

**City of Maple Heights
Charter Review Commission Meeting Minutes**

Via Video/Teleconference

June 24, 2021

Chairwoman Katurah Johnson called the City of Maple Heights 2021 Charter Review Commission Meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. with the following Charter Review Commission members present via video/teleconference: Ms. Katurah Johnson, Ms. Lakiesha Nevels, Ms. Daphne Coleman, Ms. Angela Oglesby and Ms. Lois Poole. Ms. Rikki Brown, Ms. Almeida Dye and Ms. Jackie Albers were absent and excused. Since there were only four (4) voting members present the meeting could not begin due to a lack of quorum. Ms. Rudolph joined the meeting at 6:18 p.m. Ms. Mitchem joined the meeting at 6:20 p.m. With six (6) voting members in attendance, a quorum was present and Ms. Johnson began the meeting at 6:20 p.m. Mr. Wilborn joined the meeting at 6:23 p.m. Also present were Clerk of Council Leonette Cicirella Johnson, Council President Ron Jackson and Council Members Jones, Madden and Agee. Law Director Frank Consolo was absent and excused.

MINUTES: The Minutes of the April 22, 2021 Meeting were postponed for review at a later Meeting. Ms. Johnson asked if there were any changes or corrections regarding the Minutes of the May 27, 2021 Meeting. There were no changes or corrections. Ms. Johnson said if there no objections, the Minutes of the May 27, 2021 Meeting would be approved by unanimous consent. There were no objections.

Ms. Johnson said there was no Old Business on the agenda for tonight's meeting so the Commission would consider Article XV as the first item of New Business.

Ms. Johnson said this Article concerned the Civil Service Commission and said that Section 1 covered Membership, Term, Vacancy and Removal. Ms. Johnson asked if there were any questions on Section 1. There were no questions.

Moving to Section 2 regarding Procedure; Examinations, Ms. Johnson read this Section and said it described the City personnel who were not covered by the Civil Service Commission and also those who were covered by the Civil Service Commission such as members of the Police Department and Fire Department. Ms. Johnson said this Section was recently amended in 2017.

The Clerk of Council said the recent amendment was to include the language that permitted lateral entry (lateral transfers) for the positions of Police Cadet and Fire Cadet.

Mr. Jackson said that back in 2017 Council had approved this Charter Amendment to be presented to voters at the request of the Administration to allow the Police and Fire Departments to hire experienced personnel without the need for the usual competitive written exams.

Ms. Johnson asked if there were any comments or questions. There were no comments or questions on this Section.

Ms. Johnson said Section 3 - Conflicting Provisions stated that the decisions of the Maple Heights Civil Service Commission "shall prevail over State provisions with respect to the City of Maple Heights."

The Clerk of Council said this provision was an example of the exercise of home rule by the City and that the legislation passed by Council in 2017 specifically assigned this power to the City's Civil Service Commission over State law.

Ms. Johnson asked if there were questions on this Section. There were none.

Ms. Johnson read Article XVI, Section 1 that described the Establishment and Appointment of the Planning and Zoning Commission. She asked if there was any discussion by the Commission on this Section. There was no discussion by the Commission.

Ms. Johnson read Section 2 regarding the Powers and Duties of the Planning and Zoning Commission and asked if there were any questions of discussion on this section. There were no questions or discussion.

Moving to Section 3 - Mandatory Referral to the Planning and Zoning Commission, Ms. Johnson read this Section and asked if there were any questions.

Ms. Wilborn asked about the sixty (60) day time frame included in this Section and why would the members of the Planning and Zoning Commission fail to do their job within this time.

In response, the Clerk of Council said the failure to act within the sixty (60) day deadline was not a function of the Planning and Zoning Commission members not doing their job, but it was included to cover situations such as when additional information regarding a case may be needed by the Commission that was not within their control to obtain.

The Clerk of Council said she would defer to Mr. Jackson as a former member and Chair of the Planning and Zoning Commission for his input on this issue.

In response, Mr. Jackson said another reason for a failure to act may be like what happened earlier with tonight's meeting not having a quorum. He said sometimes circumstances occur that just cannot get it done. Mr. Jackson said the sixty (60) day deadline also had to be considered along with the previous sentence.

Mr. Wilborn thanked Mr. Jackson and the Clerk for this clarification.

Ms. Johnson said Section 4 concerned Recommendations By the Planning and Zoning Commission and asked if there were any discussion or questions. There were no questions or discussion.

Moving to Article XVII, Ms. Johnson said this Article described the boundaries of each of the Council Districts and said these boundaries were established in 1992. She asked the Commission if it accepted this Section "as is."

In response, Ms. Oglesby asked if any of the Council members present had any comments on this Section.

In response, Mr. Jackson said the Council Districts were okay as described and said there was a link in the on-line version of the City Charter that showed all the districts.

Ms. Johnson said she saw no need to change this Section.

Mr. Wilborn said he concurred with Ms. Johnson.

Ms. Johnson read Section 2 – Established; Continuance In Office and asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Ms. Johnson read Section 3 – Change In Boundaries and asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Wilborn asked the Council members present would there be any reason to change the boundaries.

In response, Councilwoman Jones said one reason to change the boundaries would be if there was a loss of population in the City. She said if the number of Council Districts would be changed, then the boundaries would also need to be changed. Ms. Jones said the Charter would need to be changed by the voters to do that though.

Mr. Jackson said he concurred with Ms. Jones and that a few elections ago there were Charter Amendments to reduce the number of Council members from seven (7) to five (5) and to eliminate the Office of Council President. He said both of these issues were strongly rejected by the voters.

Ms. Jones said those issues had been presented as cost-saving measures at the time.

Moving to Article XVIII – Nominations and Elections, Ms. Johnson read Section 1 concerning Regular Municipal Elections and asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Wilborn said it was kind of confusing. Ms. Johnson said this Section described the time for the Municipal elections as being held during odd-number years.

Ms. Johnson read Section 2 - Ballots and asked if there was any discussion on this Section. She said this Section was straight-forward.

Ms. Johnson read Section 3 – Nonpartisan Primary Election; Petitions. She said this Section made provision for September primary municipal elections and that the requirements for the petitions were described in Subsections (a) through (e).

Ms. Johnson asked if there were any questions or comments on this Section. She said this Section was also straight-forward.

Ms. Johnson read Section 4 entitled Laws to Apply and asked if there were any questions. There were no questions.

Ms. Johnson said this concluded the work on the agenda for tonight's meeting. She thanked everyone who attended. Ms. Johnson asked if the Commission wanted to schedule their next meeting for Thursday, July 8, 2021 or just stay with the meeting scheduled for Thursday, July 22, 2021. It was the consensus of the Commission to keep with the schedule for their next meeting on Thursday, July 22, 2021.

Ms. Johnson said the agenda for the Commission’s next meeting would include Charter Articles XIX, XX and XXI.

There being no further business, Ms. Johnson adjourned the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

Passed: July 22, 2021

ATTEST:

S/S Leonette Cicirella Johnson, Clerk of Council