

**CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS**  
**BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA**  
**Work Session – Monday, January 13, 2014**

Pursuant to due call and notice, a work session of the City Council of the City of Bemidji, Beltrami County, Minnesota, was held on Monday, January 13, 2014, at 5:30 p.m. in the Conference Room of City Hall, Mayor Albrecht presiding.

Upon roll call, the following Councilmembers were declared present: Albrecht, Meehlhause, Hellquist, Johnson, Olson, Erickson, Thompson

Others Present: Charter Commission Members – Chuck Stombaugh, Michael Meuers, Ben Stowe, Caleb Newman  
Dave Hengel, Greater Bemidji

Staff Present: City Manager John Chattin, City Clerk Kay Murphy

Proposed Charter Amendment

Chuck Stombaugh, Charter Commission member, reviewed proposed language to amend the City's Charter regarding filling of vacancies. He stated that after Ward 4 became vacant, the Charter Commission members heard concerns from City residents regarding the length of the term remaining. The Charter Commission then looked at a number of other city charters for possible amendments. Discussion followed regarding the language.

Hellquist raised concerns about the 364 days and asked for clarification on when the vacancy occurs. Does it start when position becomes vacant or when the Council declares it vacant.

Erickson noted that the number of days do not match between Sec. 2.05 (Vacancies) and Sec. 4.03 (Special Elections). After discussion, the Council was in favor of the proposed changes to the City's Charter with corrections as noted. Stombaugh stated that the Commission will meet and make those changes.

Mayor's Term Length

Stombaugh stated that the Charter has been researching the length of terms for mayors in other cities. Based on Stombaugh's research, a two-year mayoral term was not common. Councilor Erickson stated that moving to a four year term would create no opportunity to vote for a majority of the council at every election. Mayor Albrecht stated that she could not support changing the mayor's term to four years as it is important to have accountability to the people. Albrecht further stated that the City Manager's position runs the city and provides continuity.

Greater Bemidji Update

Dave Hengel, Executive Director, updated the Council on Greater Bemidji's progress and reviewed their 2014 Work Program. He stated that he will continue to advocate for the city's businesses and economic development interests with local, regional and state leaders. He noted that he will push "hard" to market the City's land on the south shore of Lake Bemidji.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, motion by Hellquist, seconded by Meehlhause, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Kay M. Murphy  
City Clerk