

Record of Proceedings

VILLAGE OF MINERVA PARK CHARTER COMMISSION

Minutes of the

January 3rd, 2019

Commission Meeting

Council Chairwoman Conger called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

Roll: Commission Chairwoman Conger, Vice Chair Parks, and Members Beeba, Walsh, Wolf, Brasket, Townsend, Harker, Busick, Park-Curry, and Lewis.

Attending: Eric Fisher (MP Village Planner), Councilman Toni Benedetti, Councilwoman Lori Santilli-Howard, Rebecca Princehorn, Paul Rutter, Sarai Silverman-Star, Linda Allison, John Nicholson, and Eddie Bell

Bricker & Eckler Presentation:

- ❖ Rebecca Princehorn spoke to the Commission about Bricker & Eckler (B&E)'s experience in providing legal assistance to charter drafting and review commissions, specifically Nelsonville and Cuyahoga County.
- ❖ B&E can assist the Commission in drilling down to key issues, selecting appropriate language, providing legal counsel, prepare a topical charter outline, draft short memos related to relevant questions. The Charter should be reflective of MP as a whole. B&E is here to assist the Commission, not to substitute their judgement or write the Charter.
- ❖ Paul Rutter spoke about his experience with the Sunbury charter commission. He gave a brief outline of the timeline for approval, and what resources B&E can provide to assist the commission on various pros and cons of various aspects of the charter process. B&E has assisted a number of other municipalities and has a general rubric for assembling a charter. B&E can also provide memos listing the various benefits a Charter has over State statute.
- ❖ Ms. Princehorn explained that the Charter process does not end with the actual drafting of the charter. There are timelines, language, and legal assistance post-charter that B&E can also provide.
- ❖ Member Beeba asked Ms. Princehorn as to whether B&E would be available early on in the Charter Process to answer questions the Commission might have. Ms. Princehorn answered in the affirmative. They also have a list of other Charters and Chartered municipalities from which the MP Commission might draw inspiration.
- ❖ Member Walsh asked to the differences between the various chartered municipalities that B&E has had experience with. Largely the differences boil down to the structure of government (Mayor-Council, Administrator-Council, etc.) and the strength of the various organs (Mayor, Council, Administrator, etc.).
- ❖ Member Park-Curry asked as to how, specifically, MP's Charter might differ from other municipalities B&E have assisted with. Ms. Princehorn spoke to the fact that MP is not poised to become a city.

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Bricker & Eckler Presentation (continued):

- ❖ Member Braskett asked about the general structure of the charter and how it might relate to current city ordinances. Vice-Chair Parks clarified that we are concerned with what specific ordinances and structures the charter might engage. Ms. Princehorn explained that the charter sets the framework for government, not necessarily the government itself. It doesn't necessarily need to address specific ordinances.
- ❖ Eric Fisher explained that while a charter might adjust various processes by which the MP government functions, but most of the ordinances will come over unchanged.
- ❖ Chairwoman Conger asked about the process and Ms. Princehorn explained they would be able to set it up so that it is self-executing, specifically, any ordinances altered by the Charter would be automatically updated when the Village codifies its ordinances.
- ❖ Vice-Chair Parks explained that B&E would draft a timeline. MP is not behind schedule, especially when compared to other municipalities currently drafting charters (Sunbury, for instance).
- ❖ Vice-Chair Parks enquired as to whether B&E can assist with providing cost and salary issues related to the charter (the salary of a City Administrator, for instance). Ms. Princehorn explained that there are many resources available. Eric Fisher explained that the Finance Commissioner can give a solid understanding of costs once a form of government is selected.
- ❖ Member Walsh asked about how the Charter drafting process relates to current administrative code provisions, specifically the Home Rule provisions and related case law. The basic structure for municipal government is located in Title 7 of the ORC. There are ancillary rules in other titles, but the majority is in Title 7.
- ❖ Vice-Chair Parks asked who, specifically, we would be working with should the Commission retain B&E. Ms. Princehorn explained that she and Mr. Rutter would be MP's primary contacts, but that if specialized questions arise, the firm has individuals and resources they can leverage on behalf of the Commission.
- ❖ Member Walsh asked what other small municipalities has B&E worked with. Ms. Princehorn explained that Nelsonville was the smallest they had worked with. The closest to that was Sunbury, which is becoming a city.
- ❖ Member Park-Curry inquired as to how B&E would communicate with the Charter Commission. Ms. Princehorn explained that there is usually one point of contact, but that they can create an e-mail distribution list.
- ❖ Member Busick asked how far along the Sunbury charter was. Both Ms. Princehorn and Mr. Rutter explained Sunbury was roughly at the same stage as MP.
- ❖ Member Park-Curry asked about the electoral process of Council-Administrator forms, specifically whether the councils might elect a ceremonial mayor. She explained she had read a charter that allowed for the mayor to engage in various ancillary duties (such as marrying people). Mr. Rutter explained that the structure can be set by the Charter, and Ms. Princehorn added that so can the various powers of the specific members of government.

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Bricker & Eckler Presentation (continued):

- ❖ After Ms. Princehorn and Rutter left, Member Busick asked whether any other Commission member was surprised by the price of B&E's legal services.

Additional Commission Members:

- ❖ Chairwoman Conger introduced the Commission members to the three potential members. Member Park-Curry asked if each of them might introduce themselves and explain what drew them to the Charter commission.
- ❖ Eddie Bell (Jordan Road), originally from San Diego, an operations manager whose company works with JFS.
- ❖ Sarai Silverman-Star (Maplewood), has lived in MP for roughly 3 years. Pattern maker in automotive manufacturing, specializing in communication and problem-solving. Was interested in joining out of a desire to begin working with her community and getting to know her neighbors.
- ❖ Linda Allison, an attorney in private practice focusing on juvenile law. Formerly a CASA advocate for abused and neglected children. Has a great deal of writing and research experience that would be useful to the commission. Has lived in MP for several decades, loves the neighborhood, and has seen a lot of changes and community participation. Began to think about the local MP government when she learned about the building purchase last year.
- ❖ Vice-Chair Parks explained the general time commitment.
- ❖ Member Wolf asked about communication and conflict styles. Mr. Bell leads through example and wants to work with people to achieve common goals. Mrs. Silverman-Star prefers epistolary communication, focusing on detailed communication but is open to other viewpoints. Ms. Allison explained her focus on listening to all viewpoints and working to resolve issues using open communications.
- ❖ Vice-Chair Parks asked if any of the potential new members had any conflicts of interest. They all answered to the negative.
- ❖ Member Lewis explained the general Commission process and structure, as well as what resources are available on OneDrive and via village emails.
- ❖ Member Walsh asked Ms. Allison what she didn't like about the building purchase. Ms. Allison replied the lack of transparency in the purchase process. She was excited about the openness of the Charter process and the commission as a whole.
- ❖ Vice-Chair Parks asked if the Commission should enter executive session. The Commission decided that was not necessary.
- ❖ Vice-Chair Parks moved that a vote be held to admit each candidate, Member Townsend seconded, all in favor.
- ❖ Member Park-Curry made a motion that Mr. Bell be admitted, Member Townsend seconded. All in favor.
- ❖ Member Beeba proposed a motion that Ms. Allison be admitted, Member Braskett seconded. All in favor.

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Additional Commission Members (continued):

- ❖ Vice-Chair Parks made a motion that Mrs. Silverman-Star be admitted, member Wolf seconded. All in favor.

Minutes:

- ❖ Commission Chairwoman Conger moved to accept the minutes of the December 13, 2018 and December 20, 2018 Commission meeting; Commission Vice-Chair Parks seconded; passed unanimously.

Outstanding E-mail Issues:

- ❖ Members Walsh and Townshend are still experiencing issues with accessing their Village emails.
- ❖ Member Wolf will host a technology session at 6pm on 1/10 specifically for members who are still having difficulty accessing their OneDrive and e-mail accounts.

Costs and Legal Counsel:

- ❖ The commission discussed the estimated costs of retaining B&E, as well as the mailing costs. B&E will put together a timeline for various costs.
- ❖ Vice-Chair Parks spoke to the experience and resources of B&E and that they are charging a governmental rate which is well under what they would charge a private client.
- ❖ Member Braskett spoke to wanting additional choices, but us not having time to further research.
- ❖ Members Walsh and Wolf spoke to the fact that B&E has a wide breadth of experience and resources that will be very helpful to the Charter Commission.
- ❖ Member Wolf asked the Councilman Benedetti and Council President Santilli-Howard as to what the process is for getting the memorandum to retain B&E on the Council docket.
- ❖ Member Wolf moved to put B&E on the Council docket and to fast-track the retention, member Braskett seconded. All in favor.
- ❖ Eric explained the process for getting the legislation on the docket. The work session for the Council will begin at 8am on the 12th, both Commission Chair Conger and Member Wolf plan to attend.
- ❖ Member Townsend raised the timeline for deciding form of government. Vice-Chair Parks said it should be decided by the end of February.
- ❖ Member Wolf spoke to the possibility of having a community engagement meeting in late January to apprise the citizens of the various choices for governmental structure and for them to provide feedback on the various forms of government available.

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Costs and Legal Counsel (continued):

- ❖ Members Braskett and Beeba and raised the possibility of providing written questionnaire to attending citizens, and of having an outside moderator. It was decided an outside moderator would be a good idea. Member Wolf will reach out to potential candidates. Member Townsend will bring additional sound equipment.
- ❖ Councilwoman Santilli-Howard mentioned that the livestream was very quiet. Member Wolf explained audio recordings will be made available immediately upon the end of the Commission meeting.
- ❖ Member Beeba exhorted the Commission members to speak in a deeper vocal register and *project* so as to be better heard on the recording.
- ❖ Member Park-Curry elaborated on her research regarding the Mayor-Council-Administrator form of government. Out of those municipalities she has surveyed, usually the mayor is elected separately, then becomes a member of council. The possibility exists for a system wherein one of the council members could be elected to mayor internally. She would like to look into other municipalities to get a broader survey of types and structures.
- ❖ Member Lewis described the information she had received from Eric regarding MP demographics--a community survey that had been drafted by a third-party company. 1,173 electors, 116 homes are complete (110 of which are occupied). Eric Fisher will collate data to answer specific questions: RITA aggregation-by finance director; homes and businesses in the municipality (17 businesses on Cleveland, 6 on 161, 2 on Westerville Rd - 25 in all); Information on households both old and in the new subdivision.
- ❖ Member Brasket inquired as to what percentage of the community are paying RITA taxes.
- ❖ Councilman Benedetti explained that roughly half of MP citizens pay RITA taxes, but the Commission will need to refer to the aggregate numbers for more specific data.

Old Business:

- ❖ Still working to resolve guest Wifi issues (like members being unable to check e-mails in the Village hall).
- ❖ Commission Chair Conger raised the issue of a parks & recreation committee in the charter.
- ❖ Member Townsend asked what research/actions we can take prior to the decision regarding what type of government.
- ❖ Member Harker and Wolf discussed the possibility of members arriving ready to discuss the various pros and cons of the three forms.
- ❖ Member Braskett spoke to the distribution of power within the various forms of government, and how salaries and workload will be applied.
- ❖ Commission Chair Conger asked about the status of the questionnaires for past and current village employees/council members.

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Old Business (continued):

- ❖ Member Wolf is still researching potential ways of receiving feedback from villagers on the Charter drafting process. He is working to outfit the website with a questionnaire function.

Old Business Action Items:

- ❖ Commission Vice Chair Conger will be working on e-mails for Sid and the new Commission members, as well as following up regarding using the Church for the public outreach meeting.
- ❖ Audio issues on livestream will be dealt with by posting audio files (Member Wolf will research amplifying the stream).
- ❖ Eric Fisher will compile information regarding retaining B&E, and add it to the Village Council docket.
- ❖ Commission Chair Conger will follow up with the mayor regarding the swearing in of new Council members.
- ❖ Commission Member Walsh offered to compile MP's current mayoral powers within our codified ordinances, and put together an outline for the Commission.

Commission Chair Conger moved to end the Commission meeting, Member Wolf seconded. All in favor. The commission meeting adjourned at 8:16pm.