

Minutes for the City of Lansing Charter Commission

Regular Meeting | July 16, 2024

Tony Benavides City Council Chambers

Lansing City Hall, 10th floor, 124 W. Michigan Ave.

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

Absent: None

Staff Present: Deputy Clerks Lemaster, Drever

Call to Order

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

Roll Call

Deputy Clerk Lemaster called the roll of the commission. A quorum was present.

Vice Chair Adams Simon took a point of personal privilege to address a social media conversation.

Public Comment

Julie Vandeenboom spoke about Article 2-103.1 and its barriers for formerly incarcerated individuals,

Owen Handy spoke about the structure of City Council and financial access to the ballot.

Loretta Stanaway spoke about a blueprint for the way forward: including a City Manager hired by City Council, a hired City Attorney, and a 5-member Council.

Nicklas Zande spoke about reconceptualizing At-Large members of Council to distribute power across the City.

Linda Appling spoke about the unique experiences of Eaton County Lansing residents. She also spoke about a Council and City Manager form of government, and the power of the Board of Water and Light.

Mike Lynn spoke about listening to the public and advocating for the community.

Trisha Washburn spoke about Article 2-103 and its barriers for formerly incarcerated individuals.

Don Dean spoke about Article 2-103 and financial access to the ballot.

Farhan Sheikh-Omar spoke about transparency and accountability in the government.

Erica Lynn spoke about Article 2-103 and the importance of looking within Lansing's history during the revision process.

Minutes

Moved by Commissioner Bauer to approve the July 2, 2024, minutes as presented.

Motion Carried

Officer Reports

Chair

Chair Jeffries provided updates on the Commission's online presence on Facebook and the availability of the Comment Submission Form.

Vice Chair

Vice Chair Adams Simon had no report.

Clerk

Deputy Clerk Drever updated the Commission on the status of the webpage and acknowledged written public comments received by the Commission.

Unfinished Business

Community Meetings Plan

The Commissioners discussed the process for the upcoming community meetings.

Postcard

Moved by Commissioner Qawwee to approve the postcard with the following amendments: add a colon after 'visit'; change 'Get Involved in Lansing's Future' to 'We want to hear from you'; add addresses for each location; add 'all communities welcome at all meetings'; strike 'the document that outlines how our local government works'.

Motion Carried.

Commissioner Lopez asked that an effort be made to address the linguistic diversity in the Lansing community.

New Business

Article 2

The Commissioners discussed sections of Article 2 of the City Charter that will need detailed review and revisions.

Commissioner Remarks

Commissioner Boyd reminded the Commission that she will be absent from the July 30th meeting.

Public Comment

Linda Appling expanded upon earlier remarks about the experiences of Eaton County residents of Lansing, and the importance of At-Large members of Council.

Loretta Stanaway spoke about the importance of the work of the commission in catering to the public's needs.

Jay West spoke about Article 2-103 and its barriers for formerly incarcerated individuals. West suggested writing the law from a point of view of forgiveness and spoke about the importance of At-Large members of Council.

Nicklas Zande spoke about increasing number of wards and eliminating At-Large positions on Council.

Don Dean spoke about representation by and responsiveness of at-large members; suggested the Commissioners make an odd number of wards, with a Council of 7 wards 2 At-Large members; and the importance of the City Attorney being accountable to the Council

Mike Lynn spoke about strategies for public education about the Charter.

Farhan Sheikh-Omar spoke about appointments to city boards.

Linda Appling spoke about the importance of localization in regard to online engagement.

Adjournment

Chair Jeffries adjourned the meeting at 8:13 PM