Agenda
Charter Commission Meeting
City of St. Louis Park
October 27, 2025
5:30 p.m. – St. Louis Park City Hall

The St. Louis Park Charter Commission meets in person in the Westwood Room located on the third floor of St. Louis Park City Hall, 5005 Minnetonka Blvd.

1. **Call to order**
2. **Roll call**
3. **Minutes**
   a. March 10, 2025 Charter Commission meeting
   b. September 30, 2025 Charter Commission orientation
4. **Old Business**
5. **New Business**
   a. Review and consider proposed amendments to commission bylaws
   b. Discuss implementing regular review of peer city charter commission activities
   (*Note: this is a verbal update and discussion; there is no staff report*)
6. **Future Meetings**
7. **Communications**
8. **Adjourn**

Members of the public can attend St. Louis Park Charter Commission meetings in person. Generally, it is not commission practice to receive public comment during meetings. Official minutes of meetings are available on the city website once approved by the commission. Charter Commission meetings are not recorded or broadcast.

If you need special accommodations or have questions about the meeting, please call 952.924.2505.

UNOFFICIAL MINUTES
Charter Commission Meeting
St. Louis Park, Minnesota
March 10, 2025
5:30 p.m. – St. Louis Park City Hall

1. Call to order.

Chair Dwyer called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Roll call and attendance.

Members present: Gary Carlson, Lynne Carper, Jim de Lambert, Terry Dwyer, Andrew Rose and Henry Solmer.

Members absent: Jim Brimeyer

Others present: Melissa Kennedy (city clerk), Amanda Scott-Lerdal (deputy city clerk)

3. Approval of minutes.

a. Minutes of April 29, 2024, Charter Commission meeting

Chair Dwyer requested a minor correction to update the term "group" to "commission".

It was moved by Commissioner de Lambert, seconded by Commissioner Carlson, to approve the minutes with the change as proposed. The motion passed 6-0.

4. Old business

Chair Dwyer asked the commission if there was any old business to consider. He confirmed no commissioners wanted to renew conversations around amendments to Chapter 12 that were previously discussed.

5. New business

a. Election of officers

Chair Dwyer suggested keeping the current officers in place since the commission had not met or conducted any official business since they were appointed in 2024.

It was moved by Commissioner de Lambert, seconded by Commissioner Rose, to appoint Terry Dwyer to the position of Chair, Jim de Lambert to the position of Vice Chair and Lynne Carper to the position of Secretary of the Charter Commission. The motion passed 6-0.

b. Approve 2024 annual report

It was moved by Commissioner Carper, seconded by Commissioner Rose, to approve the 2024 annual report. The motion passed 6-0.

c. Legislative update (verbal discussion)

Ms. Kennedy updated the commission on the city's current legislative platform and proposed legislation that is being monitored, particularly as it relates to elections and ranked-choice voting.

The commission expressed a desire to ensure that local control was retained to be able to choose the electoral method for city offices to preserve the city's ability to utilize ranked-choice voting for local elections.

It was moved by Commissioner Rose, seconded by Commissioner Solmer, to direct staff to write a letter on behalf of the Charter Commission expressing continued support of ranked-choice voting and legislation that would allow cities to choose the electoral method for local offices. The motion passed 6-0.

6. Future meetings

Chair Dwyer asked for an update on recruitment to fill vacancies on the commission.

Ms. Kennedy and Ms. Scott-Lerdal reviewed the recruitment efforts to date, noting that while several applications had been received, there were still more vacancies than applicants. The timing of appointments and review of applications was under the purview of the district court.

The commission agreed it was important to get new applications processed so that vacancies could be filled as soon as possible.

Ms. Kennedy stated in terms of recruitment, one of the most effective strategies continues to be personal outreach from current members.

Commissioner Carper proposed several outreach strategies, including advertising and promotion in the *Sun Sailor*. He noted speaking to groups and tabling at events, similar to the outreach efforts related to elections, could be effective as well. He agreed that current commissioners are also a great resource as they are all active in the community and can encourage others to get involved.

Ms. Kennedy stated staff would continue to work to promote the opportunities on the commission. She noted that one thing that may help from a recruitment perspective was a more consistent meeting schedule.

The commission discussed their primary role in management and oversight of the charter and stated it is hard to meet regularly if there is not a need or work for them to focus on. They noted they met more frequently when they were considering changes or the council asked the commission to look at specific topics, such as the change to implement ranked-choice voting.

Commissioner Carper stated the commission could consider regular reviews of each section of the charter if they want to meet more frequently.

Commissioner Rose stated he wants to make sure the council understands the commission is available and ready to assist if needed.

Chair Dwyer stated he was not in favor of exploring changes to the charter simply to give the commission something to do. He noted that a lot of work has been done to get the charter to a place where it is fairly well written and does not need a lot of work. He suggested the commission could consider researching what other charter cities are working on or issues they may be having and then using that as a tool to look at our own charter's language and practices.

Vice Chair de Lambert stated the charter is a well written document and he does not feel the need to do continuous review to make up work or look for an issue. He appreciates that the commission is prepared to do work that is responsive and meaningful.

Ms. Kennedy stated based on what she is hearing from the commission, perhaps they want to consider ways they could be active in the space of amplifying their work, increasing visibility in the community and educating people on what the charter is, why it matters, the role of the commission and how they complement the work of the council.

Chair Dwyer appreciated the conversation and stated a more consistent cadence and meeting schedule may help, particularly in recruitment efforts.

The commission set the next meeting for October 27, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

7. Communications

8. Adjournment

It was moved by Commissioner Carper, seconded by Commissioner Carlson to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 6-0.

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Melissa Kennedy, city clerk

UNOFFICIAL MINUTES
Charter Commission Orientation
St. Louis Park, Minnesota
September 30, 2025
5:30 p.m. – St. Louis Park City Hall

Chair Dwyer welcomed those in attendance at 5:31 p.m. Attendance was not required for this optional orientation session, and no official business was conducted.

Members present: Terry Dwyer, Jim de Lambert, Tucker Theide, Sheila Glancy Letscher, Jim Brimeyer, Deb Brinkman, Henry Solmer, Gary Carlson, Lynne Carper

Others present: Soren Mattick (city attorney), Amanda Scott-Lerdal (deputy city clerk)

Chair Dwyer introduced the orientation as an opportunity for new and current commissioners to meet one another, learn about the Charter Commission's role from the city attorney, and learn how to participate in the first regular meeting of the Charter Commission on Oct. 27, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.

Chair Dwyer asked all in attendance to share their experiences with the Charter Commission and/or their path to being recently appointed. Each commissioner spoke briefly about themselves.

Mr. Mattick gave a brief overview of the mechanisms by which the Charter Commission conducts business, including amendments to the city charter and the commission's relationship to the city council. He detailed the provisions of the city charter that are unique to St. Louis Park, including the extent to which conflicts of interest are detailed. Mr. Mattick described how the Charter Commission may make recommendations to the city council to amend the charter. If an amendment is proposed by ordinance, statute requires unanimous approval by the council. An amendment could also go before the public as a ballot measure. He gave examples to illustrate how charter commissions can thus work proactively through their city council or reactively to specific situations as needed. He noted that it is generally good practice to periodically review the city charter for mechanical maintenance work, if not operational changes.

Chair Dwyer reviewed the Charter Commission's history, bylaws, parliamentary procedure in meetings, and Minnesota Open Meeting Law. He noted that the role of the Charter Commission is authorized under state law, and membership to the commission is appointment by the district court rather than appointment by the city council, as is the case in other city boards and commissions. He referred those in attendance to the Charter Commission meeting minutes of Dec. 6, 2011, as an example of the median work that commissioners might see when considering a charter amendment. Chair Dwyer also noted how meetings are conducted, including how parliamentary procedure assists with tracking the process of motions and votes.

Vice Chair de Lambert added that using parliamentary procedure in meetings assures that all commissioners present have the fair and equal opportunity to speak and vote their conscience during meetings.

The orientation concluded at 6:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Amanda Scott-Lerdal, deputy city clerk

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Charter Commission
Meeting Date: October 27, 2025
Agenda Item: 5a

Executive summary

Title: Review and consider proposed amendments to commission bylaws

Recommended action: Motion to approve amendments to commission bylaws.

Summary: The current Charter Commission bylaws were adopted in 2010. The bylaws were discussed as a part of the new member orientation workshop held in September. The purpose of bylaws is to provide a procedural framework for how a commission operates and conducts business by outlining its operating procedures and governance. Bylaws cannot conflict with applicable state laws. They ensure consistency and establish procedures for meetings and general decision making.

The Chair of the commission asked for an item to be added to the agenda related to reviewing and updating the commission bylaws. The city clerk reviewed the bylaws and has provided a draft with proposed changes for consideration to add clarity, reflect current practices, and align with best practices related to the conduct of business by the city and commission.

A draft of the proposed changes is included for the commission to review. Strikethrough language is proposed to be removed and underlined language is proposed to be added. The primary reasoning for the changes proposed is as follows:

- Item #1 – changes proposed to clean up language for clarity and to reflect current practices related to notice of meetings, delivery of meeting materials to commissioners, and access to information by the public. These changes align with the open meeting law and are consistent with current city practices related to other official bodies, such as the city council.
- Item #3 – changes proposed to reflect current and actual practice of the commission.
- Item #4 - changes proposed to clean up language for clarity and to reflect current practices. These changes align with the open meeting law and are consistent with current city practices related to other official bodies, such as the city council.
- Item #5 – language updated for clarity and accuracy.
- Item #9 – language added to 9(b) to define the term "annual meeting". Language added to 9(c) and removed from 9(d) to clarify and reflect current practice of the commission. In the last 10 years (at least) the commission has not used a ballot to elect officers and has chosen to elect officers by motion and majority vote of commission members present.
- Item #10 – language updated for clarity and consistency.

Strategic priority consideration: Not applicable.

Supporting documents: Charter Commission bylaws – DRAFT with proposed amendments

Prepared by: Melissa Kennedy, city clerk

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St. Louis Park City Charter 1955 2005 Fifty Golden Years as a Charter City

St. Louis Park Charter Commission Bylaws
Adopted ~~March 10, 2010~~ October 27, 2025

1. The commission shall hold regular meetings at the call of the chair or at the call of three (3) commissioners to conduct business and act on items on the agenda. Meetings can be cancelled or rescheduled at any time, provided that the commission ~~shall~~ meets at least once during each calendar year. Notice of each regular meeting shall be posted at St. Louis Park City Hall and shall be ~~mailed or delivered~~ provided at least ~~eight~~ three days prior to the meetings to all commission members ~~and to any persons or organization upon reasonable request.~~ The public can access the agenda and all agenda materials on the city website or by contacting the city clerk's office.

2. Quorum to transact commission business shall constitute of eight (8) members or a majority of those seated.

3. ~~At each meeting, reasonable time shall be allocated for presentations from members of the public then in attendance.~~ The commission may request presentations ~~upon~~ on any issue from specific members of the public at any meeting.

4. Special meetings of the Charter Commission may be called to conduct business that requires commission action prior to the next regular meeting ~~at any time~~ by the Chair of the commission or by five (5) commissioners by filing a written statement with the city clerk. The city clerk must post notice of the date, time, place, and purpose of the special meeting at city hall, on the city website, and provide notice to all commissioners at least three (3) days prior to the meeting. The presence of any member of the commission at a special meeting shall constitute a waiver of any formal notice requirement unless the commissioner appears only to object to the holding of such meeting. ~~upon written notice mailed or delivered provided five three (3) days prior to the meeting, and an attempt should be made to notify each member by telephone.~~

5. A majority of the members present at any meeting shall be competent to decide any matter except a resolution to amend the St. Louis Park Home Rule ~~City~~ Charter. A charter amendment must ~~carry~~ be approved by a vote of not less than a majority of the commission members. If a resolution to amend receives a vote of a majority of those present, but less than a majority of commission members, it shall be carried over and reconsidered at the next meeting.

6. The Chair has the right to speak and vote on any issue before the commission.

7. Any vote involving a charter amendment or change must be made by roll call vote.

8. No proxy votes may be accepted.

9. Annual election of officers:

  a. The commission shall elect its own officers, consisting of a Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary.

  b. The election shall be conducted at the annual meeting with the terms of office remaining through the conclusion of the annual meeting. For the purposes of this section, "annual meeting" is defined as the first meeting held in each calendar year.

c. All officers shall be elected by motion, and a majority vote of the commission members present.

~~d. If a majority vote is not received by an individual on the first ballot, (a secret ballot may be requested by any commission member) a second ballot between the two candidates who receive the highest number of votes shall be conducted.~~

10. All commission offices (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary) vacated for any reason shall be filled ~~by a special election held~~ at the first meeting after the vacancy occurs. Officers shall be elected by motion, and a majority vote of the commission members present.

11. Any member may be removed at any time from office, by written order of the district court, the reason for such removal being stated in the order. When any member has failed to perform the duties of office and has failed to attend four (4) consecutive meetings without being excused by the commission, the secretary of the charter commission shall file a certificate with the court setting forth those facts.

12. All resolutions relative to charter amendments shall be reviewed by the city attorney prior to submission to the city council.

13. Except as otherwise stated in these rules, The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure shall prevail.

Adopted on October 30, 2006; amended September 10, 2008; September 9, 2009; March 10, 2010; October 27, 2025