

CITY OF WICKLIFFE CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2008

An organizational meeting for the Wickliffe Charter Review Commission was held on Tuesday, January 22, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers.

All Commission members were present: Nancy Cole, James Schall, Judy Powers, Don Contenza, Cindy Marino, Mary Ann Surtz, Joe Oboczky, Ron Ely and Cookie LoSchiavo. Also present were Mayor Tom Ruffner, Council President William Margalis, Law Director William Gargiulo, Sue Iafelice and Bernardine Brooks.

All members of the Charter Review Commission and the Secretary were asked by Mayor Ruffner to introduce themselves and state their addresses. It was established that each Ward of the City was represented.

Mayor Ruffner introduced Law Director William Gargiulo to state the purpose of the Commission. Mr. Gargiulo stated that the Administration and Council are not involved with the workings of this Committee. Mr. Gargiulo stated that the Charter is the 'constitution' for the City of Wickliffe. Wickliffe is a Home Rule city. If a city is not a Charter city, the rules and regulations are controlled by the Ohio Revised Code. Because we have a Charter, council and administration has to live by the rules and regulations of the Charter and the Police Department enforces the Codified Ordinances. This Commission is re-examining the Charter. They are free to look at any part and examine and make changes to the Charter. Every time a change is suggested, it must go before the electors of the city of Wickliffe to approve or disapprove. The Commission can rewrite the whole Charter, just one item or five items. For example, the Charter states that bids must be taken for any purchase over \$10,000, the Commission can look at that section and decide if we should lower or raise that amount. If you have any questions about comparison with the Ohio Revised Code, just write it on paper and give to him. The Charter was reviewed 10 years ago, and the citizens raised the limit from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

June 1, 2008 is the deadline for changes and/or revisions to the Charter in order to get on the ballot. Mr. Gargiulo has to prepare the language and advertise the information properly. The Commission's job is to study the document and has complete freedom to discuss. He thinks that the Commission should look at all parts of the Charter.

Mr. Margalis stated recommendations need to be made to Council by June 1. Then council will direct the law director to prepare the application to get ready for ballot.

Mr. Gargiulo will have an outline of the Charter available for next meeting.

Mayor Ruffner stated that at any time you may ask the Law Director to be present at a meeting for understanding of specific issues, you may also call the Mayor or council persons. You may receive calls from residents and council persons that may want to approach the Commission on specific subjects.

Mayor Ruffner asked the Secretary to put dates and times of meetings in NH. He stated that this is a public meeting so that residents can attend. Rules and regulations need to be determined as to the public involvement in the meetings (if you have an audience, how to handle that. Time limits on speaking, etc.) Feel free if you have questions to call in people about specific subjects that you are debating, so that you can get both sides of the issues.

Mayor Ruffner mentioned that the Commission does not have to bring every question from the audience to the voters. You have the power to decide how to handle such issues. Many issues are discussed but then determined not to be brought before Council /Public.

Mr. Gargiulo mentioned that the Charter is divided into departments; Law, Finance, Council, etc.

Mr. Margalis stated that as meetings go on, there are people who will come before this committee to make changes. This group's purpose is to review suggestions and investigate all sides of the issues. Be sure to read the section referring to the Charter Commission. In order to make recommendations to council it has to pass by 2/3 vote of this Commission. You are making the recommendations to the City.

Mayor Ruffner asked the Commission to elect a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

Ms. Brooks asked if she, as an alternate, can have any dialog and what is her role. Mayor Ruffner said it is up to the Commission. Mr. Margalis says she does not have a vote. She asked how many alternates there are. There is only one. She is there if someone drops out of the Commission.

Ron Ely wanted to know if a Commission member could not make it to a meeting how could that person vote. The answer is that only people at the meeting can vote. It will always be a public vote.

Meetings are run by Roberts Rules. Chairperson should have control of meetings.

Sue lafelice spoke about the Charter Commission 10 years ago. Prior to that, it had been 17 years since the Charter was reviewed. Four items were amended 10 years ago....1. All language in Charter be rendered non- gender; 2. Spending limits of the mayor was raised to \$10,000 without public bidding; 3. Council can meet in places

other than Council Chambers. (ex. Town meetings at Senior Center, Community Center); can meet as long as notice is given in advance; and, 4. The Charter must be reviewed every 10 years.

Sue lafelice reviewed the minutes from the Organizational meeting 10 years ago. There are tapes of the meetings. There is a binder with all minutes and correspondence in it that she will have available for this Commission to refer to. Ron Ely asked if he could listen to the tapes from the meetings 10 years ago; Sue will try to find them downstairs.

Mr. Margalis does not anticipate a whole lot of changes than were made 10 years ago.

Secretary, Maria Matiyasic, was asked to get copies of Charters of surrounding communities for the Commission to review. Will get Willowick, Willoughby, and Willoughby Hills. The Charters will be e-mailed to Commission Members for review prior to next meeting.

Chairperson should determine a time limit for residents to speak, so as to not take up all the time of the Commission. Discussion from Mayor and Margalis on this subject. Council does not have a time restriction. He suggests let them speak. Mr. Schall agrees.

Mr. Ely asked what happens when something needs to be addressed in the Charter prior to 10 years. Mr. Margalis said Council usually decides whether to put before the voters.

Mayor stated that the Commission is only addressing the Charter. The Charter is available to the public on the City of Website.

Mayor Ruffner said when reading the Charter don't assume everyone understands the language. Take the time to be sure all understand. He suggested that the Commission may need a few meetings to read through the Charter to completely understand it. The Commission can choose to hold off votes until everything is discussed or they may vote as each issue is approached. You may choose to just have one vote on all items.

Sue said that if a Commission member will be absent, please notify Maria. A list was made of all members' e-mail addresses and phone numbers. It was agreed that minutes and Charters would be e-mailed to all and a hard copy mailed to Mary Ann.

Mary Ann Surtz nominated Cindy Marino as Commission Chairperson; seconded by Judy Powers; all in favor.

Cindy Marino nominated James Schall as Vice Chairperson; Joe Oboczyk seconded; all in favor.

All Commission members agreed to meet on the Second and Fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. The meetings will be: February 12 and 26; March 11 and 25; April 8 and 22; and May 13 and 27.

Chairperson Cindy Marino asked if there was any business that anyone would like to discuss. To prepare for next meeting try to read at least the first 10 pages of the Charter. If anything needs to be clarified before next meeting let Maria know and she will notify Cindy.

James Schall made a motion to adjourn at 8:11 p.m.; Cookie LoSchiavo seconded.