

Minutes for the City of Lansing Charter Commission

Regular Meeting | Tuesday, October 22, 2024, 6:30 PM

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

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

Absent: none

Staff Present: City Clerk Swope, Chief Deputy Clerk Jackson, Deputy Clerk Drever

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

A. Moved by Commissioner Qawwee to adopt the agenda as presented.

Motion Carried.

Approval of Minutes

A. Moved by Commissioner Dowd to approve the October 8, 2024, minutes as presented.

Motion Carried.

Public Comment

No comments were made.

Officer Reports

Chair

No report.

Vice-Chair

No report.

Clerk

Clerk Swope provided an update on the budget: \$137,098.96 has been spent, with a remaining balance of \$362,901.04.

Presentations

A. Mark Skidmore

Professor Mark Skidmore and Pei-Jyun Lu of Michigan State University gave a presentation on municipal government structures.

They then answered questions from commissioners about capital cities, costs, voter turnout, a mayor's chief administrative officer, and distributions of ward and at-large representation.

Old Business

A. Form of Government Discussion and Action

Vice-Chair Adams Simon: I too think we need to strengthen the language of the role of chief administrative officer, but for purposes of discussion,

I move to maintain the current form of government, which is mayor-council.

Commissioner Washington: I would prefer to go to the hybrid for the purposes of, and I think that's what you were saying, I think we take away the language of executive assistant, and make it specific for chief administrative officer, because the executive assistant terminology is just way too big.

Commissioner Qawwee: Point of clarification, are you making a motion to amend her motion?

Commissioner Washington: no

Commissioner Lopez: To clarify the motion so we can understand it I would ask if the motion maker would accept an amendment to the motion to say hybrid form of government

Chair Jeffries: If the motion is to continue with our current form of government which is the strong mayor which includes the language in the charter, which if you want to amend, we can do that, but I think the motion does cover all of that.

Vice-Chair Adams Simon: Because we can change the language of chief administrative officer, we can change the role.

Lopez- just to be clear.

Motion carried.

New Business

A. City Council Structure – Discussion

The commissioners discussed proposed maps with different numbers of wards; whether the size of wards needs to be adjusted; the influence of money in elections, especially for at-large seats; diversity among members of City Council; the cost to run a local campaign; the purpose of at-large seats; local engagement and education about elections; how to increase community wide representation.

Commissioner Boyd raised a question regarding Commissioners Lopez and Washington recusing themselves due to having relatives on the current City Council.

Public Comment

Fred McLaughlin spoke on the importance of planning – planning and community development, with an emphasis on community, not economy.

Commissioner Remarks

Commissioner Boyd thanked Commissioner Bauer for her past service on City Council.

Adjournment

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