

Lance Warner opened the meeting with the **Pledge of Allegiance**.

Members Present: Dick Brady, Jim Corso, Wendy Dempsey, Darwitt Garrett, Terri Johnson, Lovey Leavell, Wesley Poole, Jim Recker, Herman Robinson, Dennis Timple, Naomi Twine and Lance Warner.

Upon motion of Jim Recker and second of Wendy Dempsey, the members voted to approve the minutes of the June 29, 2010 meeting. All Ayes. The Chairman declared the motion approved.

Public Comment

None.

Regular Business

Lance Warner asked Don Icsman about the research performed regarding educational requirements in other communities. Don Icsman said of the two communities researched, one had an educational requirement in their Charter while another has the requirement in their Rules of Governance. He said the costs are paid for by the municipality although the specific training is not spelled out. Don Icsman said he would not want to see this added to the Charter, but suggested it be outlined in the recommendation(s) prepared for the City Commissioners.

Upon motion of Herman Robinson and second of Wesley Poole, the members voted to further explore the provision for mandatory training for City Commissioners. All Ayes. The Chairman declared the motion passed.

Discussion: Darwitt Garrett asked what is in place now and Don Icsman said there is a seminar for Newly Elected Officials hosted by the Ohio Municipal League (OML). Darwitt Garrett asked if Commissioners are required to attend when reelected and Commissioner Pervis Brown said he does not believe this is mandatory the second time. Wesley Poole asked if both cities have the same type of mandated training and Don Icsman said one is made available as funding is provided and as determined by Council, while the other requires attendance at courses or seminars. Wesley Poole asked Pervis Brown to provide a synopsis of the OML training and Pervis Brown said the one-day training is offered for elected officials from cities and villages and provides an overview of the Ohio Revised Code, functions of government and Charter municipalities. He said this training is in Columbus, Ohio and was very worthwhile. Wesley Poole said the Ohio Municipal League's website shows the seminar content and it is offered in general election years. He suggested that unhappiness with a City Commissioner is not a reflection of a lack of education and said a specific recommendation should be made about educational requirement(s).

Lance Warner suggested forming a committee of three persons to select educational requirement(s) for City Commissioners. Darwitt Garrett said the educational requirement should include education tailored to Sandusky as well as the one offered by the Ohio Municipal League. Jim Recker said the committee could make this decision for all elected officials. Lance Warner said he believes the duty of a City Commissioner is to establish policies and priorities and Wesley Poole asked where this would be learned. Lance Warner said there are courses available and the Erie County Chamber of Commerce is crafting a course at BGSU for this requirement. Wesley Poole said he would be comfortable suggesting a specific course rather than having an educational requirement as established by a committee of three persons. Herman Robinson said education should be provided for critical analysis and discerning and analyzing problems. Lance Warner said it is important for the City Commissioners to understand their role vs. the role of the City Manager as it has caused problems in the past. Wesley Poole said the City Commissioners know their role but if, in practice, this differs, creating an educational requirement will

not solve the problem. Herman Robinson said the education being discussed is conceptual and more for critical or analytical thinking and problem solving and would be of benefit to a City Commissioner. Lovey Leavell said she is on the committee with the Chamber of Commerce and BGSU as is a former City Commissioner who told her that he wished something like this had been available prior to his election. Wesley Poole said he supports the concept to put this committee together to continue this discussion and come up with ideas to educate City Commissioners. Lance Warner asked Pervis Brown for his opinion and Pervis Brown said if the true meaning and function of a City Commissioner is to be a policy maker, and the City Manager is hired to carry out the policies, the City Commissioners have a duty to know the Ohio Revised Code rules and regulations for municipalities. He said they need to have the ability to pick the right person to run the organization rather than to come up with ideas for learning about local politics. Pervis Brown said he felt the OML training was informative and adequate. Jim Recker said he believes it would be beneficial to force someone to learn how to select a City Manager and this could be the whole purpose of education for one year. Don Icsman said recommendations for changing the Charter should give discretion to the person elected rather than to a committee of citizens. Naomi Twine said this seems to be more of a strategic planning process than an educational requirement. Lance Warner said the recommendation should be considered by the City Commissioners. Darwitt Garrett said he was not sure why this is being discussed as Pervis Brown is here tonight and said the OML training is working. Wesley Poole said his point of view of the Commissioners' role is that they have an obligation to recognize that every idea is not perfect and they should expand their vision of what they are supposed to do. Herman Robinson asked if there is any type of survey to grade the City Commissioners and Pervis Brown said the ballot box is the survey. Wesley Poole said this does not help with day-to-day operations for the city if bad decisions are being made. Dennis Timple said this is overlapping into an area that will create a problem for the city. He said the City Manager and his/her staff needs to figure out the best way to handle city problems, not a City Commissioner. Dennis Timple said some of the things people have been upset with have been with appearances and an ethical standard.

Herman Robinson withdrew his motion and Wesley Poole withdrew his second.

Don Icsman said he does not want anyone to judge the system by deeds of certain people. He said he can defend some of the issues the City Commissioners have brought to the table. Lance Warner said the intent is to come up with a proposal that helps the City Commission get to the point where these sorts of things occur. Dennis Timple said both proposals (Rules of Order or Charter Change) are worded "they may" and asked if there is case law that allows for the Rules of Order to be changed by the City Commissioners. Don Icsman said both forms leave the discretion up to the City Commission whether to adopt in their Rules of Conduct or in their Charter. Dennis Timple said if the City Commission is attempting to mandate something that is not part of what they ran for, we may be doing something that will not be defensible in the future and Lance Warner said this recommendation is not suggested to be mandatory. Wesley Poole said the recommendation is for the City Commissioners to explore and identify additional educational opportunities for themselves. Dick Brady said it is easier to educate the seven duly elected City Commissioners than to educate 28,000 citizens. Dick Brady said he believes this should be a recommendation, not a Charter amendment. Herman Robinson said providing education is another benefit of being elected and an act of appreciation for the services rendered by the Commissioners.

Upon motion of Wesley Poole and second of Herman Robinson, the members voted to recommend the City Commission explore and identify additional educational opportunities to help in their governmental positions. Vote on the motion: Yeas: 11. Nays: 1, Darwitt Garrett. The Chairman declared the motion passed.

Darwitt Garrett said he did not believe in voting yes when there is already something in place.

Dennis Timple said that because of costs, the Charter Review Committee did not feel it judicious to do a general housecleaning of the City Charter. He said this could be recommended and revisited at a later time by the Law Department. Don Icsman said he could provide this, but there would be a cost and would require voter approval. He said the City of Dayton recently cleaned up their Charter, but the money must be spent to allow the voters to vote upon changes.

Upon motion of Wesley Poole and second of Wendy Dempsey, the members voted to request that the City Commissioners explain the reason(s) for passing legislation under Section 14 of the City Charter. All Ayes. The Chairman declared the motion passed.

Wesley Poole said he has had second thoughts about the **compensation for the City Commissioners**. Lance Warner said his concern is there may be people who want to run for City Commission but cannot afford it and this may limit the pool of candidates. Dick Brady said the salary could be raised but people will still not be running/serving for the money. He said this could widen the candidate pool by stepping into the 21st century for compensation. Lance Warner said this is a minimal expense when considering the overall budget of millions of dollars. Wesley Poole said, as an example, a 35-year old businessman running his own business would perhaps have to hire a part-time employee if he wished to take on the role of City Commissioner. He said the current wages should be adjusted before the next Charter Review Committee in 2015 to better reflect the worthiness of Commissioners and to send a message. Herman Robinson said one of the outcomes of the stipend (not the salary) should be to at least cover the cost of their service, i.e. gas, time spent on cell phones, time away from jobs, etc. He said this will level the playing field for all persons who might be interested. Lance Warner said it has been ten years since the last pay increase. Lance Warner said this could also be accomplished by recommending a change in the term limit from two terms to three terms so that Commissioners would be eligible to be vested in the Public Employee Retirement System. Don Icsman said this is true under the current rules. Dick Brady said not to be fooled into thinking that tying the \$5,000 to the hours worked is accurate. He said people are not doing this to make money, but they should not do it to lose money either. He said doing this for \$100/week is laughable.

Upon motion of Dick Brady and second of Wendy Dempsey, the members voted to raise the salary of the City Commissioners from \$5,000 to \$7,500 to attract a wider pool of candidates (Section 6 – Salary and Bonds).

Discussion: Lance Warner said the current compensation is \$100/week; increasing this to \$7,500/year would increase the salary to \$144.23/week. Dennis Timple said to keep this simple, he would request changing the motion to \$150/week. Darwitt Garrett said he does support proposing an increase when Police Officers and Fire Fighters are being laid off. Dick Brady said this will be a difficult sell and does not believe it will go to the ballot, but he believes the Committee should send a message that City Commissioners are underpaid. Herman Robinson said this is similar to the Cleveland Cavs paying big money to LeBron James but not being willing to pay the other players. Wesley Poole asked Darwitt Garrett if he believes the City Commissioners are underpaid and Darwitt Garrett said they are but cannot, in clear conscience, send this message to the City Commissioners.

Dick Brady agreed to amend his motion to change the salary to \$150/week and Wendy Dempsey agreed to the amendment (Section 6 – Salary and Bonds). Vote on the motion: Yeas: 9. Nays: 3. The Chairman declared the motion passed.

Dennis Timple suggested amending the motion to change the salary for the President of the City Commission from \$20/week to \$30/week and Dick Brady agreed to amend his motion; Wendy Dempsey agreed to the amendment. Vote on the motion: Yeas: 7. Nays: 5. The Chairman declared the motion passed.

Don Icsman said this language would be prepared for the next Charter Review Committee meeting.

Upon motion of Darwitt Garrett and second of Dick Brady, the members voted to adjourn the meeting. All Ayes. The Chairman declared the motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Lance Warner said at the meeting next week, a draft outline of the recommendations and the proposed legislation will be presented.

Respectfully submitted:

_____/_____/_____
Date

Kelly L. Kresser, Clerk of the City Commission

Approved:

_____/_____/_____
Date

Lance Warner, Chairman