

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION
OF BOSSIER CITY LOUISIANA TAKEN AT THE MEETING OF
March 28, 2024**

The Charter Commission of the City of Bossier City, State of Louisiana, had a meeting in the Bossier Council Chambers, 620 Benton Road, Bossier City, Louisiana, on March 28, 2024, at 6:30 PM.

Roll Call as follows:

Present: Vicky Whitman, Lisa Wilhite, Sandra Morehart, Preston Friedley, Jr., Lee A. Jeter, Sr., David Johnson, Shane Cheatham

Absent: Julianna Parks, Panderina Soumas, ex officio non-voting member Amanda Nottingham

Also present was ex officio non-voting member: Assistant City Attorney Richard Ray standing in for City Attorney Charles Jacobs.,

Invocation was given by Mr. Lee A. Jeter, Sr.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Cheatham.

Agenda Item called: Approve Agenda

By: Mrs. Wilhite **Motion to approve agenda.**

Second by Mr. Johnson

No comment from the audience.

No comments from the commission.

Vote in favor of motion is unanimous.

Yeas: Vicky Whitman, Lisa Wilhite, Sandra Morehart, Preston Friedley, Jr., Lee A. Jeter, Sr., David Johnson, Shane Cheatham

Nays: none

Absent: Julianna Parks, Panderina Soumas

Abstain: none

Agenda Item called: Approve Minutes from March 4, 2024 meeting.

By: Mr. Jeter **Motion to approve minutes from March 4, 2024 meeting.**

Second by Mrs. Wilhite

No comment from the audience.

Mr. Jeter asked for the ordinances he requested for salary information. Mrs. Morehart forwarded by email to Mr. Jeter.

Vote in favor of motion is unanimous.

Yeas: Vicky Whitman, Lisa Wilhite, Sandra Morehart, Preston Friedley, Jr., Lee A. Jeter, Sr., David Johnson, Shane Cheatham

Nays: none

Absent: Julianna Parks, Panderina Soumas

Abstain: none

Old Business

Agenda Item Called: Discussion of Bossier City Charter review of Chapters 1-3 in March 4 meeting.

By: Mr. Cheatham **Motion to adopt the changes provided by Mayor Chandler in the Charter commission resolution.**

Second by Mr. Johnson

Discussion:

Mrs. Morehart noted the committee had agreed to review the charter chapter by chapter before we adopted any changes.

Mr. Friedley asked a clarifying question on the version for term limits.

Mr. Cheatham asked Mr. Ray to pull the ordinance.

Mrs. Wilhite asked for clarification on how the changes would be sent to the City Council.

Mr. Ray stated he has requested guidance from an outside attorney on whether the motions passed would need a simple majority or a two-thirds vote.

Mrs. Whitman stated she felt all members should be present for the votes to change the charter.

Mr. Friedley asked technical question on the two-thirds vote.

Mr. Ray stated he believed based on a legislative body handing it to the people for a vote, it would require two-thirds vote. Mr. Ray indicated he did not realize we were voting due to it not being on the agenda.

Mrs. Whitman asked for clarification on when we have to have changes to the City Council.

Mr. Ray read the Resolution 69 of 2023. The changes would include Section 3.01.(b) proposed “Members of the City Council shall be eligible for re-election. No person shall be eligible for election to the office for more than three (3) terms and said term limit applies to all who have held the office, past, and present.

Amendment to the Motion: Mrs. Morehart amended the motion to exclude retroactivity and the term established at five years instead of four years.

Second by Mrs. Wilhite

Discussion:

Mrs. Whitman stated concern over voting with proper discussion on continuity of leadership, brain drain from loss of experience and what ifs regarding lack of candidates.

Mr. Friedley stated he believed it is covered on the current charter. He stated the brain drain of the city council would have little effect due to the long-term employees.

Mrs. Whitman stated we needed to build in safeguards for the city.

Public discussion:

Mr. David Crockett, 653 Dumaine Drive, Bossier City, LA stated the proposition would be two, one for the city council and one for the mayor. He stated his opinion on voting majority. Continuity is provided by the city staff. The city needs to get to vote.

Mrs. Priscillia McGee, 1407 Gardenia Street, Bossier City, LA asked why five years? Mrs. Morehart answered for continuity in the government.

Vote for amendment:

Yeas: Mrs. Morehart, Mrs. Wilhite

Nays: Mr. Cheatham, Mr. Jeter, Mr. Johnson, Mrs. Whitman, Mr. Friedley

Absent: Julianna Parks, Panderina Soumas

Abstain: none

Motion failed 2 Yeas, 5 Nays.

Vote for motion: **Motion to adopt the changes provided by Mayor Chandler in the Charter commission resolution.**

Yeas: Mr. Cheatham, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Friedley

Nays: Mr. Jeter, Mrs. Morehart, Mrs. Wilhite, Mrs. Whitman

Absent: Julianna Parks, Panderina Soumas

Abstain: none

Motion failed 3 Yeas, 4 Nays.

Mr. Jeter asked how the changes in the charter would be tracked and available for a complete review for the vote.

Mr. Ray advised he is tracking the changes and maintaining one master draft version.

Mrs. Morehart indicated she is capturing the discussion on the changes in the minutes. She asked everyone to review again.

New Business

Agenda Item Called: Review Bossier City Charter chapters 4-7.

By: Mrs. Morehart **Motion to establish the process of a chapter-by-chapter review of the charter and conduct a vote on the changes to the charter after the review is complete.**

Second by Mr. Cheatham

Comments from audience:

Mr. Crockett noted the changes could be significant so each chapter will need to be debated and asked that the public be allowed to interact.

Discussion from several commission members asks that we be expedient in the process in order to hit the December and/or the March ballot.

Vote in favor of motion is unanimous.

Yeas: Vicky Whitman, Lisa Wilhite, Sandra Morehart, Preston Friedley, Jr., Lee A. Jeter, Sr., David Johnson, Shane Cheatham

Nays: none

Absent: Julianna Parks, Panderina Soumas

Abstain: none

Mr. Ray added that the application date for the bond commission is August 20. This would allow submission to the City Council by the end of June and allow voting on the December ballot.

Mr. Jeter reviewed the changes for Chapter 4 & 5.

Chapter 4

Section 4.01 Election: change term for 6 years with a two-term limit to provide continuity of leadership.

Section 4.04 Compensation: Mayor compensation should be paid bi-monthly payments and should be consistent with the City council compensation. All elected officials paid at the same time – bi-monthly on the 1st and 15th.

Section 4.05(a) Vacancies: The vacancy should be filled immediately with the City Council Chairman to eliminate the 10-day void. The City Council Chairman would assume the Mayor Pro-tem until the position is filled as provided by law. (Consider wording if the City Council Chairman cannot fill the duties, it would fall to the Vice Chairman). The compensation is tiered over several time periods, consider 100% compensation at day 1.

Section 4.05(d) Change wording to “shall designate the Chief Administrative Officer” and delete or other appointed City employee.

Section 4.06 (m) Remove the Chief Administrative Officer from requiring City Council approval. Move this position to the same language as Police Chief and Fire Chief. “The Mayor shall appoint the Chief Administrative Officer, Police Chief and the Fire Chief and shall not require City Council confirmation.” The Mayor shall follow the job minimum requirements and shall hire/appoint qualified individuals.

Section 4.06(f/g) Possible addition: The Mayor will present to the citizens of Bossier City an annual State of Bossier City address which will include the current and projected debt and capital projects(restricted and non-restricted). This address will occur in writing and at the City Council meeting before March 31 of each year.

Chapter 5

Section 3.14 (and in Chapter 5 if needed) Any ordinance shall be passed with a two-thirds vote of the members present to pass. (review Mayor veto vote requirement for appropriate language and approach). More discussion should be reviewed to ensure we do not create gridlock while trying to deal with this matter.

Section 5.01 Public comment to consider item 3, change wording “or voter id”. First paragraph, 2nd line changing to 25% is not favored by some members. More discussion needed. Mr. Friedley asked all members to discuss with your City Councilman.

Mr. Ray advised the committee of the availability of the council chamber due to construction.

Chapter 6.08 Certification of Funds and Penalty for violation – Referenced to Chapter 7 but no link can be found. March 18 draft addresses this with an edit to remove the language. Elected officials should be held accountable, too. Explore wording to enforce this penalty to the city council whether in this section or 6.06.

Mr. Jeter expressed his concern with the priorities of expenditures not handling the basic quality of life issues before spending on items that do not improve the quality of life for the citizens.

Chapter 7

7.03 The Mayor shall nominate the Chief Administrative Officer. This position will not require City Council approval.

7.00 Address requirement for continuing education so that we have the best management practices for the city. Adequate compensation will be addressed in the compensation study.

7.03.1 Arena Division- Review the reporting structure for this area and determine how it is running now and who is the appropriate director to lead. (Look at this during the organizational structure review)

7.04 Project Coordinator inconsistency with 7.01 – may or shall?

Future Meetings:

April 8, 2024 9:00 am with Director Finance for chapter 6 and 16

April 15, 2024 6:00 pm Workshop – no votes on action or motions, Bayou room Civic Center

April 23, 2024. 6:00 pm

Tentative May 7, 2024 6:00 pm

By: Mr. Shane Cheatham **Motion to adjourn**
Second by: Mr. Johnson
Adjournment – 9:08 pm

No comment from the audience.
No comments from the commission.

Vote in favor of motion is unanimous.
Yeas: Vicky Whitman, Lisa Wilhite, Sandra Morehart, Preston Friedley, Jr., Lee A. Jeter, Sr.,
David Johnson, Shane Cheatham

Nays: none
Absent: Julianna Parks, Panderina Soumas
Abstain: none

Respectfully submitted:

Publish _____, 2024