



August 9, 2016

**CITY OF SARATOGA SPRINGS**  
**City Charter Review Commission**  
**City Council Room**  
**6:30 PM**

- 6:30 PM:      CALL TO ORDER**
- SALUTE TO FLAG**
- WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY PAT KANE**
- 6:40 PM      STATEMENTS BY MAYORS**
- 7:40 PM      CHARTER COMMISSIONS QUESTIONS FOR MAYORS**
- 8:55 PM      OTHER BUSINESS**
- 9:00 PM      ADJOURN**



August 9, 2016

**CITY OF SARATOGA SPRINGS**  
**City Charter Review Commission**  
**City Council Room**  
**6:30 PM**

**PRESENT:** Jeff Altamari  
Devin Dal Pos  
Elio DelSette  
Matt Jones  
Pat Kane  
BK Keramati  
Robert Kuczynski  
Minita Sanghvi  
Barbara Thomas  
Beth Wurtmann

**ABSENT:** Gordon Boyd  
Ann Casey Bullock  
Laura Chodos  
Mike Los  
Robert Turner

**STAFF:** Tony Izzo

**FORMER MAYORS:** AC Riley  
Valerie Keehn  
Ken Klotz  
Ray Watkin

**CURRENT MAYOR:** Joanne Yepsen

**RECORDING OF PROCEEDING**

The proceedings of this meeting were recorded for the benefit of the public and the secretary. Because the minutes are not a verbatim record of the proceedings, the minutes are not a word-for-word transcript.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice-Chairman Pat Kane called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Vice-chairman Pat Kane welcomed the members and the former Mayors. He asked the members to introduce themselves. He explained that it is a timed agenda tonight and M. Jones is charged with keeping the meeting on track.

E. DelSette thanked the former Mayors for their previous service stating that each has contributed to the success of this City. He noted that the city was nominated as having one of the top 10 main streets in the nation and attributed the City's success in part to the current Charter that he will struggle to maintain.

R. Kuczynski Thanked the former Mayors for coming.

B. Wurtmann stated she lived in the City in 1998, left for San Diego and has returned here by choice.

J. Altamari said he was raised in Saratoga County and spent his career in Houston but has retired to Saratoga Springs because it is a great place to live.

P. Kane said he has been in the /city 22 years. He thanked the former Mayors for coming and noted that since there are some tight agendas, he would try to respect everyone's needs and accommodate the two individuals that requested to speak early.

B. Thomas stated she has lived in the County over 40 years and moved into the city four years ago. She appreciates everything the former Mayors have done for the City and looks forward to hearing what changes are recommended.

D. Dal Pos said he has been in Saratoga Springs 14 years and is currently a board member of the Southwest Neighborhood Association.

BK Keramati said he has been living in the city since 2014 and has been in the county longer. He is retired from GE and appreciates the opportunity to serve on this Commission.

M. Jones stated that it is good to see the former Mayors again. He has worked with all of them except he was in law school when Mayor Watkin served. He is interested in the answers to the questions and the visions.

In preparation for discussion, the following list of questions was distributed to the current and former Mayors:

- 1) Do the public's expectations of the mayor match his or her formal powers under the Charter?
- 2) How much time did/do you spend on mayoral duties? How has the position changed over time? Is it still a part time position or is it a full time position?
- 3) Does the Charter have the right combination of "checks and balances" or does the allocation of powers to the Commissioners create the potential for gridlock and political gamesmanship?
- 4) What are your thoughts on two-year versus four-year terms?
- 5) What provisions of the present charter are good for the City and should be retained in any revision? Conversely, are there provisions of the Charter that excessively complicated or impeded altogether your ability to act? What suggestions would you give to address such provisions?

A.C. Dake Riley stated she was glad to hear about this and she is very interested in the process. She served on a Charter Commission in 1968 but the proposed Charter did not pass. She then served on a County committee studying the County government and learned that the county functioned more like a non-profit with a committee system and held meetings in the day time and since that fit her schedule as a busy mom, she successfully ran for and served as County Supervisor during the time that Ray Watkin was Mayor. She said she often worked with Mayor Watkin on a plan of action, and noted that Mayor Watkin would often compliment and award others which contributed to the rebirth of this City because it spurred many members of the City's business district to volunteer time and money to create a more vital business community. The resulting success of the City was not due to City Council mandates but rather because of the efforts of volunteers from the business community in collaboration with the City Council.

She explained that his City is unique because there is not professional business association or district, but instead the merchants come together as the Downtown Business District and work together to maintain a vital downtown. The people who live here take responsibility for their community and that is the one thing that is really important to maintain because everybody cares. A.C. Riley said she was elected Mayor in 1989 and served from 1990 through 1995. She learned while serving on the City Council that they did not all agree, but everyone at that table was expressing their opinions about the right thing to do and the Council's job was to reach an agreement on how each of them could play a role in moving the City forward, enforcing the rules, making sure police and fire functioned well. The Council worked collaboratively and any form of government is only successful if the people that are serving work together. Every member cares although their opinions might differ; it is important to remember that they care and that is why they are sitting there.

In response to question 1, A.C. Riley stated that the public's expectations do not match the formal powers under the charter. The public thinks that the Mayor is in charge although there are 4 others on the City Council and each of the five members has one equal vote. The Mayor can make suggestions but cannot mandate a particular Commissioner to do something. The Mayor is not in charge in the same way that a CEO of a corporation is in charge. A.C. Riley said when she was Mayor there was no Deputy Mayor although each of the four Commissioners had a Deputy; the direct responsibilities did not actually require a Deputy. She came in whenever she could; she did not have another job other than daily routines. She was available and responsive. She stated that Mayors that had full time jobs usually handled their responsibility by setting regular office hours.

R. Watkin commented that he was Mayor full time but he made it what it was, however you can spread yourself too thin. He said that circumstances play a large part in how one functions as Mayor and how much time is spent. A. C. Riley agreed that you must respond to the demands that you face and that does not depend on the form of government because no matter what form of government you are serving under, if there is a problem to solve the decision makers have the responsibility to put their heads together and solve the problem.

R. Watkin commented that under the City charter, the Mayor is the Chief Executive Officer; the first section of the charter gives the Mayor general oversight over all departments and general supervision over many offices. The Mayor is the chief Executive Officer and if you want funding from HUD, (the department of Housing and Urban Development) you have to be able to prove that you are the CEO which is the Mayor's primary responsibility- other departments have their own responsibilities.

A.C. Riley said that each of the five offices now has a deputy and if a person is good at delegating the part time nature of the elected position is not a problem. You must have a deputy that you are willing to allow to work on your behalf and that you trust enough to know when to respond that the Mayor should be contacted or to have the knowledge as to what the Mayor wants, how the Mayor thinks and respond accordingly. Anyone can hold one of these positions if they are over 18 and is a citizen but they must hire a deputy that knows the particular field because it is their job to run the department. Currently the elected officials run their departments and she used to have weekly meeting with her staff members because they are the ones that do the planning and execution and scheduling. In running the Mayor's department her method was to stay in touch, work together and have no surprises and it worked well.

In response to question 4, A.C. Riley commented that in a commission form of government, she prefers two-year terms for everyone. If there were a legislative City Council instead, with 5 to 7 members, it would be advisable to have staggered terms with only half turning over at a time so you never risk having a full council of people who never served before. It might be more difficult to find people willing to run for four-year terms because of the length of the commitment. Four-year terms would work best with a legislative City council. She likes the idea of a legislative City Council and is neutral regarding a strong Mayor or whether to have a City Manager who will be a professional full time manager. If you expect an elected official to work full time, you must pay them the equivalent of the full time employees. Someone should be there as a full time supervisor for a department just like any other organization. There must be some sort of centralized management with someone really in charge, however, the power of the budget and policy making should fall to the elected officials. A.C. Riley said she was elected in 1989 and served from 1990

through 1995 and was elected under partisan elections. She believes that political parties play a part and help with elections but at the local level policy making is not as effected by political party as it is on the State or National level. Non-partisanship drew at least ten candidates so it was interesting. Partisanship that forms enemies is never good.

R. Watkin was elected as Mayor in 1973 and served from 1974 through 1979. In response to question 1, he believes that in the mind of the people the Mayor is the Chief Executive Officer, the one that gets the calls to get something done and must facilitate a response.

In response to question 2, he stated that as Mayor he spent more than 40 hours per week on the job and went to many offices and even to Albany in order to resolve issues. He said it is necessary to coordinate activities and do the work required and it is not easy because a lot of changes are needed. He does not believe there is the correct combination of checks and balances under the current city charter; the problems have changed and someone has to steer the ship. Under the current city council format, no one takes the blame. There have been very few commission forms of government. In order to get something done, the council must have strong-willed people with a majority vote. R. Watkin stated that the Mayor should have four-year terms in order to have time to work because with two-year terms you are campaigning all the time. In response to the question 5, instead of deciding whether a provision of the charter is good for the city or not, he advises the Commission to start over and examine the needs of the city and the ability to enforce each provision in the Charter. The goal should be to get more done with less money. R. Watkin said it is time to modernize the City's form of government because more can be done, more service can be accomplished without a cumbersome government that is hard for the people to understand. It is not that the current system hurts the City, but it should be made better without a lot of red tape for the people. He believes that the City has modernized and it is time for a form of government that addresses those changes. People love to come to Saratoga Springs because there are lots of great venues and it is a great place to live and do things.

Ken Klotz said he appreciates the invitation to be here. He was elected Mayor in 1999 and served two 2-year terms as Mayor, from 2000 through 2003. In 2000 he appointed a charter Review Commission and they passed a new Charter which is the only time that the charter had been changed since 1915. He said the 1915 charter was a sparse and limited document. The Commission he appointed took the approach that the charter was dated and needed to be modernized. The City government has evolved on its own and the Commission examined how the City runs and whether it is working and if something was working, they could codify it and make it official and if a part was not working, they would try to figure out what to do to make it work. As a result, a lot of responsibilities were added to the Mayor's list and the Commission at that time felt that this was one last chance for the Commission form of government.

K. Klotz noted that any system would work if you have good people in it. A strong Mayor works if they have good vision and good projects, but if not, it could be treacherous. A City Manager as a technocrat might mechanically run better but the unique qualities of this City might get lost. He explained that commissions attempted to revise the charter every ten to fifteen years. Issues are out there and there is no magic bullet. You can talk about weaknesses and strengths of every system; this City has gotten this far with this system and it might be because the Council stayed out of the way and let business leaders and others carry something forward. This is a successful City so the good things in the government should be preserved. Regarding public expectations, the Mayor is expected to do things that are not his purview and he/she must be able to work the building to get things done, a response of "it is not my job" is not acceptable. One must rise above the politics; it is not relevant whether or not public expectations match the duties of the Mayor. It is up to the Mayor to educate and to get things going regardless whether it involves his/her or another commissioner's department.

Regarding time spent, K. Klotz said he spent about 27 hours at Skidmore weekly and 40 to 43 hours per week here which was draining and resulted in a 6 ½ day week. He would get up at 6 AM to be here at 7 AM for 1.5 hours then he would go to Skidmore then back to City Hall. The Mayor is expected to represent the City. He said that back in 1915, the Mayor was meant to be a ribbon-cutter but over time needs arose and if something came up that did not fit neatly in one of the other departments it was given to the Mayor which is why the office is so eclectic.

K. Klotz said he is not sure about the checks and balances because although he put together the Commission that got the revised Charter passed in 2001, he never served under this Charter so he cannot speak on how well it does or doesn't operate. He worked under the old Charter and was part of that system. He believes the 2001 Charter is more explicit but is not particularly adhered to and does not seem to be treated as sacred. There is no one to make a final decision or enforce the charter except possibly the City Attorney. He cannot speak knowingly about whether provisions are good for the city or not because he has never worked under this Charter.

K. Klotz said that he likes two-year terms for the public because they can vote an individual out of office after two years if he or she is not performing satisfactorily. Two years is harder for the elected official because they are running for office more often, whereas four-year terms provide time to plan and get things done.

Vice-chairman P. Kane asked if anyone has specific questions for R. Watkin.

R. Kuczynski for R. Watkin's thoughts the position of the Administrator of Parks, Open Land and Historic Preservation in the current Charter and whether there is a role that historic preservation should play in the charter.

R. Watkin responded that it is a good job and it was introduced in the 2001 Charter. The City has done well with historic preservation and we care about the past and preserving history. The Recreation Commission and Historic Preservation are always important.

B. Wurtmann asked why he seems to believe that the Commission form of government is cumbersome and needs an overhaul. R. Watkin replied that there is not always a Council that is dedicated to working for the public; the charter needs to be updated because the City has changed.

BK Keramati asked how much time R. Watkin spent resolving conflicts with other commissioners. R. Watkin said there was not much conflict, some people were obstacles but we worked to get around the obstacles and as a result lots of projects were accomplished including the Village Brook, Façade Easement program and Community Development grants and the Section 8 project of the Raymond Watkin Apartments and they saved the post office.

K. Klotz said most of his time was spent on positive productive things and since the 2001 Charter allowed for a Deputy Mayor, he was able to appoint a Deputy for his second term. He said there was plenty of conflict at the City Council table but they accomplished what they could.

R. Watkin said he did not have conflict during his terms proving that things can be done under this form of government; it is just harder to do.

J. Altamari asked if more people would be dedicated to running for and holding an office if it paid more. R. Watkin said that you either like the job or you don't, it is not about the money.

D. Dal Pos asked if the current form of government limit people that would be interested in running because specific backgrounds are needed.

R. Watkin said that if you read the charter, it gives general oversight to the Mayor and to Commissioners. When people have problems they go to the Mayor because they do not understand the commission form of government. Not everyone is willing to put in the work required so it is important to elevate the job and the compensation. It is an important job in an important City.

M. Jones stated that there is a unique perspective at this table. One of the arguments supporting retaining this form of government is accountability. However, people go to the Mayor when there is a problem; they do not know whose department is whose. One must possess a public spirit when they the job. People do not understand this form of government. However, there have been a lot of failed attempts to change it.

E. DelSette said there have been few complaints about this city government. Only one effort to revise the charter was successful and that speaks well for it. People come to meetings with complaints; they know who to go to for help with services. Mayors have served this city through difficult times. There has been terrible in-fighting among party members and at the table which should not happen under any circumstances. Regardless the Mayors here and others were able to work hard to achieve many goals and accomplish many things under this charter. If the charter is not good for the City why are we so financially successful?

R. Watkin responded that the City attracts people because of its economic well-being; there were many problems in the 1970's including a problematic downtown and almost losing exclusive racing and empty store fronts. The system has served its purpose and there is always a need for efficiency and change.

R. Watkin explained that the 70's was a bad time economically for the City; there were lots of problems but fortunately there were wonderful people in office. He asked this Commission to think about streamlining the charter and making it possible for people to be in office and make a living at it. He wished everyone good luck. (7:35 PM)

B. Thomas asked about R. Watkin's comment on gambling and corruption in the city and his statement that the Charter was designed so no one could take the fall for that.

R. Watkin agreed.

V. Keehn said she was elected in 2005 and served the City from 2006 through 2007. She thanked everyone for serving on the Commission. One of her passions has been to change the form of government in this City. She noted that the people that work in City Hall are the ones doing the hard work and many of them worry every election cycle.

She stated that the public has no idea what the formal powers of the Mayor are under the Charter and they are not expected to. People here and in most cities believe that is the Chief Executive Officer, the head administrator of City operations, the ceremonial figurehead of the City and presides over City Council meetings. People believe that the Mayor has complete control over things that happen in this City. She said if the Charter was different, if the form of government was different, there would be more qualified people running for office in this City. She questioned how qualified she was as a Special Education Teacher, yet she was elected. She loved the experience and learned a lot. If the form of government included a Mayor in charge of day to day operations with a separate legislative body, it would attract more qualified people and citizens could run for legislative seats.

V. Keehn said the position of Mayor is a full time job. She spent 8 to 10 hours a day in the office and additional time at meetings and events at night and weekends. The Deputy Mayor works full time plus some also. She said as Mayor of the City you are inundated with people that want to meet with you. She was fortunate that she was able to take a leave of absence from her full time job. She believes that if she had done other than work all those hours, she would not have been fulfilling her responsibilities. Having a part time Mayor in a full-time City makes no sense. Everything has changed since the 1915 charter was written so you would expect that the City's needs have changed. Innovation and changes have occurred and the form of government should keep up with the changes; the way the City manages its business, employees, and the major issues should change. The phrase if it is not broken do not fix it does not match the situation. We do not use quills and ink wells as primary tools to write or horses and buggies as our main transportation. No one takes notes at the Council table anymore, they have laptops. It is time to make the City's form of government more user friendly. Accountability is not a relevant issue because there will be qualified people running day to day operations and these are the people that work here. If you need information on Assessment, someone will be in that office to help you. Ideally the Mayor should not even sit at the City Council table. Whether there is a strong Mayor or a weak Mayor, there will be accountability. You do the best you can to provide answers and assistance to people.

The allocation of powers to the Commissioners creates the potential for gridlock and political gamesmanship; it does not matter who is sitting at the table, the form of government creates that kind of

mentality. V. Keehn explained that the administrators of each department administers and legislates their budget and it is a mangled up mess. It is not five budgets of five commissioners and a mayor; it is the entire city government's budget. There are no checks and balances to this form of government. There is no separation of powers. How can Commissioners vote on budgets that directly affect them? V. Keehn said that this form of government is unconstitutional because there is no separation of powers; there is a mangled mess occurring every two weeks at the City Council table and it bogs down progress and operations within the walls of City Hall.

Regarding length of terms, a four-year term for a Mayor would be ideal because it is hard to come in and learn a job and have to start campaigning all over again. If the City had a form of government with a legislative body and an administrative body, the Mayor should have a four-year term and legislators should have two-year terms.

She implored the Commission to consider a change in the form of government, there is nothing that can be done with the current form of government to improve it except change it.

Mayor Yepsen is looking forward to the Commission's analysis and any actions taken to update the city charter. She feels that the community must be educated that the charter is not a document that dictates attendance at the track or main street awards. When people say things are going really well so don't change the charter, it is not relevant because when they say it is not broken so do not fix it, they are taking about the economic impact of this city, not the charter. The investors, people moving here, the dynamics and demographics changing and the quality of life. It is not to say that the city government has not had an impact on that, but it is the collaboration between private and public sector; it is the incorporation of everyone's input and ideas into this City. There is room for improvement within City government and within city Hall and that is what the charter dictates. The Charter runs City government. The number one purpose for all of us is to serve the public and she reminds her staff of this every day and we should be finding better ways to serve the public and the taxpayers first and foremost and we should have a new charter that improves on how we do this.

The demands of the Mayor's office are at a high level of responsibility and very complex. And cover the entire spectrum from a constituent walking into the office needing housing assistance to a very complicated and often controversial land use issue. There is much that falls to the Mayor in reality and in perception. People call upon the Mayor's office to do just about everything. It is a rigorous position because of that and because you want to respond and try to help. You also want to attend the meetings, events and put forward initiatives. Most people do not understand this commission form of government including her fellow Mayors with whom she meets on a regular basis. She is not sure that the City gets taken as seriously as others and that troubles her because she works hard to represent the city on a Federal, State and local level and we deserve the most serious consideration. Often this city does not get the appropriate funding or recognition as being one of the most important cities in upstate New York. We need to find ways to include ourselves in the discussions with the big boys.

Specifically under the Mayor's section of the Charter, Mayor Yepsen believes we need a centralized personnel office and her office, HR and Civil Service are discussing how this will be accomplished; it is a mandate. There are still things in the 2001 Charter that have not been accomplished. The Administrator of Parks, Open Lands and Historic Preservation position is no longer relevant. Over the years it was funded then un-funded. This position should be called the sustainability coordinator and she chose to have this person report to the Director of Planning and Economic Development because she wants to make sure that everything is being done and that the position plays an integral part in the "City's strategic plan. This is very important. Also, the Recreation Commission should be changed to Parks and Recreation because we have several public parks including the Waterfront and the Blodgett property that do not have an administrative home. The Sustainability Coordinator is too busy writing grants and getting policies executed. The Planning and Economic Development area includes top-notch staff so she would not change much but the UDO process going on will evaluate the zoning ordinance and the process by which the land use boards function.

There is a requirement to the public to be transparent and at this point a full time City Attorney is needed.

Mayor Yepsen said the position is much more than full time to the extent that it is more like a lifestyle. It is non-stop, working 70 hours some weeks and 50 other weeks. Regarding accountability, there is not a formal process in place as elected officials so once the Charter is updated and in place, she recommends keeping some of the Commission together as a resource to oversee the implementation of the new Charter to ensure that things are being done as the Commission intended and as the voters instructed the City to do.

There are never enough checks and balances and the way the five silos are set up now is asking for gridlock and potential conflict. Mayor Yepsen feels the Mayor's term should be four years but she is not sure about the form of government. She likes the idea of staggered terms. The number one priority should be to encourage more people to run for office. She also believes the City Council should be larger because this is an important City so more voices of the tax payers are needed. So, if there was a City Council of 7 people, the terms should be staggered so not everyone is leaving office at the same time.

D. Dal Pos asked if there are things in the City Charter that inhibit your ability to do the job as Mayor.

Mayor Yepsen responded that there are some areas of the Charter that leave too much room for interpretation and need to be tightened. There could be legal ramifications if these are not tightened.

V. Keehn said that the way the Charter is written now does not hinder the job the Mayor does but what does hinder the mayor from doing what he/she should be doing is that there are heads of other departments that are at odds with the things the Mayor may want to achieve. The Council is at odds with each other too much and this form of government creates this. She compared it to allowing all school principals to weigh in on the decision to have a snow day rather than just the Superintendent.

B. Keramati asked if they believe that under the current charter that the citizens feel they are well represented in City Hall.

V. Keehn does not know how they would feel represented. There are people serving whose main concern is what goes on in their department. There are areas of the City that are not represented; there is no legislative body. The Commissioners only care about their departments and getting things passed to benefit only that department.

Mayor Yepsen does not believe that most people pay a lot of attention to the charter or understand it. They do not understand how it impacts their lives.

K. Klotz commented that all the incumbents were re-elected at the last election and this is a democracy.

E. DeSette stated that there is a high quality of workers in City Hall.

K. Klotz said he was surprised and impressed by the quality of City workers overall when he first came to City Hall.

E. DeSette said that the Mayor and each Commissioner have the ability to increase staff as need allows. He questioned the need for more qualified elected officials because sitting on the City council currently is one Public Safety retiree, one Dentist, one Librarian, a CPA and a Professional Consultant with a college degree. We are getting quality people to run for office.

Mayor Yepsen said that more are needed; people should be encouraged to run for office and she want to encourage new people, especially women to run.

E. DeSette said that at one time the City seemed to be cut up into wards- people lived in Little Dublin and then moved to the East Side as they became successful. If you can't reach your commissioners and Mayor, it is a problem and wards might not be necessary.

V. Keehn stated that she is not suggesting that the people that sat or are sitting on the City Council have not done everything possible to do the best they can in their respective offices.

K. Klotz suggested that the salaries be increased to enable people to consider making a living in these positions. If you look at recent history, most City Council leaders have been retired or independently wealthy. He does not expect to attract lawyers but you would get people that would consider working for \$60k. In the past what has driven the people are the volunteers of the City.

E. DelSette said the salary issue should be resolved. Is it possible to individualize the salaries based on the amount of time spent or is required? Can we individualize propositions on the ballot, such as Proposition 1, raise the salary of the Mayor or raise the salary of the full time City Attorney.

T. Izzo said there is no provision within this Charter that prohibits one city Council member from making more money than another. You can put it on the ballot but it could complicate voting. He has worked in City Hall for 30 years, serving 8 Mayors and he has never seen a part time Mayor; this is a very significant issue.

M. Jones noted that K.Klotz and M. Lenz held two positions on the City Council including Commissioner of Finance and Mayor and J. M. O'Connell was Deputy Commissioner of Public Safety, Commissioner of Finance and Mayor. He asked if this previous experience helps Mayors. K. Klotz said that knowledge of City Finances gives an important grasp of the fiscal workings which is an asset to the Mayor's office but that prior experience is not necessary.

B. Thomas asked if a City Council that was only legislative and not administrative should come from wards or districts. Would that format necessitate more training for volunteer boards? How would you suggest to implement the Charter and enforce the implementation?

Mayor Yepsen said that the Mayor has many appointments and when she makes those appointments, she tries to look at geography, skills, and experience but geography is especially important. The terms for DRC, Zoning and Planning Board is 7 years and because there are 7 members, only one is appointed per year so you are not moving all the members out at once.

Regarding the implementation of the charter, if there are questions or concerns, there should be a group of Commission members to provide oversight to be sure that it is being implemented properly.

V. Keehn said there was a committee that did that and they met with each new Council member and they were mildly successful. She appointed someone to the POSH position only to have the next Mayor de-fund the position which indicates that the Charter is only as good as the people that are willing to comply with it and implement the Charter. People are going to do what they want. She commented that a 7-year term for citizen boards is ample and should not be extended. A person that volunteers their time for 7 years has done their due diligence.

V. Keehn said that City Council members could be legislators for specific wards or at large or a combination; there will always be differences. Disagreements should not affect daily operations of the City is there are separate administrative and legislative bodies. By separating the two authoritative bodies, many problems would disappear.

K. Klotz said it is hard to find good people to commit to land use boards; and this is a factor that effects the way City government runs. It is time consuming and lots of responsibility. It is very important fact especially harder if you increased the size of those boards. He does not have an answer regarding enforcement. You could write into the charter a standing committee with an enforcement mechanism. Disagreements are going to happen. If people can't follow decent rules of civility, there are two year terms and they can be voted out. When a person is elected to represent the City, you must represent the City; wards would pull people into one group versus the other, one neighborhood over the other.

P. Kane said he was asked by K. Klotz to serve on the DRC and he expressed concern that he was a republican but K. Klotz said to do the job, it does not matter what your political party is, you are to serve the public.

D. Dal Pos said that he is surprised that the majority of people that have served on a city council come from a small part of the City. How can we broaden that base so there is more representation throughout the City?

J. Yepsen said that the model that parties use is to have representatives from each District; supposedly so each neighborhood is represented on the committee. If you make it an ad hoc position, you might have more interest. It is important to open it widely; more in the form of a political party/committee structure.

K. Klotz represents Geysers Crest; 25% of registered voters were in that region. The rest of the City Council is on the East side or close to downtown.

P. Kane said that looking at where representatives live, it is a narrow portion of the City and this seems to be a concern.

J. Yepsen noted that almost one third of registered voters are no-party affiliate.

K. Klotz said there are neighborhoods with no voice and there are neighborhoods with active voices.

J. Yepsen said that our duty as Mayor is to reach out and attend those neighborhood meetings. If you do not attend those meetings, representation is a problem.

D. Dal Pos said it is an observation; it was a surprising thing to learn.

E. DeSette said that people who have wealth and power came from certain sections of the City and this has changed tremendously. There were groups that were powerhouses in the City. People in newer neighborhoods had more recognition when they served on boards. The power of political parties is still very significant.

M. Sanghvi said that speaking about the future; voices are heard from different neighborhoods. There are many things in the community that affect decisions.

V. Keehn said that Geysers Crest has no sidewalks and people were constantly putting in cut-outs so they could park inside their property and off the street. Others in the same neighborhood wanted legislation to make the cut-outs illegal because it impacted the look of the neighborhood. She spoke to a lot of people in Geysers Crest because they were under-represented. If there was an opportunity to have someone from Geysers Crest run for an at-large position, they may have had more interest.

B. Wurtmann asked the Mayor and former Mayors to make the case as to why this time charter change would be different and succeed in changing the minds of voters that have resisted change in the past.

J. Yepsen said that only Mayors that have actually called an official Charter Commission; it is in the Charter that we are supposed to do this whether it is the Charter or the Comprehensive Plan, there are times when the charter has done a good job to educate the public. This Commission's job is to get the message out to the public; 40% of people living here have moved here in the last few years.

V. Keehn said that she honestly does not have the confidence that a big change proposed would pass. It may take a whole new generation to make that happen. She was pleased to hear that R. Watkin has changed his attitude and now advocates a complete change in government and ten years ago he was adamantly opposed to change. A small vocal minority can get things done; recruit people that have had a change of heart to share it with the public. You can tweak and change the Charter and it is not going to make a difference. There must be significant changes made and the administrative and legislative branches should be separated.

K. Klotz said he is conflicted. We are in a different time and there are issues with the ways the City Council is functioning. He is putting it to the Commission that if it is hard to get it passed, so be it; this is a democracy, and it is not relevant whether people understand this form of government; it is a complex problem. There is human nature, there are people who do not work hard or do a good job and there are people that are argumentative. This charter allows any City Council member to appoint a committee on any subject and it could result in competing committees and any such impulses for conflict should be removed from the Charter. He said that salary increases were up to the City council, there was no reason to have a Charter change for changing salaries. There might be guidance on the restraints put on by the state and it would be beneficial for the Commission to do the research.

R. Kuczynski stated that what is not talked about is selling this to the people. He wants to know what worked and what should be done differently.

V. Keehn said that what the 2006 Charter Commission decided on was their own choosing. She had no insight into the details they were suggesting. It is not up to the sitting Mayor to infiltrate the Commission with his/her opinions on what should be done. Get foot soldiers to educate the public. As long as the City is beautiful and operating well, people may not care. She is not sure whether changes would improve the lives of city residents. Having an administrator like a Mayor running day to day operations should not be hindered by another department simply because it does not fit with their initiatives.

K. Klotz said that is a different vision. He feels that if you want to make changes, you should be recruiting and talking with other people. The key to the success of the 2000-2001 charter Commission was that they decided to avoid radical changes and attempted incremental changes that people would still get a sense of familiarity. Use modern language, add details.

V. Keehn said that no matter which Mayor puts together a Commission; the public will perceive it as a power grab and to change that put term limits in place so the existing City Council would probably not benefit from it and the changes might go over better.

P. Kane thanked everyone for their time.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

E. DelSette submitted a letter from the Executive Secretary of the Civil Service Commission requesting to interview with the Commission on how the Civil Service office functions.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**There being no further business, Vice chairman P. Kane asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. M. Jones moved and D. Delpas seconded to adjourn the meeting 9:00 p.m. Ayes all**

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Wagner  
Clerk

Approved:  
Vote:

