

**City of Moorhead  
Charter Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
December 14, 2011 at 7:30 AM  
City Hall Boardroom**

**Roll call of the members was made as follows:**

Board Member:	James Danielson	Present
Board Member:	Eileen Hastad	Present
Board Member:	Roger Buscher	Present
Board Member:	Kenneth Tangen	Present at 7:53 a.m.
Board Member:	Russell Hanson	Present
Board Member:	Darvin Landa	Absent
Board Member:	Patricia Staples	Absent
Board Member:	Ronald Hagemann	Present
Board Member:	Travis Reimche	Present
Board Member:	Douglas Fagerlie	Present
Board Member:	Thomas Krabbenhoft	Present
Board Member:	Richard Bolton	Present
Board Member:	Yoke-Sim Gunaratne	Present at 7:50 a.m.

**City Staff:**

City Clerk	Jill Wenger	Present
Assistant City Attorney	John Shockley	Present

**Charter Commission Meeting**

1. [Call to Order](#)

Minutes: Charter Commission Chair, Jim Danielson, called the meeting to order.

2. Roll Call

Minutes: Roll call of the Commission members was noted.

3. [Approval of Minutes](#)

A. November 11, 2011 Charter Commission Meeting Minutes

Motion to Approve made by Russell Hanson and seconded by Roger Buscher

**Approve Minutes of November 11, 2011**

Motion Passed by unanimous vote

4. [Reports of the Chair, Officers, Commissions and Committees](#)

Minutes: No reports were presented.

5. Public Comment

Minutes: No citizens addressed the Commission.

## 6. Unfinished Business

### A. [Discussion of Charter Commission Recommendations to the City Council](#)

Minutes: Chair Danielson referenced a November 28, 2011 letter provided to the Mayor and City Council regarding the Charter Commission's expectation that the proposed Charter amendment related to hydrant fees be taken off the table by the City Council, considered and voted upon. No action has been taken by the City Council to date.

Danielson stated that he has not received a formal response from the Mayor and Council, but was provided an informal response from the City Manager. It appears that staff of the City and Moorhead Public Service is working on a future agreement related to hydrant fees. Increased fees could cause significant costs to the City of Moorhead and careful transition is being considered to ease into these increased payments over the course of the next several years.

It was noted that the ordinance was tabled due to concerns stated by the Mayor. A unanimous vote of the Mayor and City Council is required to pass an ordinance affecting the Moorhead City Charter.

Charter Commission Members noted the following:

- Concern was noted regarding the Mayor and Council's decision to table this Charter recommendation for such a significant period of time.
- Concern was noted regarding whether this action may set a precedent for future Charter recommendations to the Council.
- It is believed that the Mayor and City Council have a duty to provide a formal response or decision on the matter to the Charter Commission.
- It was noted that an agreement related to cost transition between the City and Moorhead Public Service could occur following changes to the Charter.

John Shockley, Assistant City Attorney stated that Minnesota State Statutes requires that second consideration of an ordinance must occur within a reasonable amount of time; however, statute does not prescribe a specific time period.

It was determined that members of the Charter Commission be invited to attend the January 9, 2012 City Council meeting. Chair Danielson will address the Mayor and City Council on behalf of the Charter Commission regarding concerns over the tabled Charter recommendation related to hydrant fees.

Jill Wenger, City Clerk, will notify Charter Commissioners of the outcome of Council discussion following the January 9, 2011 City Council Meeting.

B. [Discussion of Mayoral Voting and Council Composition](#)

Minutes: John Shockley, Assistant City Attorney, provided an explanation of a memo provided to the Charter Commission regarding Mayoral voting and how this change would impact voting provisions set forth in the Charter.

Charter Commission Members noted the following:

- Systematic mayoral voting could provide regular at-large representation on the Council.
- Mayoral voting could assist the Council in overcoming some supermajority voting requirements.
- It is preferred that the Council be comprised of eight separate ward representatives.
- It is preferred that ward representation be balanced with at-large representation on the Council.
- It is preferred that the current mayoral voting and council composition remain unchanged.

It was noted that voting to keep mayoral voting and council composition provisions unchanged at this time does not preclude the Charter Commission from discussing the topic at a future time.

Motion to Approve made by Douglas Fagerlie and seconded by Eileen Hastad  
**Mayoral Voting and Council Composition Remain Unchanged**  
Motion Passed by unanimous vote

7. [New Business](#)

Minutes: It was noted that any individual Charter Commission member can request that a new item be added to the Charter agenda by contacting the City staff liaison to the Charter Commission, Jill Wenger. This allows for background information to be prepared in advance of the meeting.

It was noted that duties of the Charter Commission are set forth by State Statutes and are further structured by the Charter bylaws. These guidelines are somewhat different to those governing other citizen advisory groups.

It was noted that Charter Commission ward representatives are appointed by Council Members and Charter Commission at-large representatives are appointed by the Mayor. Commissioners can serve up to two, four-year terms except in the case of filling an unexpired term. Commissioners can communicate their interest in serving a second term to Council Members, Mayor, and/or the City staff liaison to the Charter Commission, Jill Wenger.

8. Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn made by Travis Reimche and seconded by Ken Tangen

**Motion to Adjourn**

Motion Passed by unanimous vote

Minutes: It was determined that the Charter Commission would meet on February 8, 2012 at 7:30 a.m. to conduct business related to the annual meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:39 a.m.

*Respectfully submitted by:  
Jill Wenger, City Clerk*