CITY OF FRIDLEY
CHARTER COMMISSION MEETING
APRIL 5, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Nelson called the Charter Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Commissioners Gary Braam, Kelli Brillhart, Donald Findell, Manuel Granroos, Nikki Karnopp, Ted Kranz, Bruce Nelson, Rick Nelson, Courtney Rathke, Barb Reiland, Val Rolstad, and Cynthia Soule

Members Absent: Commissioners Pam Reynolds, and Avonna Starck

Others Present: Melissa Moore, Admin. Services Coord./Deputy City Clerk/Staff Liaison
Dan Tienter, Finance Director/City Treasurer/City Clerk
Deborah Dahl, Director of Community Services and Employee Resources
Alyssa Kruzel, Community Engagement Specialist

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Commissioner Braam approving the meeting agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Brillhart.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, CHAIRPERSON NELSON DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of March 1, 2021 Charter Commission Meeting Minutes

MOTION by Commissioner Brillhart to approve the meeting minutes of March 1, 2021 as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Braam.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, CHAIRPERSON NELSON DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. New Member Interviews

Ms. Moore introduced Oluwaseyi Olawore who submitted an application for membership. She stated that there was one other applicant that was not able to attend the meeting tonight.

Chairperson Nelson asked why the applicant would like to join the Charter Commission.

Mr. Olawore replied that he would like to make an impact in his community. He commented that the Charter Commission provides regulation of the City and believed that this would be a good place for him to provide his input.

Commissioner Rathke commented that Mr. Olwore's educational background is impressive and asked if he has any relative experience.

Mr. Olawore stated that he works with federal agencies in his occupation and is familiar with writing rules and regulations. He stated that he has written many documents that have been adopted by his previous university.

Commissioner Brillhart commented that Mr. Olawore has been in Fridley for about 11 years and asked what he believes has been the biggest improvement in the community during that time.

Mr. Olawore stated that what someone sees from the outside is not the same what someone sees from the inside. He used the example of speed limits, as someone may want the speed limit on East River Road lowered but recognized that is not a power the City has because it is a County road.

Chairperson Nelson thanked Mr. Olawore for attending and participating in the interview.

Commissioner Rathke commented that Mr. Olawore has an impressive background that is detail oriented and would be a good fit for the Commission. She commented that he has also lived in Fridley for over ten years, which makes him educated about the community.

Commissioners Brillhart and Nelson agreed.

Ms. Moore commented that Mr. Olawore is the Head Election Judge at the location he worked at in 2020 and did a great job. It was also noted that the Charter Commission was his first choice for placement.

Commissioner Rathke commented that Mr. Olawore is well informed, qualified, and wants to serve the community on this Commission.

MOTION by Commissioner Rathke to direct staff to petition to the Judge to recommend that Oluwaseyi Olawore be appointed to the Charter Commission. Seconded by Commissioner Brillhart.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, CHAIRPERSON NELSON DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED.

Commissioner Soule commented that there was another applicant and asked what would happen with that applicant as she was unable to attend.

Mr. Moore commented that she will reach out to that applicant to inform her that the application will be held on file, as it will be recommended to fill the open position with Mr. Olawore.

OLD BUSINESS

2. Chapter 12 Revisions

Chairperson Nelson noted that the changes recommended at the last meeting have been incorporated into the draft included in the Commission packet and provided a breif overview.

Commissioner Brillhart stated that the draft aligns with the changes the Commission recommended and would be happy with the draft as is.

Commissioner Karnopp asked and received confirmation that this is the typical process to amend the Charter.

Mr. Tienter identified a few changes in capitalization and punctuation that staff found when reading through the draft.

The Commission agreed that those changes were nonsubstantiative and could be incorporated into the draft.

MOTION by Commissioner Braam to approve the changes to Chapter 12 as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Karnopp.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, CHAIRPERSON NELSON DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

FUTURE MEETING TOPICS/COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Tienter noted that at the next meeting a representative from the League of Minnesota Cities will be present to complete the training. It was confirmed that Mr. Olawore could attend the next meeting.

Ms. Moore provided an overview of the appointment process and commented that she believed Mr. Olawore could be appointed prior to the next meeting.

3. Parks Master Plan Presentation

Ms. Dahl presented the Parks Master Plan to the group.

Commissioner Rathke commented that she received the postcard about the park in her neighborhood. She stated that the phrase "challenge playground" element was used and asked for input from staff on what that would be.

Ms. Dahl replied that could be described as a ninja warrier obstacle course items. She commented that there are teens in that area that would most likely use that type of equipment.

Chairperson Nelson asked if the projected cost includes inflation.

Mr. Tienter commented that this stage the plan has not been phased and does not include inflation.

Commissioner Brillhart asked if there are plans to improve the water quality as well. She commented that the water quality of Moore Lake needs to be improved and she would think that should happen if the parks on the sides of the lake are being improved.

Ms. Dahl commented that there is an Environmental Planner for the City working with the Watershed District to address those issues, separately from the Parks Master Plan.

Commissioner Karnopp commented that she has noticed that the City and School District do not appear to work closely together. She believed that engaging the School District could provide additional opportunities for the entities to work and plan together.

Ms. Dahl commented that the City met with the School District one year ago in order to have those programming and planning discussions. She stated that the City has a liaison at the School District and has monthly meetings related to parks maintenance. She stated that they have also reached out to other stakeholder groups, such as sports associations, in order to refresh those relationships and engage those groups.

Chairperson Nelson asked if there has been discussion related to the opportunity that could be provided through National Night Out. He stated that perhaps there could be brochures made available with this information that could be passed out at the different events.

Ms. Kruzel commented that she has begun discussions with public safety staff related to Night to Unite, but explained that they most likely use the 2022 Night to Unite events to engage the community.

Ms. Dahl commented that staff is reaching out to block captains and faith-based organizations in order to engage members of the community throughout the process.

Commissioner Braam asked if there has been discussion about petitioning the legislature to grant a small increase in its sales tax to support these improvements.

Mr. Tienter stated that they did discuss other possible funding sources in the past. He stated that the State Legislature modified the process a few years ago to include a referendum and projects would need to have a regional signficiance, therefore the parks projects would not be eligible as most of the improvements are proposed for neighborhood parks.

Commissioner Kranz commented that district and state tournaments are good for use of the parks and also provide benefit to local businesses. He noted that in the past the City hosted many tournaments and asked if there is a desire to pursue that type of activity again.

Ms. Dahl commented that the City used to have over 132 teams of softball players locally while there have been 10 to 12 teams in the past few years. She commented that there has been a decline in use and therefore that is part of the process to reassess the needs and field use. She stated that they have engaged an organization that brings in national tournaments and staff will continue to work with that group to continue to build the tournament capacity. She stated that when you host tournaments you need concessions and crowd control and there has not been much interest from community groups that used to provide those services in the past. She commented that there has been a lot of interest in cricket, lacrosse, and soccer. She noted that some of the field space may be coverted for that type of activity.

Chairperson Nelson thanked Ms. Dahl for the presentation.

Ms. Dahl commented that staff would welcome additional input in the future.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Commissioner Brillhart to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Karnopp.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, CHAIRPERSON NELSON DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED AND THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:36 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Commissioner Karnopp, Charter Commission Secretary

Amanda Staple, Recording Secretary