

**City of Moorhead  
Charter Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
May 09, 2012 at 7:30 AM  
City Hall Boardroom**

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

Board Member (At Large):	James Danielson	Present
Board Member (At Large):	Eileen Hastad	Present
Board Member (At Large):	Roger Buscher	Present
Board Member (At Large):	Kenneth Tangen	Present
Board Member (At Large):	Russell Hanson	Absent
Board Member (Ward 1):	Darvin Landa	Present
Board Member (Ward 1):	VACANT	N/A
Board Member (Ward 2):	Ronald Hagemann	Present
Board Member (Ward 2):	Travis Reimche	Absent
Board Member (Ward 3):	Douglas Fagerlie	Present
Board Member (Ward 3):	Thomas Krabbenhoft	Present
Board Member (Ward 4):	Richard Bolton	Present
Board Member (Ward 4):	Yoke-Sim Gunaratne	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. [February 8, 2012](#)

Motion made to Approve made by Douglas Fagerlie and seconded by Roger Buscher

**Approve minutes of February 8, 2012**

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. [Update on Charter Commission Recommendation to the City Council: Hydrant Fees](#)

Minutes: Chair Danielson reported that City staff is awaiting the completion of the Moorhead Public Service "Utility Cost of Service Study" prior to further consideration of hydrant fee rates.

B. [Odd-Year Election Discussion](#)

Minutes: Chair Danielson referenced the memorandum provided in the agenda packet related to city election costs.

Jill Wenger, City Clerk, noted that there is no additional cost to changing City elections to an even year. The biggest issue in conducting City elections during odd years is the financial cost and the increasing amount of time for City staff to administer the election.

Charter Commission Members noted the following:

- Concern was noted regarding City election cost and low voter turnout.
- Concern was noted in that City elected offices may become less visible during a larger election and that voters may be less informed at the polls when selecting a City Council candidate.

Motion made to Approve made by Darvin Landa and seconded by Kenneth Tangen  
**Approve draft Ordinance to Amend and Reenact Section 4.01 of the Charter of the City of Moorhead Relating to Regular Elections and forward to Moorhead City Council for consideration**

**Motion Passed**

For: 8 - James Danielson, Eileen Hastad, Roger Buscher, Kenneth Tangen, Darvin Landa, Douglas Fagerlie, Thomas Krabbenhoft, Yoke-Sim Gunaratne

Against: 2 - Ronald Hagemann, Richard Bolton

Absent: 2 - Russell Hanson, Travis Reimche,

Vacant Position: 1

7. New Business

A. [City Emergency Operations Catastrophe and Succession Plan](#)

Minutes: Chair Danielson referenced the memorandum provided in the agenda packet related to the city emergency operations catastrophe and succession plan.

Charter Commission Members noted the following:

- A succession plan in a catastrophe is dependent on the level of destruction. The State or Federal Government may work in conjunction with the City or declare how emergency operations are to be handled.

City staff was directed to provide further information on current operations, laws, and any ordinances or models that could be adopted by local governments to address a catastrophic event that eliminates the Mayor and all Members of the City Council.

B. [Voting Provisions on Issues Related to Expenditures](#)

Minutes: Chair Danielson referenced the memorandum provided in the agenda packet related to voting provisions on issues related to expenditures.

John Shockley, City Attorney, clarified that simply adding the Mayor as a voting member of the Council would not change threshold requirements currently outlined in City Code related to expenditure approval. The Charter can opt to add the Mayor as a voting member, lower the voting threshold requirement related to approval of expenditures, or both.

Charter Commission Members noted the following:

- The City Council has had difficulty approving the City's budget and other important financial matters due to current voting threshold requirements.
- Supermajority requirements to approve City expenditures have created a form of minority governance.
- The City's current threshold requirements reflect a longstanding value of those who established the City Charter.
- Supermajority requirements serve to protect minority rights.
- It may be beneficial for a stronger Mayor role on issues related to expenditures given that the Mayor's position is the only at-large representative of the city.

City staff was directed to provide a draft ordinance that would modify sections of the City Code to provide for Mayoral voting and reduce the voting threshold on issues related to expenditures. Both provisions will be considered separately by the Charter Commission at the next meeting.

8. Adjourn

A. [Establish Next Commission Meeting Date](#)

Motion made to Approve made by Kenneth Tangen and seconded by Darvin Landa  
**Motion to Establish August 22 as the Next Commission Meeting Date**  
Motion Passed by unanimous vote

Meeting adjourned at 8:27 a.m.

*Respectfully submitted by:*  
*Jill Wenger, City Clerk*