

City of Big Spring
Charter Committee Meeting
Minutes 02/10/2021

Meeting called to order by John Scott, committee chair.

Committee members present in person were John Scott, Nati Saldivar, Troy Tompkins. Committee members attending virtually were Pat Chesworth, A.J. Weaver and Elias Gamboa. Others in attendance were Mayor Shannon Thomason, Andrew Hagen, Todd Darden, and Charles Zech. Guest speaker Jodi Duck as also in attendance.

Public Comment Period – there were none present requesting to make comments.

Old Business

Discussion Related to Prior Action with Regards to Recommending Amendments to the City Charter

Cmte Chair J. Scott presented a consent item to the committee. At the prior meeting, the committee adopted a motion that the last sentence of the first paragraph of Article 4 Sect. 1A would be deleted: “Any individual who resides in the city may file for any of the six single member district places.” The consent item was adopted unanimously.

Cmte Chair J. Scott presented a consent item to the committee. At the prior meeting, the committee adopted a motion to change the last sentence of Article 4 Sect. 3 to read as follows: “They mayor, or any two councilmen and/or councilwomen may call the council together for a special meeting.” The consent item was adopted unanimously.

Discussion of Original Charter and Amendments

Mr. Zech addressed explained the concept of annexation and disannexation as relates to state law and the city charter. Mr. Zech advised that while no changes need to be made to our charter, protecting against disannexation could be achieved by requiring notice to the affected area and requiring public hearings relating to same. The chair reminded the members that such changes would need to be made during new business.

New Business

Approval of the Charter Committee Minutes from the Regular Meeting of Jan. 13, 2021. No discussion or comments. Motion to approve by N. Saldivar; 2nd by P. Chesworth. Approved unanimously.

Announcement by city of availability of Charter Committee email address:

charter@mybigspring.com

Guest speaker – Jodi Duck discussed “qualified voter,” “registered voter,” and “suspended voter” as defined by state of Texas law. Mr. Zech added some commentary to further explain.

City Manager & Staff Input - T. Darden requested that in Article 6 Sect. 1, the committee address change “city treasurer” to “finance director.” Chair J. Scott made note of same.

Discussion and Possible Action with Regards to Recommending Amendments to the City Charter, Articles IV, V, VI and Charter Law Generally

Article 4

Sect. 5 (3) – Mr. Zech noted there is a technical correction needed to bring into compliance, the language the committee inserted, and he would advise the committee accordingly. Zech indicated Mayor Thomason has provided him some template language.

Sect. 6 – Mr. Scott pointed out this provision dictates council proceedings be kept in a bound book.

Sect. 7 – Discussion of ordinances and resolutions and “minute orders.” Motion by A.J. Weaver to allow mayor to override any action passed by the city council. Motion failed for lack of a second.

Sect. 8. – P. Chesworth noted the requirement for “book form” archival of council ordinances. The Chair suggested a review of the city’s document retention practices and then addressing this item as a committee. There were no objections. Guest speaker Duck was recognized and advocated for continuing to use a “bound book.”

Sect. 9 – no changes

Sect. 10 – no changes

Sect. 11 – previously omitted per Mr. Zech

Sect. 12 – no changes

Sect. 13 – no changes

Sect. 14 – P. Chesworth suggested pronouns in this section be gender neutral. Motion to make pronouns gender neutral throughout the entire document by P. Chesworth; second by A.J. Weaver. Adopted unanimously.

The committee requested Mr. Zech to insert some clarifying language to make it clear that the city attorney, city judge, and internal auditor are appointed and terminated by council, not the city manager.

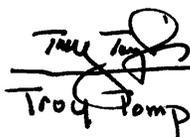
Sect. 15 – no changes

Committee Input

N. Saldivar asked whether citizens are able to petition council for charter changes. Mr. Zech indicated in the affirmative, as long as two years has passed since the charter was last amended. State law says a charter can only be amended every two years, per Mr. Zech.

T. Tompkins requested that the charter social media page include a hyperlink to the original charter document. S. Thomason agreed to work on that item.

There were no further comments. J. Scott adjourned the meeting.

 04/07/2021
Troy Tompkins, Committee Secretary