

**Red Wing Charter Commission
Annual Meeting
City Council Chambers
June 18, 2025**

Members Present: Chair Terri Cook; Commissioners Terese Bjornstad, Thomas Drazkowski, John Guerber, Ryan Hanson, Michael Johnson, Chad Kono, Carol Overland, Alan Quarnstrom, Charles Richardson, Ann Vogel, and Mallory West

Members Absent: Commissioners Min MartinOakes, Peggy Rehder, and Anne Robertson

Others Present: Melissa Hill, City Clerk / Staff Liaison; Chris Heineman, Council Administrator; Michelle Leise, Public Information and Engagement Officer; Donald Kliewer, Council Liaison

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Cook at 6:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Cook led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Motion to Excuse Absent Commission Members

A motion was made by Commissioner Bjornstad, seconded by Commissioner Overland and unanimously carried, to excuse the absences of Commissioners MartinOakes, Rehder, and Robertson.

4. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Commissioner Guerber, seconded by Commissioner Vogel, to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Overland provided comments regarding agenda Item 8K. A vote was conducted, and the motion to approve the agenda as presented carried unanimously.

5. Approval of Minutes

A. Motion to Approve June 24, 2024, Minutes.

A motion was made by Commissioner West, seconded by Commissioner Overland and unanimously carried, to approve the meeting minutes as drafted.

6. Election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

Nominations were opened for the position of Chairperson. Commissioner Bjornstad nominated Commissioner Cook to serve as Chairperson of the Charter Commission. There were no other nominations.

A roll call vote was conducted, and Commissioner Cook was unanimously elected to serve as Chairperson of the Charter Commission for the next year.

Nominations were opened for the position of Vice Chairperson. Commissioner Johnson nominated Commissioner MartinOakes to serve as Vice Chairperson of the Charter Commission. There were no other nominations.

A roll call vote was conducted, and Commissioner MartinOakes was unanimously elected to serve as Vice Chairperson of the Charter Commission for the next year.

7. Public Comment

Chair Cook reviewed the public comment procedure.

Alan Muller, West Avenue, Red Wing, expressed concerns about offering the opportunity for public comment only during the Public Comment portion of the meeting, as opposed to allowing public comment during discussion of other agenda items. He stated that this limits meaningful public participation and suggested reconsidering this policy.

Mr. Muller also commented regarding agenda Item 8K. He discussed the city manager form of local government and asked about the intention of placing this item on the agenda. Chair Cook clarified that Item 8K was placed on the agenda for discussion purposes only.

Commissioner Johnson asked whether the Charter Commission has the ability to respond to comments offered by the public during the Public Comment period. Chair Cook provided rationale for the practice of generally not responding to public comments, noting that more time may be needed to gather additional information, in order to respond correctly. She clarified the Charter Commission Bylaws in this regard and added that the Charter Commission has made it clear in the past that it supports public comments.

8. Motions and General Business

A. Consider Motion to Recommend to the Chief Judge of the First Judicial District the Reappointment of Charles Richardson to a First Term on the Charter Commission.

Chair Cook provided background information. She noted that Commissioner Richardson has completed a partial term and has expressed an interest in serving a first term on the Charter Commission.

A motion was made by Commissioner Overland to recommend the appointment of Charles Richardson to a first term on the Charter Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kono, a voice vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Consider Motion to Recommend to the Chief Judge of the First Judicial District the Reappointment of Peggy Rehder to a Second Term on the Charter Commission.

Chair Cook provided background information. She noted that Commissioner Rehder has fulfilled a first term and has expressed an interest in serving a second term on the Charter Commission.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson to recommend the reappointment of Peggy Rehder to the Charter Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Guerber, a voice vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously.

C. Consider Motion to Recommend to the Chief Judge of the First Judicial District the Appointment of Janet Brandt to a First Term on the Charter Commission.

Chair Cook provided background information. She asked the Charter Commission to consider recommending the appointment of Janet Brandt to a first term on the Charter Commission. She noted that this would fill the seat of Commissioner Bjornstad, who is not seeking a second term. She clarified that Charter Commission members may continue to serve until they are replaced. She referenced Ms. Brandt's application, noting that it was included in the agenda materials.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bjornstad to recommend the appointment of Janet Brandt to the Charter Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Overland. Commissioner Bjornstad expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve on the Charter Commission. A voice vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Cook reviewed the next steps in the appointment process.

D. Consider Motion to Approve the 2024 Charter Commission Annual Report.

Chair Cook referenced the 2024 Annual Report, noting that it was included in the agenda materials. A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Guerber and unanimously carried, to approve the 2024 Charter Commission Annual Report as drafted.

E. Consider Motion to Adopt City of Red Wing Data Practices Procedures and Data Inventory Public Document as the Official Data Practices Policy of the Charter Commission.

Chair Cook provided background information regarding the data practices policy and procedures. She referenced the updated information that was included in the agenda materials relating to this item. A motion was made by Commissioner Richardson, seconded by Commissioner Vogel, to adopt the City of Red Wing data practices procedures and data inventory public document as the official data practices policy of the Charter Commission. A voice vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously.

F. Review Legislative Changes that Affect the Charter Commissions.

Chair Cook provided background information and referenced the agenda materials. She highlighted changes to the Open Meeting Law that were adopted by the Minnesota Legislature in May of 2025 relating to remote meeting participation. She noted that this would not require any changes to the City Charter. She also referenced minor changes to election laws. She noted that bills that were recently passed during a special session of the Minnesota Legislature will be communicated soon.

G. Annual Materials.

- 1. City Attorney Material.**
- 2. Code of Conduct.**
- 3. Board and Commission Policy.**

Commissioner Overland asked whether there have been any revisions to these documents since last year.

City Clerk Hill noted that there were no changes to the Legal Considerations for City Officials document. She stated that there were significant changes to the Board, Commission, and Committee Policy document, which were approved by the City Council. She indicated that she was unaware of any changes to the Code of Conduct policy.

Commissioner Overland requested an overview of the changes to the Board, Commission, and Committee Policy document. Public Information and Engagement Officer Leise highlighted a change to the description of advisory commissions with additional decision-making authority, including the Advisory Planning Commission and the Heritage Preservation Commission. She reviewed changes to the public comment procedure and provided rationale for the revisions.

Ms. Leise discussed changes to the policy governing virtual meeting participation by members of boards and commissions. Commissioner Bjornstad referenced changes to Minnesota Law relating to remote meeting participation. Ms. Leise commented that State law was recently changed in this regard.

It was noted that no Charter Commission action is being requested. Commissioner Overland expressed concerns regarding the remote meeting policy.

H. Training for Board Members and Chairs.

Public Information and Engagement Officer Leise thanked Charter Commission members for their service. She reported that new training materials are being developed to assist Board and Commission members, including short videos that members will be able to view on their own.

Ms. Leise provided an overview of Robert's Rules of Order. She noted the primary reasons for utilizing this guide:

- 1) Ensures that all members have an opportunity to be heard.
- 2) Ensures that the members and the public understand what is being discussed and voted on.
- 3) Helps keep the meeting discussion on track.

Ms. Leise reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the meeting chair. She detailed the process of considering items along with the process of making, seconding, discussing, and voting on motions and provided examples. The procedures for amending motions and calling the question were discussed. It was noted that a motion can be made for discussion purposes.

Ms. Leise stated that she will provide copies of a Robert's Rules of Order guidebook to Charter Commission members.

I. Public Comment During Special Meetings.

Chair Cook provided background information and referenced past Charter Commission discussion of public comment policy. She discussed the process of scheduling a special meeting and requested additional discussion of the Charter Commission public comment policy relating to special meetings.

Commissioner Bjornstad asked whether public comment is currently allowed during special meetings. It was clarified that public comment is currently limited to special meeting agenda topics only.

Commissioner Johnson requested an example of when public comment relating to other topics would be beneficial during a special meeting. Commissioner Guerber noted that topics or concerns would not be able to be addressed during the special meeting. Chair Cook commented that regular Charter Commission meetings may be scheduled in the future, in addition to the annual meeting.

Commissioner Overland referenced language from the Charter Commission Bylaws pertaining to following the order of business during meetings. The Bylaws were reviewed. It was clarified that any changes to the policy would impact only the Charter Commission. Commissioner Johnson suggested deferring action on this item until after discussion of the Charter Commission meeting schedule (Item 8L).

Commissioners Bjornstad and Drazkowski spoke in support of maintaining the current public comment policy during special meetings. Commissioner Bjornstad commented that members of the public can communicate with the Charter Commission regarding their concerns in other ways.

Commissioner Richardson suggested calling the question at this point. The process of amending the Bylaws was reviewed.

A motion was made by Commissioner Richardson to affirm the Charter Commission Bylaws as written regarding public comment at special meetings. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Drazkowski, a voice vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously.

J. Officers of the Council Discussion.

Chair Cook introduced City Clerk Hill and Council Administrator Heineman.

Council Administrator Heineman introduced himself and summarized his background. He thanked Charter Commission members for their service. He referenced Chapter 3, Section 3.01 of the City Charter pertaining to Departments and Officers of Administration. He requested consideration of a specific technical revision to the current Charter language. He noted that a longstanding Administrative Services Director and a longstanding City Clerk recently retired, necessitating changes to the City's administrative structure. He noted that the Administrative Services Director position is currently vacant and may be held vacant for an indefinite period of time or may be eliminated. He noted that this position is specifically called out in the City Charter as an administrative officer of the City Council. He suggested a Charter amendment that would delete that position from the language of Chapter 3, Section 3.01.

Council Administrator Heineman then referenced City Charter language from a broader perspective pertaining to elected and appointed officials, noting that the terminology is somewhat confusing. He stated that he is unaware of other cities that have this number of Officers of City Administration. He stated that charter cities and statutory cities typically designate only the appointed positions of the City Administrator, potentially the City Clerk, and sometimes the Chief of Police as officers. He discussed the challenges of Officers of Administration reporting to both the Council Administrator and to the City Council. He provided additional background information relating to a past reorganization of the Department of Administration.

Commissioner Overland asked what is being proposed. Council Administrator Heineman suggested that the Charter Commission schedule a meeting to discuss the situation and decide whether potential Charter amendments are warranted. He noted that language could potentially be proposed for Charter Commission consideration. Commissioner Bjornstad provided suggestions in terms of potential language revisions. Chair Cook clarified the potential next steps in the process, if the Charter Commission is interested in further discussing this topic. Council Administrator Heineman commented that clarity would be beneficial in terms of better defining the roles of the Council Administrator and City Council Members. Commissioner West asked whether jobs or titles would be impacted by Charter language changes. Council Administrator Heineman further discussed the City's current organizational structure.

Commissioner Hanson requested clarification of the role of the Financial Officer position. He provided examples from other cities, noting that some cities have a City Clerk / Treasurer position. Council Administrator Heineman commented that there would still be a chief financial officer position, which in Red Wing is titled Administrative Business Director.

Commissioner Overland referenced a comment about individual Council Members having interactions with City officers, noting that this is a separate issue from the Charter language. She also commented that it might be considered a conflict of interest for Council Administrator Heineman to promote a Charter language change that would impact his position.

Chair Cook commented that Council Administrator Heineman is put in a difficult position when Charter language on one page differs from language on another page or from current City operational procedures. She stated that Council Administrator Heineman is merely trying to bring clarity to the process.

Commissioner Overland requested examples of contradictory Charter language. City Clerk Hill commented that this section of the Charter is problematic from a managerial perspective. She stated that the referenced positions would not change or cease to exist. She noted that the titles would be removed from the Charter to avoid the perception of dual management, noting that other language in the Charter clarifies that the Council Administrator manages these positions. She stated that Council Administrator Heineman is suggesting that the Charter Commission consider evaluating this language during a future meeting and potentially propose revisions that would not alter the structure of Red Wing's government.

Commissioner Guerber spoke in support of further discussion of this language by the Charter Commission. He discussed the importance of a clear chain of command.

A motion was made by Commissioner Richardson for City staff to propose potential language changes to Chapter 3 of the City Charter to the Charter Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Guerber. Commissioner Johnson asked about a timeframe to conduct this discussion. Council Administrator Heineman referenced the vacant Administrative Services Director position. Chair Cook suggested scheduling a regular meeting sometime in August or September, adding that the meeting schedule would be discussed later during the meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Drazkowski to offer a friendly amendment to discuss this topic during the next Charter Commission meeting. Commissioner Richardson accepted the friendly amendment, and Commissioner Guerber seconded the motion. A voice vote to approve the friendly amendment to the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Cook re-stated the amended motion to ask staff to propose language for Charter Commission consideration during the next meeting. A voice vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Overland commented regarding the process of changing the City Charter. A motion was made by Commissioner Overland to concurrently bring the proposed Charter revisions before the City Council. It was suggested to forward a recommendation from the Charter Commission to the City Council in this regard. Council Administrator Heineman indicated that he will be discussing this topic with the City Council. The motion failed due to the lack of a second.

K. Form of Government Discussion.

Chair Cook provided background information. She referenced Chapter 2, Section 2.01 of the Red Wing City Charter, which defines the form of government. Council Administrator Heineman discussed the City's current weak mayor system and mayor / council form of government. He provided information regarding the city manager form of government. He stated that this is the most prominent and fastest growing form of local government in the United States.

Council Administrator Heineman reviewed some of the benefits of the city manager form of government:

- 1) Encourages open communication from citizens and between citizens in the government.
- 2) Each member of the governing body has an equal voice in policy development and administrative oversight, which gives residents and diverse groups a greater opportunity to influence policy.
- 3) The power of special interests is often diffused.
- 4) Focuses on professional management, making partisan politics less likely.
- 5) Functions more like a business organization.
- 6) Provides more clearly defined roles between policy and administration and greater flexibility in terms of communication with residents.

Commissioner Overland stated that she had requested additional information but did not receive anything. She summarized the results of her research. She referenced the role of the mayor in a city manager system in terms of voting, veto power, and presiding over city council meetings. She stated that the city manager form of government would significantly change the role of the mayor. Council Administrator Heineman clarified that a city manager form of government would not change the roles of elected officials and would work well with the existing Charter. He commented that most cities do have a voting mayor.

Commissioner Bjornstad requested written documentation of the presentation provided by Council Administrator Heineman.

Commissioner Guerber asked why this topic is being brought before the Charter Commission, if this would not require a Charter change. Council Administrator Heineman clarified that a city manager form of government would necessitate language revisions to Chapter 2 of the City Charter. City Clerk Hill clarified that there would be no changes to the duties of the mayor or the power structure of City of Red Wing government.

Chair Cook asked whether the duties of the mayor and council vary from city to city. Council Administrator Heineman commented that every city has different nuances. He further discussed the common structure of charter cities and statutory cities in Minnesota.

Commissioner Johnson requested clarification of what the Charter Commission is being asked to take action on or consider. Chair Cook suggested consideration of adding this topic to a future meeting agenda.

Commissioner Richardson described this as a political decision. He suggested bringing this issue to the City Council, which could refer it back to the Charter Commission for further discussion and a recommendation. Commissioner Overland expressed agreement with these comments. She commented that most cities functioning under the city manager form of government are statutory cities.

Commissioner Kono stated his opinion that discussion of this issue should originate with the Charter Commission, which helps to set the rules by which the City Council operates.

Commissioner Johnson suggested requesting a perspective from Mayor Iocco, noting that this language change could impact his role or relationship with the City Council.

A motion was made by Commissioner Drazkowski to end the discussion and take no action at this time, pending the receipt of additional information. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Overland. Commissioner West requested clarification of whether this topic would be added to the next meeting agenda. Commissioner Drazkowski commented that this topic could be added to a future meeting agenda, at the discretion of Chair Cook, for future discussion and action. Chair Cook noted that this is not a time-sensitive issue. Council Administrator Heineman indicated that he could either forward additional information to Charter Commission members and / or discuss this item with the City Council. Commissioner Overland encouraged Commissioners to conduct their own research.

Following discussion a voice vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously.

L. Consider Motion to Adopt the Charter Commission Regular Meeting Schedule.

Chair Cook referenced the Charter Commission meeting calendar. A motion was made by Commissioner Richardson to adopt the Charter Commission meeting schedule as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Guerber.

Chair Cook offered a friendly amendment to schedule a regular meeting during 2025. Commissioner Richardson withdrew his motion at this point, and Commissioner Guerber withdrew his second.

City Clerk Hill reviewed potential meeting dates.

A new motion was made by Commissioner Richardson to schedule a regular meeting on September 25, a regular meeting on the third Wednesday of March in 2026 (March 18), and an annual meeting on the third Wednesday of June in 2026 (June 17). The motion was seconded by Chair Cook. It was noted that a Human Rights Commission meeting is scheduled on September 25, and August 28 was discussed as an alternative meeting date. Commissioner Richardson amended his motion to approve the Charter Commission meeting schedule, to include regular meetings on August 28, 2025, and March 18, 2026, with the next annual meeting scheduled on June 17, 2026. Chair Cook seconded the amended motion, a voice vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.