

AGENDA
CHARTER COMMISSION
City Council Chambers
October 12, 2022
5:00 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

II. ACCEPTANCE OF REQUESTED EXCUSED ABSENCES

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. January 12, 2022

IV. COMMUNICATIONS

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

A. ELECTION OF PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT

B. DISCUSSION ITEM: ORDINANCE MODERNIZATION TASKFORCE

VII. ADJOURNMENT

REMINDER: Pursuant to the Charter Commission Rules of Procedure: “[o]nly absences due to personal emergency or illness, or absence from the city will be excused and only if prior notice is given to the president or secretary of the commission.”

Please notify the City Clerk’s Office on or before 10:00 a.m. on October 12, 2022, if necessary to request an excused absence, by e-mail to ibjohnson@duluthmn.gov or by phone to (218) 730-5500.

MINUTES
CHARTER COMMISSION
City Council Chambers
January 12, 2022
5:00 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

II. ACCEPTANCE OF REQUESTED EXCUSED ABSENCES: None

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. October 13, 2021 – unanimously approved.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS:

A. CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING DEPUTY FIRE CHIEFS - Received

B. CITY ATTORNEY SUBMITTING DRAFT ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER V, SECTION 36, OF THE CITY OF DULUTH HOME RULE CHARTER, 1912, AS AMENDED, CHANGING MAXIMUM NUMBER OF APPOINTED DEPUTY FIRE CHIEFS FROM TWO TO THREE - Received

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

A. ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER V, SECTION 36, OF THE CITY OF DULUTH HOME RULE CHARTER, 1912, AS AMENDED, CHANGING MAXIMUM NUMBER OF APPOINTED DEPUTY FIRE CHIEFS FROM TWO TO THREE.

Chief Krizaj:

This was previously introduced and tabled by the Commission at the time and it was returned to administration with no action taken. Now we have had some turnover in the Command staff and have received a budget for training from our City Council. Material that was included, was for reference, I included the requirements for Deputy Policy Chief so you could compare. The qualifications do not go through the Charter Commission but it is something we are working on separately. We are adding some qualifications and educational requirements.

We believe this is the right time for a change. We received a 100k increase to the training budget and additional dollars from the Minnesota Board of Training Education. Now the budget is between 125 and 150K. I believe the responsibility should be at a Supervisory level. Local 101 and Administration believe there should be two training positions and Local 101 is neutral as to whether that should be a Chief level position. The Training officer position is one that does receive OT, in the last two years due to COVID our training decreased, but even in 2019 and 2020, the Training Officer received OT. The pay is close to the starting point of Deputy Chief, there is some room for growth in the CDSA collective bargaining agreement, but there is no initial budgetary impact.

Commissioner Stolee:

From my observation, the City and the Fire Department has not grown and in recent weeks we have seen a number of employees leave at the same time there is a record number of calls that they are responding too. I see the challenge for the City as really recruitment and retention.

To be adding more administrative office personnel, adding more management could lead to greater turnover, more burnout.

I think this could add to the challenge of recruiting and training more FF.

My thought was to continue the same model until they can get fully staffed. To revisit when the Department is fully staffed.

Commissioner Matheson:

We know short staffing is a problem everywhere and I have also noticed

I am not sure that falls within the scope of what we do at the Charter Commission, that is more management. My question is should there be a 3rd Assistant Chief. If we are short staffing, are the Chief's tapped in-to to assist.

Chief Krizaj:

We are in the middle of a hiring process, we gave out 3 lateral transfers in December and we are still working through the hiring process for another 12. They are supposed to be onboarded on 1/12. We aren't actually adding a position, we are currently budgeted for 2 training officers, we are just changing one from a Training Officer to a Deputy Chief (supervisor). Our FTE count will remain the same. We do have 9 deployments, and staffing, it is always a concern. Our Deputy Chief's don't fall into operational (i.e. riding the rig) we do cover that typically with OT. At a fire like the Seaway, our Command staff does come in and fills higher level command positions. It does help us because we don't have to fill with a Captain or Training Officer, so they can fill the more traditional role.

Commissioner Matheson:

I think the last time our major concern is that the Union had not been consulted. I feel that has happened now. They sound neutral. Given you have done the work we ask, I would move to approve.

President Stauber:

Comm. Matheson. I believe you are correct

Commissioner Stolee:

I just wanted to say I appreciate the Chief's additional comments, that you are not adding a new position just transition one position is that correct?

Chief Krizaj:

Correct we will not be adding a position.

Commissioner Seim:

I support the motion but when I look at the language, under qualifications, under the, there are not and/ors between the clauses. With Fire it could be construed as you would need all three of those things. So maybe the City Attorney could look at that.

Chief Krizaj:

It does require a bachelor degree, but we are trying to give a little leeway, not to require all three of those things. We are in

Commissioner Greene:

That is also a change to the Code as opposed to the Charter?

Chief Krizaj:

Yes, that is my understanding as well

Attorney Hanke:

The edit could be made to the City Code by Ordinance, but the matter before is the Charter Amendment. but the intent was to add the "and" and that will be included when it goes to Council.

President Stauber:

I am very much in support of this. I know he is not here, but I will echo Commissioner Ness comments. I believe the management is best leave to the management and the Chief is selected by the Council for a reason, they should be allowed to do that, it is a large burden to go to the Charter Commission and then Council, and I do appreciate this being brought forward.

Motion was made, seconded and unanimously carried to approve.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made, seconded and unanimously carried to adjourn.

