



City of Venice

401 West Venice Avenue
Venice, FL 34285
www.venicegov.com

Meeting Minutes City Council

Thursday, October 1, 2020

1:30 PM

Council Chambers and Virtual

Workshop - Charter, Meeting Procedures and Board Appointments

Instructions on How to Watch and/or Participate in the Meeting

[20-4707](#)

Instructions on How to Watch and/or Participate in the Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Feinsod called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Mayor Ron Feinsod, Council Member Richard Cautero, Vice Mayor Charles Newsom, Dr. Margaret Fiedler, Council Member Helen Moore, Council Member Nick Pachota and Dr. Joseph Neunder

ALSO PRESENT

City Attorney Kelly Fernandez, City Manager Ed Lavallee, City Clerk Lori Stelzer, Information Technology Director Christophe St. Luce, and Administrative Coordinator Mercedes Barcia.

In person: Mr. Cautero, Dr. Fiedler, Dr. Neunder and Mr. Pachota
Via video conferencing: Mayor Feinsod, Mr. Newsom and Ms. Moore

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Feinsod led the Pledge of Allegiance.

I. COUNCIL ACTION/DISCUSSION

[20-4708](#)

Discuss Recommended Changes to the City Charter

Mayor Feinsod spoke to board appointments and public notice of vacancies.

Discussion took place regarding proposed amendments to the city charter, public transparency, reviewing the charter every ten years, having a charter review board, and amendment one regarding the city manager's signatory authority for operational activities.

Ms. Fernandez spoke to the charter review process, and addressing consensus items identified at strategic planning.

Ms. Stelzer responded to council questions on the last charter review date, and cost of a full charter review.

Discussion followed regarding selected charter improvements, ordinance and voter referendum requirement, public involvement in the process, and previous charter review.

Mayor Feinsod requested a show of hands on doing a complete charter review. Vice Mayor Newsom raised his hand.

There was consensus not to do a complete charter review.

Discussion took place on Ms. Fernandez's memorandum, starting with amendment one.

Per council's request, Mr. Lavallee explained purpose for amendment.

There was consensus to approve amendment one.

Discussion followed on amendment two regarding timing of selection of vice-mayor.

There was consensus to approve amendment two.

Discussion followed on amendment three regarding term limits for council service.

There was consensus to approve amendment three.

Discussion followed on amendment four regarding required vote for ordinances, resolutions and contracts.

Ms. Fernandez explained intent of amendment.

Discussion continued regarding residents understanding voting concept and procedure for continuing resolutions, ordinances, or contracts to the next regular meeting.

There was consensus to approve amendment four.

Discussion followed on amendment five regarding board appointment process.

Mayor Feinsod spoke to board appointment selection process, public transparency, communication with applicants, and council's review of applications.

Discussion followed regarding simplifying process, considering a charter revision to allow council to make a motion and nominate candidates, including all relevant applications on the agenda, council's ability to view all applications, and ranking system.

Ms. Moore spoke to meeting process and Mayor Feinsod's comment on board appointments by previous mayor.

Mayor Feinsod called for a point of order and noted he repeated what he was told regarding the previous mayor's process.

Discussion ensued on board appointment process and amendment five.

There was consensus to approve amendment five.

Discussion took place on amendment six regarding appointment of finance director, police chief and fire chief by the city manager.

Per council's request, Mr. Lavalley provided background on appointment, suspension and removal of key personnel.

Discussion followed regarding council's involvement with appointment of key personnel, the city manager's qualification on staffing decisions, and council's responsibility to set policy and the city manager's responsibility to run daily operations of the city.

Mayor Feinsod passed the gavel to Vice Mayor Newsom and left the meeting at 2:42 p.m..

Discussion continued on amendment language and charter officer evaluations.

Mayor Feinsod returned to the meeting at 2:44 p.m. and Vice Mayor Newsom returned the gavel to Mayor Feinsod.

Discussion ensued on selection of personnel to be at the discretion of the city manager, council's involvement in the initial appointment of key positions, modifying amendment language by striking the word "consent" and reading "Provided, however, the city manager shall, with advice of the city council", and removing last sentence regarding the city manager suspending or removing personnel.

Ms. Fernandez responded to council questions on the purpose of last sentence.

Mr. Lavallee noted council should make their decision based on principle.

There was consensus to approve amendment six to include reinstate the strikethrough wording on appointment of finance director, police chief and fire chief, remove the word "consent", and delete the last sentence.

Recess was taken at 3:01 p.m. until 3:11 p.m.

There was consensus to approve amendments seven through ten.

[20-4709](#)

Discuss Procedure for Appointments to City Advisory Boards

Discussion took place regarding number of applications received, council involvement in the selection of advisory board members, vetting process, recruitment of qualified candidates, notifying applicant of selection and council meeting date, having a collective process, and notifying candidates of sunshine laws.

Mayor Feinsod commented on allowing council to view applications and recommendations prior to a council meeting.

Discussion followed regarding recommendations not approved by council, permitting council to make a motion for an alternate candidate, and ranking process for applicants.

Ms. Fernandez advised ranking process will have to be done at a public meeting.

Mr. Lavallee commented on public advertisement, opportunity for council involvement without changing charter, and responded to council questions on how vacancies are publicly noticed.

Ms. Moore rejoined the meeting at 3:28 p.m.

Discussion ensued on explaining sunshine law restrictions to applicants, adding a link on the city's website on sunshine requirements, ranking process and announcement, interview process of applicants, having diversity on committees, publicizing vacancies, filling positions, keeping appointment process simple, soliciting nominations and recommendations from advisory boards, applications for boards that have quasi-judicial hearings, ranking system, transparency, and opportunity for council to interview candidates.

Ms. Fernandez explained ranking process.

Discussion continued on ranking system, candidate interview process, student board appointments, public noticing, making applications available to council, ranking system, and diversity on boards.

Dr. Neunder left the dais at 4:01 p.m.

Discussion followed on representing all areas of the city and ranking applicants.

Dr. Neunder returned to the dais at 4:02 p.m.

Discussion ensued on representing the community, ceremonial mayor position, and applications for boards that have quasi-judicial hearings.

There was consensus that advisory board vacancies will be publicly noticed, applications will be available for council's review, council members will rank applicants, and the city clerk will tabulate the rankings.

[20-4710](#)

Discuss Meeting Procedures and Rules

Discussion took place on Ordinance No. 2020-27 and removing "or proposing a presentation by a third party" under Section 2-52(3), adding a segment on the order council members speak during a council meeting, including protocol for continuation of regular council meetings containing quasi-judicial hearings, and clarifying language in Section 2-74 Special Meetings on how special and emergency meetings are called.

There was consensus for the city attorney to include council's recommendations in the ordinance.

II. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was none.

III. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 4:19 p.m.

ATTEST:

Mayor - City of Venice

City Clerk