

Ramsey County Charter Commission Minutes of October 22, 2018

The meeting was held at Ramsey County Public Works, 1425 Paul Kirkwold Dr, Arden Hills with the following members in attendance:

	Members Present	Members Absent
District 1	Joe Murphy	
		Steven Reeves
District 2	Bob Benke	Emily Dunsworth
District 3	Randy Gustafson Jacquelyn Thomas	
District 4	Bethany Winkels Sharon Garth	
District 5	Wendy Underwood	Kyle Mestad
District 6	Robert Humphrey	
District 7		
At Large	Bill Kempe	Fred Perez Renee Alexander

Also present: Jeff Stephenson, Ramsey County Civil Division Director
 Janet Guthrie, Director of Administrative Services / Chief Clerk – County Board
 Cheryl Kempe, Administrative Assistant
 Katie Haselman, Administrative Assistant
 Ryan O’Connor, County Manager
 Elizabeth Tolzmann, Policy and Planning Director
 Luis Rosario, County Assessor
 Chris Samuel, County Auditor/Treasurer
 Lee Mehrkens, Chief Financial Officer

1. Call to Order: Chair Gustafson called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.
2. Introductions: In addition to the Charter Commission members, the guest staff from the County introduced themselves.
3. Approval of October 22, 2018 Agenda: Joe Murphy moved approval of the agenda, seconded by Bill Kempe. Approved unanimously.
4. Approval of February 5, 2018 Minutes: Joe Murphy moved approval of the minutes, seconded by Robert Humphrey. Approved unanimously.
5. Approval of August 6, 2018 Minutes: Joe Murphy moved approval of the minutes, seconded by Bob Benke. Approved unanimously.
6. Citizen Comments/Input: None
7. Old Business:
 - A. Update on Ad Hoc Committee: Chair Gustafson indicated that he will defer action on this for new chair to start process.
8. New Business:

A. Presentations:

- a. County Manager Ryan O'Connor (handout provided) presented on the 2019 Supplemental Budget and Performance Measures. He explained that Ramsey County uses a two-year budget cycle. More predictable, aligns with legislative biennium and helps to manage peaks and valleys.
 - i. Vision, Mission and Goals – Residents first approach, balancing our residents and businesses ability to pay
 - ii. Performance Measures – quality rather than quantity, ensuring racial equity, forward thinking in our metrics by setting 2040 targets
 - iii. Service Teams – This budget will be the first budget that was able to leverage the use of service teams
 - iv. Strategic Plan – focused work in eleven key areas – one area is talent attraction, retention and employee development
 - v. Where the county dollar comes from and goes
- b. Policy and Planning Director Elizabeth Tolzmann presented on Performance Measures by demonstrating information on the County's website
 - i. Community indicators – what matters to our community
 - ii. Four goals: Well-being, Prosperity, Opportunity and Accountability – four indicators per goal. Biennial – one-year focus on numbers, one year focus on metrics. Metrics: Community Engagement, racial equity, talent attraction, economic development, facilities and customer services
 - iii. Open Data Portal – look up data about anything in the County, tour of site and how the goals are outlined
- c. County Assessor Luis Rosario (handout provided) presented on the Assessor's Mid-Year Update.
 - i. Total market value up, total new construction down
 - ii. Ramsey County assessed values are at an all time high - \$52,783,790,200
 - iii. Tax has shifted from residential to apartment since 2017
 - iv. New development is strong in the county, sets stage for future growth
- d. County Auditor/Treasurer Chris Samuel (handout provided) presented on Trends Affecting Payable 2019 Property Taxes
 - i. Common misconception: As market values go up, individual taxing authorities get more money. All that market values do is determine how much gets paid. The only way an individual taxing authority gets more money is through the levy process.
 - ii. Examples of impact on Median Value homes, commercial property, planning districts and school districts

Questions fielded from Charter Commission members related to the County budget:

Q: One-time bonding dollars comes from intergovernmental revenues?

A: Yes.

Q: Fund balance is \$3 million less than 2018 – why?

A: Fund balance normally bobs and weaves. It is typically used for one time capital expenses.

Q: What added value can the commission provide to the County?

A: Sometimes being good stewards of the Home Rule Charter document means you aren't changing anything, you are simply being good stewards and maintaining the purpose of the commission. There are three principles that guide the commission:

accountability of Elected Officials, professional form of management, and coordination across different levels of government. Suggestions to help evaluate those three principles are looking at the budget, strategic plan, performance measures and the comprehensive plan.

Q: What is Health & Wellness' costs? They are close to half the budget. How does it compare to other counties?

A: Health and Wellness is made up of Social Services, Community Corrections, Financial Assistance, Public Health, Veterans Services, Healthcare Services and Health & Wellness Admin. Ramsey County close in comparison to other counties, but we have more poverty and address different issues. You can visit ramseycounty.us and search 'budget' for more information.

Q: Are you using community engagement to increase voter turnout?

A: Yes. We are currently in the process of issuing a master contract for community engagement and we are intentionally soliciting grass roots organizations, individuals, communities and organizations that focus on voter engagement.

Q: How are students in student housing impacting the poverty statistics?

A: We started tracking this in 2015 and hypothesized that students living in student housing were falsely increasing the poverty rates in areas that included college campuses. Generally, we found that it doesn't have an impact because most students don't file as households and so they don't show up in the same way.

Q: How does TIF (Tax Increment Financing) swing so much?

A: It is because of the growth along University Ave/Green Line, which has now stabilized.

9. Presentation: Certificates of Appreciation were given to outgoing board members Bob Benke and Randy Gustafson and appreciation for the years of service they have provided to the County through the Charter Commission.
10. Nominating Committee: Beth Winkles and Jacquie Thomas, serving as the Nominating Committee, presented nominations for Chair and Vice Chair for 2019. Chair: Joe Murphy Vice Chair: Bill Kempe. Bob Benke moved to approve the nominations; seconded by Sharon Garth. Approved unanimously.
11. Future Agenda Items:
 - A. Strategic Priorities
 - B. Next meeting February 4, 7:00 PM – Association of Minnesota Counties

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made by Joe Murphy, seconded by Bob Benke. The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Katie Haselman – Administrative Assistant – County Manager's Office