioning Council to make their voting system rank choice. Discussion about charter changes needed to make rank choice voting available to Council.

Keever provided her views on rank choice voting. Hartsock provided his views on rank choice voting. Discussion regarding rank choice voting followed.

Douglas provided another rank choice voting demonstration. Additional discussion on rank choice voting followed.

Hartsock thanked the group for being polite during the rank choice voting conversation. Hartsock closed the public hearing. Hartsock stated that additional discussion on Articles 7-9 would be on the next meeting agenda. Hartsock discussed the commission's meeting schedule and asked if the group wanted to keep one (1) meeting a month or go back to two (2) meetings a month. Hartsock stated the next meeting would be September 6th at 6:00 p.m. and asked Coffey to check and see if the Police Department training room would be available due to a conflict with the Council chambers being available. Hartsock said a potential future meeting would be September 20th at 6:00 p.m. Hartsock stated the agenda items for the September 6th meeting.

Hartsock called for a motion to adjourn at 8:02 p.m. Carl made a motion to adjourn with Keever seconding and all Commissioners voting aye.