



City of North Port

4970 CITY HALL BLVD
NORTH PORT, FL 34286

Meeting Minutes - Final Charter Review Advisory Board

Wednesday, October 30, 2019

6:00 PM

City Hall Room 244

1. Call to Order

Chair Hutchinson called the meeting to order at 6:22 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Board Member Sweeting arrived at 6:30 p.m.

Present 5 - Chair Cory Hutchinson, Vice Chair Justin Willis, Board Member Melanie Breuer, Board Member Eve Sweeting, and Board Member David Duval

Absent 1 - Board Member William Sauer

Also Present:

Interim City Clerk Heather Taylor, City Attorney Amber Slayton, and Recording Secretary Susan Hale.

3. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice Chair Willis.

4. Public Comment

Jeffrey Scott: Charter Officer positions, social media as a public record.

Vice Chair Willis recommended addressing concerns to the Commission.

5. Approval of Minutes

- A. [19-0790](#) Approval of Minutes for the July 2, 2019 Charter Review Advisory Board Regular Meeting.

A motion was made by Board Member Duval, seconded by Vice Chair Willis, to approve the Minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

6. New Business

- A. [19-0823](#) Discussion and Possible Recommendation Regarding Limiting Campaign Contributions for City Commission Candidates (Hutchinson)

Ms. Slayton provided contribution information from Florida Statutes, repealing the City Code's restriction, and stated there is no provision in the City Charter addressing campaign contributions.

Discussion ensued regarding excess contributions in local elections, curbing contributions, publicly-funded elections and drawbacks, impacts of special interest

contributors, a minimum contribution of \$200, individual vs. corporate donations, and negative influence of contributions in local elections.

Ms. Slayton stated she only researched Florida law respecting contribution limits.

Discussion continued concerning Florida Statute limiting the maximum to \$1000 and difficulties associated with running for office.

Chair Hutchinson passed the gavel to Vice Chair Willis.

A motion was made by Chair Hutchinson, seconded by Board Member Duval, to recommend that the City Commission discuss and consider limiting campaign contributions for City Commission candidates to \$200.00 per contributor per election cycle.

Discussion ensued regarding ways to circumvent the system and making the election system fair.

The motion failed on a two-to-three (2-3) voice vote with Board Members Breuer, Sweeting, and Vice Chair Willis dissenting.

Vice Chair Willis passed the gavel back to Chair Hutchinson.

B. [19-0824](#)

Discussion and Possible Recommendation Regarding the Requirement for Emergency Ordinances vs. a Declaration of a State of Local Emergency and Should the Charter be Amended (Commission Directive)

Chair Hutchinson introduced the item.

Ms. Slayton spoke to the City Ordinance addressing emergency legislation, the vote required for approval, notice requirements, exceptions for local emergencies, and Florida Statutes Chapter 870 relating to civil unrest.

Discussion ensued wherein the Board Members agreed with the State Statutes and there was no further discussion. .

C. [19-1078](#)

Discussion and Possible Recommendation Requiring a Referendum for Projects in Excess of \$5 Million that are not Used for Services (Hutchinson)

Chair Hutchinson introduced the item.

Discussion ensued regarding service issues that may come up, deciding and defining a level of "service," setting a financial cap, implementing protection for purchase of things not used for services, and North Port being an "amenity rich" community.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Willis, seconded by Chair Hutchinson, to bring a discussion to the Commission that anything more than \$5 million must go to referendum for a vote. The motion carried on a three-to-two (3-2) voice vote with Vice Chair Willis and Board Member Sweeting dissenting.

D. [19-1257](#)

Discussion and Possible Recommendation Regarding Ordinance Number 2019-05 to Remove the Designation of the Deputy City Clerk as a Charter Officer by Amending the Charter via Referendum (Commission directive)

Ms. Slayton introduced the item, and spoke to language being common, Board recommendations accompanying the document to first reading, providing historical background to the proposed change, and the requirements of a Charter Officer.

Discussion ensued regarding the Charter provision when City Clerk vacates office.

Ms. Slayton spoke to the Deputy City Clerk removal as a Charter Officer taking effect when the current Deputy City Clerk leaves the position, the new organizational structure not being decided yet, and all interim positions serve at the pleasure of the Commission.

A motion was made by Board Member Sweeting, seconded by Board Member Breuer, to recommend removing the Deputy City Clerk as a Charter Officer by amending the Charter via referendum. The motion carried on a four-to-one (4-1) voice vote with Vice Chair Willis dissenting.

7. Updates

Board Member Duvall spoke to the 2022 election cycle disallowing some citizen to run for office due the 2020 Census, redistricting plans, and district residency requirements.

Ms. Slayton noted this has not been noticed and to place it on the future agenda items

8. Future Agenda Items

Future items included a joint meeting with the Commission, and providing a list of items that have been discussed at Board meetings.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, December 3, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.

Ms. Slayton confirmed that phone-in conversations by Board Members is not allowed per an Attorney General Opinion, spoke to the process of adding agenda items between meetings, all communication going through the staff liaison, and future agenda items should be requested under that item during the meeting.

As an additional future agenda item, it was requested to allow all Board Members, besides the Chair, the ability to add topics to the agenda.

9. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

10. Adjournment

Chair Hutchinson adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

By: _____
Cory Hutchinson, Chair

Minutes approved on the ____ day of _____, 2019.