

RAMSEY COUNTY CHARTER COMMISSION
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2009

PUBLIC HEARING

The Ramsey County Charter Commission held a public hearing to receive public input on a potential amendment to the Ramsey County Home Rule Charter related to the salary of the seven elected County Commissioners. The Public Hearing was called to order at approximately 6:40 p.m. by Vice-Chair Peter Hendricks. All members introduced themselves.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

District 1: Ben Stephens
Jim Schottmuller
District 2: Bob Benke
District 3: Bryan Olson
Frank Gurney
District 4: Christopher Leifeld
Peter Hendricks
District 5: Lyle Nelson
District 6: A.L. Brown
Russell Miller
District 7: Bud Berry
Marvin Koppen
At-Large: Mike Fratto
Minoka Kitto
Beth Miller

MEMBERS ABSENT:

District 2: Richard Moses (excused)
District 5: Rod Halvorson (excused)

Mr. Hendricks asked speakers to limit their testimony to about three to five minutes and requested of Charter Commission members that only clarifying questions be asked.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Approval of the Agenda of the Public Hearing was duly moved and seconded. It was approved as submitted.

PROPOSALS

Mr. Hendricks said the Charter Commission approved two options at its August meeting.

Option A : "Should the Ramsey County Home Rule Charter be amended so that a salary ordinance increasing Commissioner salaries by more than five percent (5%) shall be subject to an automatic referendum and shall not be effective until approved by a majority voting at a referendum?"

Option B: "Should the Ramsey County Home Rule Charter be amended so that any salary ordinance shall be subject to an automatic referendum and shall not be effective until approved by a majority voting at a referendum if: (1) the annual salary will increase more than five percent (5%) from the preceding year's salary; or (2) the annual salary will be more than seventy percent (70%) of the current salary of a District Court Judge for the Second Judicial District?"

The following individuals addressed the Commission:

Ray Faricy, 289 Lexington Parkway So, St. Paul, MN 55105 – served as the Chair of the Ramsey County Charter Study Commission which created the Charter and presented it to the public for a vote. Prior to the Charter being in place, the Ramsey County Commissioners could increase their salaries by resolution; the public had no rights to do anything about it. His comments were mainly directed at Option A. The Charter provides that setting of Commissioner's salary must be done by Ordinance, which then clicked in the provision that a petition could be filed and a referendum could be held on an Ordinance. Though he is not tied to the 5% in Option A, it is clean. When the Board held a hearing on its last large increase, a public hearing was held but it was during the day hours; four people showed up to testify. He believes the Commission will need to 'sell' the idea to the public. If people don't vote on the issue it is considered a 'no' vote.

Mr. Nelson recalls voting on the initial Charter. He commended the Study Commission for the work they did.

Ed Davis, 1169 Lane Place, St. Paul – considers the position of Commissioner as part time; they are earning approximately \$80,000. He understands through the Charter that Commissioners can also have another job. Neither option truly comes to the heart of what the objectives of a Commissioner should be. It is his hope that any salary increase would be based on something akin to a parameter about the County, such as the median family salary. That would give an idea of how well the Commissioner is doing. There are other parameters that could be used: how many kids are on school lunches; the literacy level of the county; and many other social and demographic parameters. It would be more complex.

Joseph Waters, 2393 Hazelwood St., Maplewood – was disturbed by the two options; as he looks at Option B, it is no more than Option A with a salary figure attached to it. He would like to see a third option – any salary increase automatically put to the voters. He considers a Commissioner a part time position and values that position at no more than \$45K/year. He was distressed when he saw the 5% figure. Because the salary is at \$80,000, if there is going to be any judgment by the public, he believes it should be any increase; and that the increase would not go into effect until the next term.

A.L. Brown asked how he arrived at the \$45K figure. Mr. Waters said it is a part time position; one of the arguments he heard when the salary jumped from \$60K to \$80K, is that they wanted to be competitive with Hennepin County. Hennepin County does things much differently than Ramsey County. They are thorough in discussing issues; Ramsey County meetings last about one hour and then they move to another meeting off camera. Everything Hennepin County does is in the light of the day and you can see everything that is going on. Ramsey County is not as complex as Hennepin County; hence he does not believe they are worth the same kind of money. It was a value judgment he made alone.

Greg Copeland, 612 East Cook Avenue, St. Paul – believes the Commission is trying to solve a couple of problems – (1) the public perception of people setting their own salaries is not good; and (2) the large increase a few years ago was really bad. He suggested taking the County Commissioners out of this salary issue and that their salary not be tied to anyone else's salary. Instead, a formula could be arrived upon. His suggestion is to use the population of the County multiplied by \$1, which would make up a pot to be split seven ways, in the amount of \$73,061, which is less than they are currently earning. Citizens don't need to keep wrestling with this; there are better things for this Commission to do than debate the salary of the County Commissioners. This would lock in their salary for a 10-year period, and depends upon population growth. It should be about wanting to serve the public as opposed to getting a paycheck.

Mr. Gurney asked if there would be any increase in salary over the 10 years – or would some type of COLA be appropriate. Mr. Copeland was not suggesting any increase, but said that language should be built into the Charter stating that if the salary method be changed, it would have to go back to the public.

Mr. Fratto said the proposal has a great deal of simplicity. He is concerned about using population as a basis for any kind of calculation based on a person's salary because the job doesn't change if 100,000 people leave the County – the need to manage would still be there. If the salary was lowered, no one would serve. He is a retired state employee; we don't want just anyone to serve, we want people who can do the job to serve. In many cases we are not going to get those people without putting a reasonable expectation of salary. The County Commissioners and the City Council of St. Paul are both part time jobs, but based on the number of hours put in, they are probably not part time. He wants to come up with a better way of doing things but he is not sure tying salary to population is the best way to do it. If we don't like the work they are doing, we vote them out. However, they should be paid an adequate salary. He asked if Mr. Copeland had any other ideas on what to base a salary on other than population.

Mr. Copeland was looking at it from the standpoint of public service and an honor, not as a job. The Commissioners are not managers – they are policy makers. They hire a County Manager, who hires many other people to carry out the work of the departments. We don't want the County Commissioners wearing a manager's hat.

Mr. Bell (no name or address provided) – is a St. Paul resident and small business owner and concerned about public expenditures. He thought the Charter Commission members were County Commissioners and that they were considering a salary increase at this time. He said public sector spending is out of control. Business people are the people who pay for public sector salaries. He believes \$80K is a disgrace.

Ed Davis (encore) – agreed with the previous speaker that salary increases should be with voter approval. County Manager and staff offer lots of research to Commissioners and they are just policy makers. We are still looking at a part time job; if it is a full time job he would want provisions in the Charter that state that if a Commissioner has other employment, there is a base salary, typical median salary of the County, and if no other income there would be sliding scale that would give more income because you are doing more than a part time job. Regarding population as a base, he hopes that would not be seriously considered because it is a far cry from trying to determine the quality of service that a Commissioner is doing; it is quality of life not how many people live here; that is a rough way to get at how people are doing in the County. There are many better parameters. There had been a suggestion that County Commissioners do more than part time work and he is suggesting that a lot of support is given to them to do their job; to go out to people to find out what their feelings are with respect to their policy making. County staff should not be relied upon to make their decisions; they should go out and speak with their constituency.

Mr. Gurney said it would seem to be very important for any elected official to interact with the people who elect them, and what we pay them for, to be out and about, and to interact. His County Commissioner does a good job at that. He didn't understand Mr. Davis' position, but believes County Commissioners should be paid to go out and interact with the people.

Mr. Davis said you are trying to get at the needs of the people. As a past public employee, he is somewhat offended to say he doesn't listen to the clients he served in the planning department. All the County staff is one source. The Commissioners' endeavor in meeting with people is another

source, and it will all hopefully work together in the end. His standpoint is that if a person decides to become a Commissioner, you become a target of both positives and negatives. If doing a good job, it will level out to some degree. It is still in his mind a part time job, done because you volunteer to do it, as the Charter Commission members have chosen to do, except County Commissioners spend a lot more time doing their job. Yes, you would get paid as a County Commissioner, but not the kind of wage he would consider a good livable wage for this County.

Mr. Nelson asked if he would vote for the proposal if it is not changed.

Mr. Davis responded no. He would likely start a petition to ask for a Charter amendment that would be more in-line with the service of a Commissioner to parameters of the quality of life.

Mr. Nelson asked if he felt this is too liberal.

Mr. Davis responded yes, and offered that at the very least, Option A with zero percent; whenever a salary increase is requested, it must go to the citizens.

Mr. Faricy said five people have spoken – one more than the people who showed up in opposition to the ‘big’ raise. It is disheartening. He appreciates the Commission making the effort to bring the issue forward but if there is this kind of malaise out there, how do we get people to vote for whatever might be put out if they don’t want to take the time to come out to express themselves.

Mr. Nelson said that is human nature; only 10% of people show up for anything.

Mr. Hendricks said people had the opportunity to email comments to Bonnie Jackelen, Chief Clerk, who has copies for circulation. He asked that any further comments be addressed to the issue of salary, limited to the proposals cited in the public notice. If there other suggestions to Charter amendment to salaries, that would be appreciated.

Joseph Waters commented on Mr. Faricy’s argument. He said it was difficult finding parking to get to this meeting. He said there may be a lot of people watching this hearing at home, however, he wasn’t sure it was being shown in Maplewood. He suggested at the next Charter meeting on February 10, it be held in the Maplewood Community Center, the Shoreview Community Center, somewhere out in the backyard of the public to possibly get more speakers.

Mr. Gurney said hearings on a "hotter" matter that had about the average attendance. This is not the only matter with malaise.

Mr. Olson referred to Mr. Waters comments about parking. One of the main reasons for the hearing location tonight was because it is the only location that could be televised in the County.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further testimony, Vice-Chair Hendricks closed the public hearing.

RAMSEY COUNTY CHARTER COMMISSION
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2009

REGULAR MEETING
Immediately following the Public Meeting

Vice-Chair Hendricks called the meeting to order.

AGENDA

Mr. Olson proposed the following additions to Item 7 of the Agenda:

- 7 a. 2010 Meeting Schedule
- 7 b. Charter Commission operating fund
- 7 c. Legal notices and publicity
- 7 d. Announcements

Motion and second to approve the amended agenda was duly made and approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Brown moved, seconded by Mr. Fratto to approve the minutes of the August 3, 2009 meeting.
MOTION CARRIED.

CITIZEN COMMENTS/INPUT

Vice-Chair Hendricks called for any citizen comments; none were presented.

NEW BUSINESS -- Election of 2010 Officers, Chair and Vice-Chair

Mr. Stephens proposed the nomination of Peter Hendricks and Chair and A.L. Brown as Vice-Chair.

Mr. Schottmuller recommended Peter Hendricks as Chair, and requested discussion of Vice-Chair nominations by the entire Commission.

Mr. Fratto moved to elect Mr. Hendricks as Chair for the year 2010, seconded by Mr. Leifeld.
MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Gurney moved to elect A.L. Brown as Vice-Chair; Mr. Brown declined the position of Vice-Chair.

Mr. Olson nominated Jim Schottmuller as Vice-Chair for the year 2010, seconded by Mr. Fratto. Mr. Schottmuller accepted the nomination. MOTION CARRIED.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion related to Public Hearing on November 2, 2009

Mr. Hendricks asked if another public hearing is needed on the proposed amendments related to how the salary of the seven elected County Commissioners is determined.

Mr. Fratto said he wasn't sure another hearing is needed based on the experience of the last issue, however, felt there should be another hearing if it could be held in the suburbs to allow others the opportunity to express themselves. He suggested the hearing be held on February 1st, the same date

as the next Charter Commission meeting, possibly at the Public Works Facility on Paul Kirkwold Drive and Highway 96 in Arden Hills.

Mr. Brown suggested the location not be determined today in case it is not available.

Mr. Hendricks moved a proposal that a hearing be held on the salary issue sooner than three months from today, possibly for sometime in the next month.

Mr. Fratto said a hearing could be held before the next regular Charter Commission meeting, but it might be difficult to find a date that would work for the majority of the Commission.

Mr. Benke asked if the proposal is to hold a second public hearing on the salary increases, and was it to be on February 1, when there is already a proposed hearing to be held on initiative and referendum issues? Could they be doubled up?

Mr. Hendricks concurred that at the August meeting, the Commission approved that a public hearing be held in February related to a possible change to the referendum procedure. The question is whether the salary and referendum issues could be held at one public hearing.

Mr. Brown said that would be difficult. The question should be asked for what purpose the public meeting would be held -- is it to satisfy someone who did not have an opportunity to speak today. He wondered why there would need to be a second public meeting. If that decision is made, he would move to have it in January. November and December are not suitable months to hold public meetings.

Mr. Brown moved to hold a second public hearing in January with staff selecting the location, with a duly made second.

Mr. Hendricks said one criteria he heard was that parking has to be more convenient than in downtown St. Paul.

Ms. Kitto said the decision should be made as to whether there should be another meeting. Last time this was voted on it was for one public hearing.

Mr. Gurney said there may be no reason for a second hearing if we are going to change our proposal and we haven't had that discussion yet; we will get the same people with the same comments.

Mr. Fratto said we need to decide what to do outside any public hearing. If another date is added for a public hearing, we cannot make a decision until February 1 until a special meeting is announced. On February 1st we will be dealing with the issue of initiative and referendum. Do we want to tie those two together? A decision on both has to be made by the August meeting. What would be the schedule, and how would we do that. The speakers for both issues would have to be separated. We would have to move ahead on everything without adding to our agenda. If there is to be a second hearing on this issue, in February a decision would have to be as to whether we would move ahead on it, in addition to holding the hearing for initiative and referendum.

Mr. Olson said if we are going to have another meeting on this issue, we should put forth another option. If we were to do that based on some of the comments, to strike the 5%, and if the Commissioners would want to raise their salary, it would go to an election. If there is another

meeting, it should be with another option. He is not opposed to having a marathon meeting on February 1 to get this all done.

Mr. Brown clarified that the proposal that went out did not fixate the limits of what the Commission could do now. It simply stated two potential options. The motion as he remembered was “and other”. Any Commission member is now free to take into account the comments from the public to make another amendment. Another public meeting would not be needed to do that to introduce that. He wanted to wrap up the debate on whether there would be a meeting in January on this issue, and then talk about the issue. He felt the meeting should be held because there is no way this would go out untouched. Folks have an opinion about it and there will be debate about it and it would be good if whatever comes out of that debate could be presented to the public if necessary. January is the most suitable time.

Mr. Schottmuller moved, seconded by Mr. Gurney, to table the question of a second meeting until after the discussion about the comments heard at the earlier public meeting. MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Schottmuller said he has had conversations with people and had hoped they would send in their recommendations. While not necessarily his recommendations, he wanted to share it with the Commission. The suggestion was instead of the 5%, to say that anytime the County Board’s increase exceeded the average increase of the County employees, it would automatically trigger the referendum.

Mr. Hendricks said his understanding of the employee increases is that they are for three-year contracts, with a salary base rate increase, not always every year.

Mr. Benke asked if that would have the reverse impact in encouraging the Board to approve a larger increase than it might otherwise?

Mr. Schottmuller said it made sense to consider it in the fact that it would be a dramatic change – they would never get away with a 25% pay increase. It would be tied to something more realistic.

Mr. Benke said he understood that the large increase was a catch-up. He doubted that an increase of that sort would be seen in the future. Rather than salaries for staff, we might work with COLA or the implicit price deflator, which is the price of government services as comparable to COLA. COLA or the implicit price deflator might be the benchmark. COLA is the cost of living increase calculated by the federal government based on market basket of goods. The implicit price deflator is a comparable index of government services. Since government services don’t mirror the home budget, they use a different set of indicators to calculate that ratio. They track close, but can be up or down from each other.

Mr. Brown moved to add to Option C, which would be to peg the County Commissioner’s salary to the median income of a family in Ramsey County plus 15%, effective at the next election of the County Commissioners so they would have the opportunity to choose as to whether they would continue to work at what would likely be reduced pay.

Mr. Hendricks asked Mr. Brown to define ‘a family’.

Mr. Brown said there is a statistical number put out by the Department of Labor on what the median family income is, generally described as two workers in a household, or sometimes described as one.

Mr. Nelson asked if that would result in a pay decrease based on present day statistics.

Mr. Leifeld seconded the motion.

Mr. Brown said there is something to be said from the citizen comments today, which is that this is a job about public service. He didn't take for granted that it takes a certain level of commitment and dedication to do the job, but it doesn't take any more commitment and dedication for what it takes him to do his job. That ought to be taken into account. We hear about performance pay for teachers; we never hear about performance pay for politicians. This is a perfect way to gather and understand whether they are paid to make policy. Hopefully their policy will be reflected in the betterment of our lives. Most people unfortunately, were pegged as to how much they make within our community. It is a fair measure of how they are performing. Otherwise, I don't know how many meetings they attend per day, or how necessary it is. You can get elected as County Commissioner and chose not to attend most of the meetings. There is no consequence for that with the exception of an election in which the turnout might not be stupendous and the incumbent rate is high. We have to deal with the reality of how the public approaches the County Commissioner position and our obligation, which is to create as best we can better government through the Charter, and holding County Commissioners accountable for the results of their public policy decisions as reflected by their pay.

Mr. Scottmuller asked if that is something that would be addressed at every census.

Mr. Brown did not feel it should be done every ten years. They deserve an increase like everyone else. He did not feel that ten-year non-pay increases is fair to the Commissioners.

Mr. Koppen asked if this would be calculated every year; the average median income changes every year.

Mr. Brown responded affirmatively, but it doesn't jump 20-30%.

Mr. Koppen said every year if the median income goes up adding 15% every year, the salary is set at amount. Is that what Mr. Brown is saying?

Mr. Brown said he is not suggesting it is perfect; it gives plenty of room for amendment. The body should consider it as something to bring to the public. One solution might be to do that every three years, or at some fixed point in time to know when the increases are coming. Or, do it at the beginning of their term. The terms are four years – every four years look at what the median income is and say this is what this commissioner cohort would be paid. If choosing to run for election again, a statement has been made that you not only want to serve, but to serve at this rate. That is what everybody does when they take a job.

Mr. Leifeld said the terms are staggered. He liked that idea though because it simplifies it.

Mr. Nelson asked if any other governmental body figures its pay in that way. If we are going to discuss that another meeting is needed. Some experts are needed to talk about it.

Mr. Fratto said he is not sure what type of expertise Mr. Nelson needs for this discussion. The DEED office comes up with the average median income every year, possibly quarterly and monthly. If Mr. Brown's suggestion makes sense, it would tie it to something that has value. His concern is whether

this would be done annually, biannually, or every two years as it applies to those commissioners elected at that time. That might be tough for County payroll. It makes sense. It meets some of the comments made today, and it is a reasonable idea. He would like to know more about what that would do to the salary before voting in favor of that proposal. He would be uncomfortable voting for a proposal to place on the ballot that would take us to a point in time prior to the last increase that everybody seems upset about.

Mr. Benke understood the motion to add Option C procedurally at the election; to put Option A, B and C on the ballot to vote for one of the three.

Mr. Hendricks said for background purposes, there was a salary subcommittee, at which everyone on the Charter was welcome. Only the five members of the subcommittee attended the meeting at Mr. Nelson's house. Option B was the option he had come up with. He is willing to take that off the table because it is too complicated. Looking back at those individuals who spoke tonight, several did not address which option they were in favor of. If we keep adding options, we are going to have the same result we had tonight, which is people will give their general ideas for how elected officials are paid. After dealing with Mr. Brown's option still on the table, he will entertain a motion to get rid of Option B.

Mr. Fratto said the Charter Commission would decide which of the options should go on the ballot. The suggestion by Mr. Brown is adding another piece for the Commission's consideration before making a decision. There could potentially be legal challenges with three options on the ballot. That would not be feasible.

Mr. Hendricks said Options A and B when presented in August had draft language on how the Charter would be changed. Option C would also need corresponding language.

Mr. Brown said the language would have to be drafted. He appreciated all the work done previously on Options A and B. The whole purpose of a public meeting is to get informed and get more information, and from these conversations, which have not always been useful, from these public meetings. From these conversations, it has reinvigorated his feeling that it should be pegged to some metrics to how the County is doing. Hopefully, the Commission will ultimately agree on one option that can go before the people for a vote.

Mr. Nelson said he heard from the public testimony, people think the Commissioners are overpaid. Whatever the Commission does in that direction goes along with the consensus.

Mr. Brown referred to the question about what the median income is for a Ramsey County income. Based on the Ramsey County's website, it appears that the median income for a household in the County was \$45,722, and the median income for a family was \$57,747. His proposal would definitely need to be flushed out. There are likely questions about whether the 15% is too high, but he is attempting to create a buffer for folks to say these are professionals. The fundamental question has to be asked – what is the job of a Ramsey County Commissioner? What are they required to do? How many boards do they sit on? How many of those boards are they required to sit on? Can they delegate that to a Ramsey County citizen who can report back? They probably work more than the part-time hours, assuming those are 20-hours per week. Even as a full-time job, \$80,000, not counting the benefits, is real money; that is a lot of money.

Mr. Hendricks said this needs to be put into perspective. Adding up the seven Commissioners' salaries, this is 1/10th of 1% of the entire County budget. That does not mean we should not try to find ways to reduce the salary or present it as an option, just to keep it in perspective.

Mr. Brown said he didn't know that it offers a perspective because some might say that the County budget is just too big.

Mr. Hendricks said the motion was on Option C.

Mr. Brown said he hoped the Commission would think about this option, discuss it and fix it. Knowing not everyone would be in agreement on the 15% or on the staggered terms of the Commissioners, he offered it for discussion and amendment. He welcomed debate on this option.

Mr. Hendricks asked if the motion passes, would there be time to amend or modify Option C before having another public hearing, if it is agreed to hold another public hearing.

Mr. Brown said the Commission would have to decide what the purpose is of the public hearing. The public hearing could serve the purpose of getting information such as was done tonight to help inform what we want to do, or the public hearing could be for the Commission to say this is what we are thinking about specifically – tell us what is wrong or what is right about this idea. Those are two different purposes for a public hearing.

Mr. Fratto pointed the information sheet passed out about emailed comments in which there was an email from Tom Goldstein who requested the Commission delay this hearing because all the politicians and workers are out campaigning. Some of us have to be at polling places at 6:00 a.m. There might have been people who would have wished to speak to the issue regardless of the option before making a decision. That might be an argument for holding another public hearing.

Mr. Leifeld suggested adding in Option 3 and hold another public hearing to get more information.

Mr. Miller said we have Options A and B that could be tweaked, and now we have Option C. Mr. Brown took the public input and suggested Option C. It doesn't make any difference which one to support, but it is a good idea to have, listen and add in Option C. We could do what we have to do within the timeframe if it is kept simple and discuss it at the next hearing.

Mr. Hendricks proposed that if Option C passes that the Salary Subcommittee reconvene with all the Commission members invited to come up with proposed language and give it to Ms. Jackelen before the next public hearing notice goes out.

Mr. Schottmuller had been interested in attending that subcommittee meeting but was 'warned off' because it might cause a problem with too many people in attendance. It would have meant there was a quorum for a meeting that wasn't noticed as a public meeting.

Mr. Hendricks said if there had been a majority of the Charter Commission in attendance it might have been construed as a public meeting.

Mr. Fratto proposed that whenever the subcommittee sets a meeting date, it is noticed on the website, and send it to the Charter Commission; get an announcement out to the St. Paul Issues Forum, and that should satisfy any issues to the open meeting law.

Mr. Hendricks proposed an amendment to Mr. Brown's motion that the Salary Subcommittee reconvene to flush out specific language related to Option C.

Mr. Fratto moved the amended motion, seconded by Mr. Berry. Mr. Brown accepted the motion as a friendly amendment.

Mr. Leifeld asked if an effort had been made to find out exactly what the County Commissioners do – how many meetings they go to; meetings they go to, a layout of their week.

Mr. Hendricks said County Commissioners have come to Charter Commission meetings with their schedules, but he hasn't seen a job description or the number of hours they spend.

Mr. Brown said the amendment to the motion passed and that this would go to the subcommittee who would prepare something for the next meeting which has not yet been scheduled. He asked if the meeting schedule could be voted on at this point.

A motion to move forward with Option C, as amended, was duly made and seconded. MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Brown's motion had been tabled. He said he could not take it off the table

The debate on Option C to move it off the table was voted on. MOTION CARRIED.

A motion to hold a public hearing in January 2010 was duly made and seconded. MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Brown said any other lingering options should be brought now to be referred to the subcommittee; it would close the door on options unless they come out of a comment. These three options would create the framework.

Mr. Hendricks clarified that if there are any other salary options to bring them forward now.

Mr. Brown said the framework would be only to amend three options; no new options could be provided, unless it comes out of the public hearing.

A motion to this effect was duly made and seconded.

Mr. Schottmuller said if everyone had a chance to read through the options, he would be fine with that.

Mr. Brown said anything submitted up to this date would form the decision making on Options A, B and C. Any other new options that come up must be from any subsequent hearing, but no new options would come from the Commission.

Mr. Benke asked if Option B was to be taken off the table or would that continue forward.

Mr. Hendricks said he would make a motion to take it off the table to simplify things.

MOTION CARRIED on Mr. Brown's motion.

Mr. Hendricks moved to remove Option B, seconded by Mr. Benke.

Mr. Nelson asked why Option B was being removed.

Mr. Hendricks said it is too complicated.

Mr. Fratto said Mr. Hendricks did a good explaining it at the last meeting.

Mr. Hendricks said it was not raised at the Salary Subcommittee. He emailed it and the response was that it was fine. By taking Option B off the table, it would limit the options.

MOTION CARRIED on Mr. Hendrick's motion to remove Option B.

Mr. Hendricks asked if for simplification Mr. Brown's option could now be called Option B. A motion is needed for the Salary Subcommittee to send out a meeting announcement to Ms. Jackelen for circulation.

Mr. Brown said that has already been done. That would be administrative as part of the prior motion.

Mr. Hendricks asked if there was more discussion on the public hearing as it relates to the salaries to take place in January 2010. He asked for proposed dates in January, suggesting 6:30 p.m. as a start time.

A suggestion was made for January 11, 2010, the Monday prior to Martin Luther King Day.

Mr. Fratto moved for a public hearing at 6:30 p.m., Monday, January 11, 2010, at a location secured by staff in the suburbs, if possible, seconded by Mr. Koppen. MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Hendricks said the next agenda item is the February 1st public hearing related to initiative and referendum, which was approved at the August Salary Subcommittee meeting. The public hearing would be for proposed changes in the Charter on the number of signatures required for referendum and the time period to obtain those signatures. Direction is needed on the time for staff. There is proposed language.

Mr. Hendricks put forward the motion since that is the regular meeting of the Charter Commission, that the public hearing take place at 6:30 p.m., February 1, at a suburban location, seconded by Mr. Koppen. MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Hendricks said Ms. Jackelen will work on publishing the January and February hearings similar to that done for this meeting.

Mr. Leifeld raised Mr. Olson's concern about tonight's hearing to televise it throughout the whole County. He didn't know if that would apply to the hearing on initiative and referendum if the meeting were held in the suburbs.

Mr. Olson said he is video production professional, and started off with cable access in Roseville. Since the meeting tonight was to be a public hearing it would be good to televise it throughout the

County, and the only way to do that was to hold the hearing in this room. From Coon Rapids down to Eagan, the whole northern and eastern side of the metro is all connected with a broadband link via Comcast line. They can send programming to each other, live programming, pre-recorded programming, files, etc. The problem in that process is SPNN, the cable access for the City of St. Paul, because they lack a piece of equipment which would connect them to the whole network. When everybody is connected, a meeting like this could be done in a suburban city hall to give more flexibility. He encouraged people to do what they can to encourage St. Paul to buy the equipment for complete connection in all the suburban areas. He said he would start with the County Commissioners who might connect with the Manager of SPNN, to help make this happen. The St. Paul City Council might have some political pull as well.

Mr. Gurney said when cable first came in, part of the agreement was that any company that supplied the service to the City of St. Paul would also throw into some money into a public entity, which SPNN is. The place to start is with the City Council.

Mr. Hendricks said we are talking about the February 1st meeting. Can it be televised?

Ms. Kitto responded not throughout the County.

Mr. Fratto said SPNN could tape the meeting and broadcast it at a later date.

Mr. Olson said if SPNN does the taping, they would have to hand deliver tapes to the other two facilities in the County, and everyone would view it on a delayed basis.

Mr. Fratto was suggesting that in order for the residents of St. Paul to get access, they would do it. Those who have satellite won't see it anyway, making it a moot point. Comcast has the franchise for St. Paul and you would think they could figure out something.

Ms. Kitto moved the motion to hold the February 1 meeting in the Council Chambers of the City/County Court House because this is where it can be televised. The other public hearing would still be done out in the suburbs, seconded by Mr. Brown. MOTION CARRIED.

Review of Bylaws

A motion was duly made and seconded to table this discussion to another meeting. MOTION CARRIED.

7 a) 2010 Meeting Schedule

Mr. Hendricks said a meeting would be held on January 11, which is the second public hearing on the salary, to be at 6:30 p.m. at a suburban location, to be determined by staff.

The February 1st meeting would be a public hearing on initiative and referendum, proposed changes, as well as a regular meeting to take place in the City/County Council Chambers.

Regular meetings are to be held May 3, August 2; and November 1.

Mr. Fratto asked if August 2 is when the decision has to be made to get something on the November ballot.

Ms. Jackelen responded affirmatively.

Mr. Fratto said that deadline should be placed on the tentative agendas.

Mr. Fratto said November 2nd is an election day. A motion was duly made and seconded to move the November 1 Charter Commission meeting to November 8. MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Olson moved to set a schedule of six meetings for the Charter Commission to meet every other month on even months in a year. The meetings could be cancelled as needed. He would like the locations set now, but that it might not be feasible. Mr. Gurney seconded the motion for discussion.

Mr. Fratto spoke against the motion. Meetings can be added as needed. If a meeting schedule is established, it sets an expectation for the public. If a meeting is cancelled and someone shows up, we do more harm than good. It is good that new members of the Charter Commission have ideas, but each piece has to be taken as they come up rather than making work for the Commission. He couldn't imagine getting members to meetings six times a year when it is difficult enough getting members to the quarterly meetings.

Ms. Kitto said five meetings are already scheduled with the addition of the January meeting; only one short of the six. Leaving it the way it is would be fine.

Mr. Gurney said that puts a lot of pressure on staff. It is difficult for Bonnie to find locations as it is.

Mr. Brown called the previous question.

Mr. Hendricks said the motion was for meetings in 2010 in even months for a total of six meetings in the year.

Mr. Brown called the question.

Mr. Schottmuller said he is not necessarily for the motion, but he is for the idea. If the work cannot be done in the time allotted, then more time is needed. We should consider whatever we need to do to get the job done and not rush out of the meeting.

Mr. Brown said meetings should have agendas, and we don't have an agenda for when we are planning the meeting. As a need arises, he would be in support of adding meetings.

Mr. Hendricks said he would oppose the motion, but reminded the Commission members that there are subcommittees that can do work. More subcommittees can be formed.

Mr. Hendricks declared the debate closed. MOTION TO CLOSE DEBATED CARRIED.

Roll call on the motion for holding meetings in even months for 2010 beginning in February. MOTION FAILED. 2-14.

7 b) Charter Commission Operating Fund

Mr. Olson asked Ms. Jackelen if the \$1,000 operating fund is in writing anywhere.

Ms. Jackelen responded that the operating fund is cited in the County budget. Referencing an email she said in 2009 it was \$1,017. In the proposed 2010 budget it is possibly up an additional \$50. If more money is needed for publicity for a ballot question, the Charter Commission would go to the County Board to request additional funds from the contingency account.

Mr. Olson asked how the County Board arrived at \$1,017. Is the money in that fund carried over from one year to another? Ms. Jackelen said it is not.

7 c) and d) Legal Notices and Publicity/Announcements

Mr. Olson asked Ms. Jackelen to send each of the Commission members a list of where the legal notices for tonight's meeting were published and the list of media contacts used. He wanted to know how often the media is using the material being sent and actually publishing it. He cited a press release dated October 21, published in the Ramsey County Review, the County's legal newspaper for 2009. The Ramsey County Review is only seen in North St. Paul and parts of Maplewood. This press release was seeking volunteers for Ramsey County committees – Capital Improvement Citizens Advisory Committee, Community Corrections Advisory Board, Extension Committee, Food and Nutrition Commission, Ramsey County Library Board, Small Business Enterprise Committee.

Mr. Fratto said the Ramsey County Review is the print media where legal notices are sent for Ramsey County. It is not the only publication that prints the information. Individuals can also subscribe to an e-newsletter from Ramsey County for those announcements.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Hendricks declared the meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Submitted by Bonnie Jackelen