

Minutes for the City of Lansing Charter Commission

Regular Meeting | Tuesday, April 29, 2025, 6:30 PM

Tony Benavides City Council Chambers,
Lansing City Hall, 10th floor, 124 W. Michigan Ave.

Present: Commissioners Adams Simon, Anderson, Boyd, Dowd, Jeffries, Lopez, Qawwee, Washington

Absent: Commissioner Bauer (excused)

Staff Present: City Clerk Swope, Deputy Clerk Drever, Attorney Rewa

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Jeffries at 6:30 PM.

Roll Call

Clerk Swope called the roll of the Commission. A quorum was present.

Adopt the Agenda

Moved by Commissioner Dowd to adopt the agenda as presented.

Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Commissioner Dowd to adopt the April 15, 2025 minutes as presented.

Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Dowd to adopt the April 22, 2025 minutes as presented.

Motion carried.

Public Comment

No comments were made.

Officer Reports

Chair

No report.

Vice-Chair

No report.

Clerk

Clerk Swope acknowledged written communications in the packet and provided a budget update: the Commission has spent \$ 215,723.09 with a remaining balance of \$284,276.91. Finally, he acknowledged intern Nick Saba's work as this is his last meeting with the Commission.

Old Business

A. Article 5: Line-by-line Review

Attorney Rewa overviewed the April 25 legal opinion that addresses Article 5: Boards and Commissions.

Commissioners discussed transparency in applications and the appointments process.

Moved by Commissioner Dowd to amend 5-105.10 to read “The minutes of all board meetings; shall be filed in the office of the Clerk as a public record. **Proposed meeting minutes shall be available for public inspection within 8 business days after the meeting. Approved minutes shall be available within 5 business days after approval.** ~~No official action taken by any board at any meeting shall be valid or effective until a copy of the minutes at which the action was taken is filed with the Clerk.”~~

Motion carried.

Attorney Rewa overviewed the April 25, 2025 legal opinion that addresses Article 5 Chapter 5: Board of Ethics.

Commissioner Dowd suggested the Commission add the clause “hereinafter referred to as Board” in this chapter to maintain consistency across the Charter.

Moved by Commissioner Qawwee to amend 5-501.1 to read: “The Board of Ethics shall be a review board and shall consist of eight members; ~~four~~ **five** members shall be appointed by the City Council, one from each city ward, and ~~four~~ **three** shall be appointed by the Mayor. The City Attorney shall assist and advise the Board **of Ethics** and the City Clerk shall serve as Recording Secretary to the Board **of Ethics** and provide such administrative services to the Board **of Ethics** as may be necessary; however, neither shall be eligible for appointment as board members.”

Commissioner Washington expressed that she will not support the motion because she is against lessening the representation on Council, but keeping representation on boards the same.

Motion carried 7-1, with Commissioner Washington voting against.

5-503.1, .2, .3, .4, .5, and .6 were approved as presented.

Moved by Vice-Chair Adams Simon to strike “within one year from the effective date of this section” from 5-503.7.

Motion Carried. 5-503.7 now reads “The City shall provide an ethics manual for the use of all City officers and employees. Such manual shall first be approved by the Board of Ethics before distribution. Each City officer and employee shall acknowledge receipt of said manual.”

Attorney Rewa overviewed the April 25 legal opinion that addresses Article 5 Chapter 6: Planning Commission.

Moved by Vice-Chair Adams Simon to adopt 5-601.2, with the change of “board” to “commission” as previously amended.

Motion carried.

Moved by Vice-Chair Adams Simon to amend 5-601.3 to read “.3 In addition to the regular members of the Planning ~~Commission Board~~, the City Council **President** shall ~~nominate and~~ appoint two Council members who shall serve as ex-officio members of the **Commission Board**, without a vote, for a one-year term in the manner set forth in Section 3-102.6 of this Charter. ~~commencing on July 1 of each year.”~~

Motion carried.

Moved by Vice-Chair Adams Simon to adopt 5-602.3 with a correction of “Capitol” to “Capital”.

Motion carried.

Moved by Vice-Chair Adams Simon to amend 5-602.4 to read “The Board **Commission** shall develop and maintain **make and approve** a master plan for the orderly development of the City. The plan shall include the consideration of the impact of social, physical, and economic factors.”

Motion carried.

New Business

A. Article 6: City Employees

Attorney Rewa overviewed the April 25 legal opinion that addresses things to keep in mind in Article 6.

6-101.1 and .2 were adopted as presented by unanimous consent.

6-102.1 and .2 were adopted as presented by unanimous consent.

Moved by Commissioner Dowd to amend 6-102.3 to read “All persons hired by the City, other than those stated in **6-102.1** ~~of the section~~ shall be processed through the ~~office of personnel~~ **Human Resources Department** and the ~~chief personnel officer~~ **Human Resources Director** shall evaluate the level of competency of each candidate against standards established prior to the evaluation.”

Motion carried.

6-201.1, .2, .3, and .4 were adopted as presented by unanimous consent.

Moved by Vice-Chair Adams Simon to strike “These limitations shall not apply to contracts established prior to January 1, 2016.” From 6-401.

Motion carried.

B. Article 7: Taxation and Finance

Chair Jeffries advised that the Commission will review Article 7 once they have a presentation from City staff.

Commissioners discussed the City’s investment practices.

Public Comment

Amanda Castillo spoke about the proposed ethical investment clause.

Commissioner Remarks

Commissioner Boyd asked about inviting a member supporting the ethical investment clause to present to the Commission.

Commissioner Lopez commended the Lansing Public Media Department for providing audio assistive technology and encouraged others to use it.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Jeffries at 7:47 PM.