

RAMSEY COUNTY CHARTER COMMISSION

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2020 - 7 P.M.

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 13D.021 and 13D.04 Subd. 3, Chief Legal Counsel of Ramsey County has determined that an in-person meeting is not practical or prudent because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Charter Commission members will participate by telephone or other electronic means. Public participation is available in-person only. The public may have in-person access to the live meeting at the Ramsey County Public Works Building, 1425 Paul Kirkwold Drive, Arden Hills, 55112. The audio recording of the September 14, 2020 meeting will be available online within 1 day of the meeting and linked via <https://www.ramseycounty.us/your-government/leadership/charter-commission/charter-commission-agendas-and-minutes>

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. ROLL CALL Attendance (Attachment – Members 7.6.2020)
3. Approval of September 14, 2020 Agenda – Agenda tabled from the August 3, 2020 meeting
4. Approval of February 3, 2020 Minutes (attachment)
5. Approval of August 3, 2020 Minutes (attachment)
6. Old Business
 - A. Resume Charter Review Discussion:
 - o Attachment: Home Rule Charter Review Comments (with attributes)
 - o Attachment: Ramsey County Charter Commission Research – December 6, 2019 (summary of three issues raised during Charter review):
 - Election vs. Appointment of the County Sheriff
 - Board of Commissioners’ Term Limits
 - Board of Commissioners’ Salaries
 - o Attachment: Ramsey County Charter Commission Timeline – December 4, 2019 (historical review of Charter Commission discussions regarding the above three topics)
 - B. Election vs. Appointment of Sheriff
 - o REFERENCE: Video clip of County Board meeting on July 21, 2020 re: County Board discussion on Office of the County Sheriff: http://stpaul.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish_id=f6a43e22-cb7f-11ea-93cb-0050569183fa (use scroll bar to start discussion at 2.20.50 (2 hours, 20 mins and 50 seconds) up to 3.00.34 (3 hours and 34 seconds). Note: this works best in Chrome browser (not Internet Explorer). This discussion includes County Board’s desire to hold community meetings, with a mention of Charter Commission.
7. New Business
 - A. Select Nominating Committee (minimum of 2 people) to bring slate of officers to October meeting
 - B. Recruitment Period to open September 1 – October 31 (attachment: Recruitment Process)
 - o Term expirations include
 - Joe Murphy – District 1 (term limit)
 - Emily Dunsworth – District 2
 - Jacquie Thomas – District 3
 - Bethany Winkels – District 4
 - Michael Lindsay – District 5

- Robert Humphrey – District 6 (term limit)
 - Angela Thies – District 7
 - Bill Kempe – District 8
8. Citizen Comments/Input (Individual speakers are limited to 3 min; Citizen Input capped at 30 minutes)
 9. Future Agenda Items (October 19, 2020)
 - A. County Manager’s presentation of Performance Measures and 2021 Supplemental Budget
 - B. Election of Chair and Vice Chair for 2021
 - C. Dates for 2021 Meetings
 - D. Farewell to Joe Murphy and Robert Humphrey
 10. Adjournment

Next Meeting: Monday, October 19, 2020 7 p.m. – Virtual Meeting for Charter Commission Members; Staff and public access to the meeting at a location TBD

Attachments:

- Charter Commission Members as of 7.6.2020
- February 3, 2020 Draft Minutes
- August 3, 2020 Draft Minutes
- Home Rule Charter Review Comments (with attributes)
- Ramsey County Charter Commission Research – December 6, 2019
- Ramsey County Charter Commission Timeline – December 4, 2019
- Recruitment Process

RAMSEY COUNTY CHARTER COMMISSION MEMBERS

Updated: July 6, 2020

Member	Contact	District	Term Expiration
Joe Murphy (Chair)	Vadnais Heights, MN 55127 djmurphy@onesco.net	1	11/5/20
Steven Reeves	White Bear Township, MN 55110 reeves23@comcast.net	1	11/5/22
Ache Wakai	New Brighton, MN 55112 achewakai@gmail.com	2	11/5/22
Emily Dunsworth	New Brighton, MN 55112 emdunsworth@gmail.com	2	11/5/20
Jacquelyn Thomas	St. Paul, MN 55117 villagemamajacquie@gmail.com	3	11/5/20
Nancy Anne Haas	St. Paul, MN 55117 nhaas@messerlikramer.com	3	11/5/22
Bethany Winkels	St. Paul, MN 55104 bethany.winkels@gmail.com	4	11/5/20
Sharon Garth	St. Paul, MN 55103 sgarth62@gmail.com	4	11/5/22
Michael Lindsay	St. Paul MN 55116 lindsaymichaelj@gmail.com	5	11/5/20
Joshua L. Ortiz	St. Paul, MN 55105 Ortiz.josh@gmail.com	5	11/5/22
Robert L. Humphrey	St. Paul, MN 55106 robert.humphrey@ci.stpaul.mn.us	6	11/5/20
Tony Parrish, Sr.	St. Paul, MN 55119 tonyrpsr@gmail.com	6	11/5/22
Angela Thies	White Bear Township MN 55110 amthieser@gmail.com	7	11/5/20
John O'Phelan	Maplewood, MN 55119 jop457@yahoo.com	7	11/5/22
Susan Majerus	Falcon Heights, MN 55108 surejam2000@yahoo.com	At Large	11/5/22
Bill Kempe (Vice Chair)	Maplewood, MN 55109 wckempe@yahoo.com	At Large	11/5/20
Laura Suess	St. Paul, MN 55104 laurasuess@gmail.com	At Large	11/5/22

Ramsey County Staff

Amy Schmidt, Assistant County Attorney
Ramsey County Attorney's Office
amy.schmidt@co.ramsey.mn.us

Janet Guthrie, Director of Administrative Services and Chief Clerk
County Board County Manager's Office
janet.guthrie@co.ramsey.mn.us

Laura J. Stevens, Probate Registrar
Second District Court
laura.stevens@courts.state.mn.us

Ramsey County Charter Commission

Minutes of February 3, 2020

The meeting was held at the Ramsey County Shoreview Library, 4560 Victoria St. N, St Paul with the following members in attendance:

	Members Present	Members Absent
District 1		Joe Murphy Steven Reeves
District 2	Emily Dunsworth Ache Wakai	
District 3		Jacquelyn Thomas Nancy Haas Sharon Garth
District 4	Bethany Winkels	
District 5	Michael Lindsay	
District 6	Robert Humphrey Tony Parrish Sr.	
District 7	John O’Phelan Angie Thies	
At Large	Laura Suess Susan Majerus	Bill Kempe
Also present:	Jolie Wood, Ramsey County Policy Analyst David Triplett, Elections Manager Jeff Stephenson, Ramsey County Attorney’s Office – Civil Division Director Janet Guthrie, Director of Administrative Services / Chief Clerk – County Board Jenny Xiong, Clerk Typist – County Manager’s Office	

1. Call to Order: Mike Lindsay volunteered to step in to chair the meeting as the chair and vice-chair were unavailable for this meeting. Mike called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m. Quorum was met at 8:16 PM. Without quorum, the agenda was modified to go through items that did not require formal action.
2. Introductions: Members introduced themselves. This was Angela Thies’ first meeting. Guests included Ramsey County Policy Analyst, Jolie Wood and Ramsey County Interim Elections Manager, David Triplett.
3. New Business:
 - A. Outreach Efforts for Elections and Census: Jolie Wood, PhD (refer to PowerPoint attached)
 - There is a proposed additional question about citizenship. Ramsey County has been working to promote the census since early 2018 through community engagement initiatives. Many people that need to be contacted through outreach to participate in the census are the same people that we need to reach out to participate in voting.
 - Mailings will start going to homes in March. New option: going online to respond or paper questionnaires. Census takers will go to homes that have not gone online or responded by paper forms. In December, Census Bureau will deliver counts to congress and the president where redistricting processing will begin.
 - Counting happens every 10 years to ensure fair representation for every state. Minnesota has not been growing as fast as other states and is on the verge of losing a seat in Congress.
 - The census data guides the amount of funding to states for important federal programs such as healthcare, food, education, housing and financial assistance programs.

- Individuals' personal information is protected, and everyone counts whether they're a citizen or not.
- Currently, we need census takers, especially those who can speak local languages.

B. Election Security: Dave Triplett

- There is an estimated 60,000-80,000 eligible residents that are not voting.
- Voter guides are being provided residents.
- Poll-books were implemented in 2019, which are quick, private, and can speak back to you.
- Redistricting should be complete in mid-February of next year.
- Ramsey County hired an IS security manager.
- Ramsey County is the only county in the state with a non-networked voting system.
- Performance metrics are aligned with turnout, which can all be found on the [Ramsey County Open Data Portal](#).
- There is a 46-day early voting period in Ramsey County.
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4. Approval of February 3, 2020 Agenda: Bethany motioned to approve agenda. Robert seconded. The agenda was approved unanimously.
5. Approval of October 21, 2019 Minutes: Sue motioned to approve minutes. Angie seconded. Minutes were approved unanimously.
6. Citizen Comments/Input: None.
7. Old Business: None.

C. Recruitment Period to Open March 1 – Closes April 30: 1 Opening – District 5 (attachments)

D. The Chief Clerk asked for clarification about the need for paper copies of the agenda packet being brought to the meetings. The majority indicated that providing paper copies would be useful. Paper copies will be provided for everyone.

8. Future Agenda Items:

- A. Welcoming new Charter Commission member
- B. Home Rule Charter Review (October ongoing)

C. Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made by Robert Humphrey, seconded by Bethany Winkels. The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jenny Xiong – Clerk Typist – County Manager's Office

Ramsey County Charter Commission

Minutes of August 3, 2020

The meeting was held through a virtual Zoom Meeting.

	Members Present	Members Absent
District 1	Joe Murphy	Steven Reeves
District 2	Ache Wakai	Emily Dunsworth
District 3	Nancy Haas Jacquelyn Thomas	
District 4	Sharon Garth Bethany Winkels	
District 5	Josh Ortiz	Michael Lindsay
District 6	Robert Humphrey	Tony Parrish, Sr.
District 7	John O’Phelan Angie Thies	
At Large	Laura Suess Susan Majerus Bill Kempe	
Also present:	Amy Schmidt, Ramsey County Attorney’s Office – Civil Division Jeff Stephenson, Ramsey County Attorney’s Office – Civil Division Janet Guthrie, Director of Administrative Services / Chief Clerk – County Board Jenny Xiong, Clerk Typist – County Manager’s Office Roy Magnuson, Ramsey County Sheriff’s Office – Public Information Officer Mary _____, unknown affiliation	

1. Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM.
2. Introductions: Members introduced themselves. This is Josh Ortiz’s first meeting.
3. Approval of August 3, 2020 Agenda: Chair Murphy asked for a motion to suspend agenda and schedule another meeting that has been properly noticed. Motion made by Bill Kempe, seconded by Robert Humphrey. Vote by roll call; motion passed.

A motion was made by Robert Humphrey to reschedule meeting for September 14, 2020 at 7:00 PM, seconded by Susan Majerus. Vote by roll call; motion passed.

4. Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made by Bill Kempe, seconded by Jacquelyn Thomas. The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Jenny Xiong – County Manager’s Office

Charter Commission: Review of Home Rule Charter Sept. 2019

Chapter	Contents	Contributor	Comments
1. Powers of the County	General grant, construction and exercise of powers		NONE
2. County Board of Commissioners	Composition, powers, organization, procedures	Laura Suess	Section 2.01 B Include term limits; as is, board members serve 4 years and continue to serve until successor is elected and takes office. I don't know much about the how long commissioners typically serve, but if they are anything like Congress, they are in office for life. While there is merit to the voters benefiting from a commissioner with years of experience, service without term limits could result in cronyism and stagnation. Term limits were considered but rejected in original charter.
		Sue Majerus	Section 2.01D - Composition County board determine amount of salary? Should be tied to performance measures determined between county manager and commissioner
		Bethany Winkels	Section 2.01D The Board Chair referenced the challenges with releasing the salary ordinance by July 1. In addition, #3 of this section determines that if an election is held on a compensations ordinance, that is the only way to increase the salary moving forward (but could be decreased by ordinance). This doesn't seem ideal, as after the first time it happens, you have elections on this ordinance moving forward. It also may not be a needed change at this time (a cross that bridge when we come to it situation).
		Laura Suess	Section 2.01DD Why do county board members and not the voters determine the board member salaries? This seems to be an inherent conflict of interest. Establish minimum salary that board members can receive (ie they can't take a pay cut) but give voters a voice. I suspect the commissioners earn a lot more than the average person working in Ramsey County. At a minimum the salary process must be transparent.
3. County Manager	Appointment/removal, powers and duties		NONE
4. Administrative Departments/Offices/Agencies	General provisions, purchasing officer, personnel officer		NONE
5. Ordinance and Resolution Procedures	Ordinance procedures, resolutions	Laura Suess	Section 5.04 A.2 Adoption of tax levy, as well as adoption and revision of county budget, is done by resolution not ordinance, so no public hearing is required. In the interest of transparency and voter engagement, tax levies and budget matters other than emergencies should be adopted by ordinance after public hearing and comment.
6. Coordination of Operational Services/Planning	Coordination and county plan	Bethany Winkels	Section 6.01 F Calls for a strategic plan being adopted no less than once a decade (but to be done periodically). What has been the frequency? Has it changed?
		Bethany Winkels	Section 6.01 G States the purpose of the charter commission's review of the budget. This would be good to discuss in anticipation of our next budget, including thoughts on how to best insure we "review and comment upon the county manager's budget proposals in terms of whether, in the view of the commission, such proposals implement the requirements set forth in the section for strategic, tactical, and public data and information systems planning."

Charter Commission: Review of Home Rule Charter Sept. 2019

Chapter	Contents	Contributor	Comments
		Sue Majerus	Section 6.02 County Plan D Related to service delivery. Term system I assume means application. With all new rfp's for applications the department must first assess if any department uses the same Or similar business process and collaborate new and replacement applications with one single vendor. Could result in same Application, but different modules to meet the departments business needs.
7. Nominations and elections	Nominations, elections, forfeiture of office, vacancy in County Attorney and Sheriff	Bethany Winkels	The role of the Board and the County Manager are clear in the charter. Are the roles of the County Attorney and Sheriff all laid out in statute? As the only other elected positions in the country, I found it strange that their roles weren't also laid out in the charter. Can we have those ordinances during our review of the charter to understand how they intersect?
8. Initiative, Referendum and Recall	Definition, procedures		NONE
9. Taxation and Bonding	Authority, certification of tax levy, obligations and bonding		NONE
10. Budget	Budget Process, administration, amendments and capital improvements plan	Laura Suess	A few things that strike me as an at large private citizen of the County include (1) Regarding the budget, there should be more public meetings than just the two that are scheduled to encourage more public participation. If someone is unable to attend both dates and are not aware that they can submit comments on the web site, their voices are not heard. Ideally the budget information could be broken down to just a few pages summarizing the data. As it is now, it is almost too much information for the average resident to digest. The average person may not want to speak at a meeting but they want to attend. (2) Somewhat related is a way for residents to see where their money goes in the forms of a story. The stories (such as someone who received homeless assistance) could be based on aggregated facts etc but people can relate better to seeing tangible examples of where their money is going. (3) I would love to see more community forums outside of budget talks for residents to learn information and provide feedback on county issues. I know there are publicly available informational sessions each month on specific subjects but they are clearly for government staff since they are in middle of the day and at the county court house. Having meetings in the evenings for working people, at spaces that are easy to attend such as a Ramsey County library (specifically in St. Paul if possible) would be helpful in the regard. Social media could be leveraged more effectively to obtain feedback on issues affecting residents.
11. Charter Provisions	Provisions, amendments and Charter Commission	Bethany Winkels	Section 11.02 This entire section would be good for the charter commission to discuss, so as to ensure everyone on the commission has a clear understanding of the process, and the role of the charter commission in that process.
		Bethany Winkels	Section 11.03 This section should also be reviewed as a group, so everyone has a clear idea of their role as commissioners*.
12. Transitional Provisions	Continuity, special laws superseded		NONE
Miscellaneous	Other	Sue Majerus	Could we get an update on recycling fees and how used. I couldn't find a specific language related to the fees and usage so interested in learning more
		John O'Phelan	Much of what I reflected on is how little I still know about procedures, processes and decisions that are made on behalf of Ramsey County residents. I have lived here my entire life and worked for the County now over 20+ years yet I'm still not attune to this critical part of how our future is discussed and decided on. I even get the County Board agenda and I know I still miss out on much of this. It would be good for our Charter to discuss how Ramsey County communicates to our RC residents to keep them in the loop on public forums, Board discussions, etc. 1. Example 1: Living in Maplewood I get a monthly newsletter updating me on what's happening. 2. Example 2: How many households (and people) live in Ramsey County and how many receive updates on the above matters and how is that communicated (i.e. email. snail mail) to them?

*Appointees to the Charter Commission are referred to as members in the Home Rule Charter.

Overview

On October 2019, the Charter Commissions brought up three topics of discussion related to the Ramsey County Home Rule Charter. There were questions regarding election of the Sheriff, and the setting of salaries and term limits of the Board of Commissioners. Research was completed by reviewing the previous Charter Commission agenda items and minutes from 1992 through 2015. This document is a summary report of the findings regarding the three topics.

Appointment of the County Sheriff

There was conversation in October 2004 that resulted in research findings of the December 1995 report done by Hamline University. In this report, they concluded that majority of the counties, statewide and nationwide, have elected Sheriffs and County Attorneys. The researchers recommended that the County should maintain their election process for these positions. Throughout 2004 to 2008, the Charter Commission hosted meetings, and public hearings regarding appointing or electing the Sheriff. Both the Sheriff and County Attorney opposed being appointed and argued about the importance of checks and balances of the Commissioners' power. There is also a MN State Statute, [Section 382.01](#), stating the election procedure of the County Sheriff.

There was going to be a ballot, asking citizens if the Sheriff should be an elected or appointed position, and the Commissioners and Charter Commissions received various comments mainly supporting a continued election of the position. In May 2008, there was a vote on whether the question should be on the ballot, and it did not pass by a tied vote of eight. The County Sheriff may only be appointed by the Commissioners if there is a vacancy, according to MN State Statutes, [Section 382.02](#).

Board of Commissioners Salary

The earliest question of why the Commissioners set their own salaries was found in charter minutes from 1994. It was not brought up again until 2000, and the Charter Commission looked more into the details behind setting salaries. From 2002 to 2005, discussion continued with the Commissioners, but no action was taken until 2008. A third-party agency, Himle Horner Inc., was brought in to research and review the salaries of Commissioners and provide recommendations. Himle Horner Inc. recommended the Commissioners salaries during this year (around \$60,000) be increased to around \$80,000 in order to align with other counties, and elected officials. Although no clear agreement was found in the documents, that year, Commissioners' salaries were increased to the \$80,000 range (34% increase).

The issue was brought up again and discussed from 2009 through 2012. A ballot was proposed to change the Home Rule Charter language from 30 to 45 days, and a motion passed to include "Should the Ramsey County Home Charter be amended to prohibit the Commissioners from increasing their salary in excess of 2% per calendar year?" There were no following documents that signified any changes, but the current Home Rule Charter, [Section 2.01 D](#), currently has 45 days instead of the initial 30 days. It seems as though a ballot may have been sent out and voted on.

Board of Commissioners Term Limits

Very few to no information was found regarding term limits in the files reviewed. This is most likely because when the issue was initially brought up in 1998, the County Attorneys brought up a case that was resolved with the Supreme Court ([Minneapolis Term Limits Coalition v. Keefe](#)) that declared "an amendment to the Minneapolis city charter limiting the terms of local elected officials would violate Article VII, [Section 6](#) of the Minnesota Constitution." In additional years that term limits was brought up for elected officials, like the Commissioners, the County Attorneys referred to the Supreme Court case which dismissed the topic.

Election Vs. Appointment of the County Sheriff

The MN State Statutes, [Section 382.01](#), it states: “In every County in this state there shall be elected at the general election in 1918 a County auditor, a County treasurer, Sheriff, County recorder, County Attorney, and coroner. The terms of office of these officers shall be four years and shall begin on the first Monday in January next succeeding their election. They shall hold office until their successors are elected and qualified. Each of these offices must be filled by election every four years thereafter, unless an office is consolidated with another County office or made appointive under chapter 375A or other general or special law.”

The first Ramsey County Sheriff was elected in 1849, which was before the establishment of the state of MN. If the position is ever vacant, according to the MN State Statutes, [Section 375.08](#), the County Board shall fill it by appointment.

Year	Details
1993	The Ramsey County Home Rule Charter clearly states that both the Sheriff and County Attorney are to be and remain elected positions.
1994	There was discussion to attempt to change the state law to allow County Boards to appoint the County Attorney and County Sheriff instead of having them elected.
1995	Further discussion about the appointment or election of the County Sheriff occurred, and an outline of the legal process for reviewing the proposed amendment was shared.
1999	A report, <i>Appointment Vs. Election of the Ramsey County Sheriff and County Attorney</i> , by Richard Hodsdon and Eileen Troseth from Hamline University (12/13/1995) concluded that there was not enough reasoning for changing the two statuses and recommended to maintain the current elected process for both positions.
2003	An article that was published resulted in community launching a campaign against the current County Sheriff. This reignited the consideration to possibly finding a way to make his position appointed instead of elected.
2004	Discussion and questions on the role of the County Sheriff and trying to find a connection to possibly align it with the appointed Police Officials and Chiefs.
2005	The Hamline University report was brought up again and reviewed. Reiteration of how majority of counties and states have an elected Sheriff and found that other counties who attempted to change to an appointed Sheriff were rejected. During the discussion, both the County Attorney and Sheriff opposed appointment status.
2007	There was a motion stated to bring forth language regarding the appointment of the Sheriff by the County manager and set to draft amended language. This language and a proposed drafted ballot were presented during this meeting.
2008	There was a vote to have the proposed amended language of the appointment vs election of the Sheriff on the ballot, but the motion did not pass since it was a tied vote (8 ayes, 8 nays).

Related Topic: Sheriff Vacancy

In the current Ramsey County Home Rule Charter, under [Section 7.03](#), it states: “A vacancy in the office of County Attorney or Sheriff shall be filled by County board appointment. If the vacancy occurs before the first day to file affidavits of candidacy for the next regular County election (held every even numbered year in November), the appointed person shall serve only until the qualification of a successor elected at the next election to fill the unexpired portion of the term. If the vacancy occurs on or after the first day to file affidavits of candidacy for the next regular County election, the appointed person shall serve the remainder of the term.”

In the MN State Statutes, [Section 382.02](#), it states: “Any appointment made to fill a vacancy in any of the offices named in [Section 382.01](#) that has not been made appointive under chapter 375A or other general or special law shall be for the balance of such entire term, and be made by the County board.”

Year	Details
1993	There was a discussion on the Charter amendment to change the procedure set by law for filling a vacancy. At this time, the Commissioners were to fill vacancies for the County Attorney or Sheriff by appointment to serve until someone new is elected at the next election. The charter commission proposed a report on pros/cons of appointment to be conducted and to share it with the public, but there were disagreements on that idea. A question of whether the vacancy of a County Attorney or Sheriff position be filled at the next election or the next general election in four years was shared.
1994	There was a proposed resolution in the charter commissions that they request the Commissioners to not require an applicant for the appointed interim Sheriff to file for office in the next election. This request was approved by the charter commission, and the charter commission proposed an amendment to the Ramsey County Home Rule Charter on the procedure of filling a vacancy for the elected County Attorney or Sheriff. The ballot amendment was noted that it would require a mid-term election to fill the position.
1995	In the election results, the “vacancy of Sheriff or Attorney passed with 82% in favor and 13% not” casting a vote. It was unclear what next steps would be or what amendment passed in the minutes.

Board of Commissioners’ Term Limits

In the current Ramsey County Home Rule Charter, under [Section 2.01 B](#), it states: “Members of the County board shall be elected as provided in Chapter 7 of this charter, for terms of four years beginning the first Monday in January after their election; but members shall continue to serve until their successors have been elected and take office. The terms of the County board members shall be staggered as provided by law.”

Year	Details
2008	An email was received and saved on file that proposed an 8-year term limit to Commissioners. It stated that their terms should be similar to the president of the United States.
2009	The topic of Commissioners’ term limits was brought up to address on a list of concerns.
2011	Revisited: "Charter Commission could never set term limits on office-holders other than County office-holders, i.e. state legislator, because that goes beyond scope of the Charter." -- MN Supreme Court said the Constitution of the State pre-empted the issue and prohibited, in this case, the City of Minneapolis, from attempting to impose term limits. Term limits was brought up again, and charter commissions requested to have Attorneys have another look into it. A report from the Attorneys shared that term limits would not be able to be changed.

Board of Commissioners' Salaries

In the current Ramsey County Home Rule Charter under [Section 2.01 D](#), it states: "The County board may determine the amount of the annual salary of its members by ordinance. The ordinance shall state the dollar amount of the annual salary and shall be passed by July 1 of the year prior to the effective date of the ordinance. The salary ordinance shall not be effective until the first business day of the following January. A petition asking for an election on the proposed ordinance, signed by registered voters of the County equal in number to ten percent of those who voted at the last general election for the office of President of the United States, is to be filed with the County within 45 days following its publication. The salary ordinance, thus petitioned, shall not be effective until it has been approved by the majority of those voting on the question at a regular or special election."

Year	Details
1993	Voluntary salary reductions may only be effectuated by County Board resolution.
1994	A charter commission member brought up the concern of an elected official being able to set their own salary.
2000	A suggestion that Commissioners raise their salaries based on the consumer price index, but no higher than the percentage of the previous year's labor contract. Another idea was to set a salary cap, or a rollback to \$40,000. The charter commission found that issues may take 12 to 18 months before an action is taken. Issue wouldn't be addressed until the time of the general election.
2002	Commissioner McDonough stated that he was opposed to the 46% salary increase proposal but knows that Commissioners' salaries are quite low. He adds that in past years, Commissioners have forgone raises or taken very small increases, not consistent with the changing work hours and time commitments.
2003	At the request of the charter subcommittee, Darwin Lookingbill reviewed the Charter provisions governing compensation for Commissioners, and it was noted that the method of setting up compensation could be an issue for review.
2004	A list of issues to address were shared for the past two years, and Commissioners' salaries were one of them to look into. It was found that Commissioners cannot decline an increase in salary that was set previously through ordinance. Discussed possibly getting input from the public and changing the ordinance procedure to a resolution process. The charter commission reviewed Commissioners' salaries from 1992 to 2005 and compared it to the other metro counties. Possible amendments discussed were: provide the same level of pay increase as County employees; an increase equal to the cost-of-living increase; or have the commission establish the salary level.
2008	Further discussion on why Commissioners of Ramsey County is the "only governing body" who can raise their own salaries. A research report was done by Himle Horner Inc., which recommended increasing salaries of Commissioners to \$80,000 to align with economy and other public/private positions similar to theirs.
2010	A ballot was drafted with options of: 1) should Ramsey County decrease required petition from 10% to 7% and 2) should Ramsey County increase the time to obtain signatures from 30 to 45 days?
2011	More discussion on the ballot language again.
2012	Additional votes on ballot language: "should the Ramsey County Home Charter be amended to prohibit the Commissioners from increasing their salary in excess of 2% per calendar year?" –the motion passed.

Ramsey County Charter Commission: Recruitment Process

Implementation: March 2018

<u>Two Annual Rounds of Recruitment:</u>	<u>March</u>	<u>September</u>
Active recruitment – 8 weeks	Mar 1 – Apr 30*	Sep 1 – Oct. 31*
Chief Judge Review, appointment applicants	By May 31	By Nov 30
Welcome from Charter Commission Chair	By June 30	By Dec 30
New Appointees attend 1 st meeting	August Meeting	February Meeting

**Applications received outside of these two 8-week periods will be held over for the subsequent open recruitment period.*

Steps In Recruitment Process

Responsible Party

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. Prepare posting/notice of Charter Commission openings and send to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Courts Supervisor – Staff to Chief Judge• Charter Commission Members• Ramsey County Communications - website, distribution list• County Board of Commissioners• County Manager | Chief Clerk (Ramsey County) |
| 2. Accept applications through designated 8-week open application period. (<u>All inquiries/applications handled exclusively by Courts.</u>) | Courts Supervisor |
| 3. Review applications received and determine appointments. | Chief Judge |
| 4. Orders are sent to applicants being appointed. | Chief Judge |
| 5. Notice and contact information of appointed applicants sent to Chief Clerk. | Courts Supervisor |
| 6. Welcome letter, information, invitation to the next meeting from Charter Commission Chair sent to new appointees. | Chief Clerk |
| 7. New appointees are introduced at subsequent Charter Commission meeting. | Charter Commission Chair |

Contacts:

Laura Stevens – Probate Registrar	(651) 266-8148	laura.stevens@courts.state.mn.us
Janet Guthrie – Director, Admin. Services/ Chief Clerk-County Board	(651) 266-8014	janet.guthrie@co.ramsey.mn.us