

**City of Brookings, South Dakota  
Brookings City Charter Commission  
August 8, 2024  
Community Room 300, City and County Government Center**

**Meeting Notes**

**Present:** Bob Burns, Keith Corbett, David Gilbertson, Lisa Hager, Jeanne Manzer, Dianne Nagy, Ashley Ragsdale, Gail Robertson, and Tom Yseth

**Not Present:** Van Fishback, Roger Solum

**National Civic League:** Derek Okubo, Senior Fellow – Lead Facilitator, and Doug Linkhart, President

**Brookings Staff:** City Manager Paul Briseno, City Attorney Steve Britzman, and City Clerk Bonnie Foster

**I. Welcome – David Gilbertson, Chair**

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Gilbertson at 5:30 p.m.

**II. Agenda Review and Approval of Minutes**

Motion was made by Gail Robertson, seconded by Keith Corbett, to approve the Minutes of the July 11<sup>th</sup> meeting. Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

**III. Review of the Last Meeting**

Derek reviewed the key points of the previous meeting and how that work leads into the focus on tonight's meeting.

**IV. Orientation to City Charters, Structure, and Topics – Doug Linkhart**

Doug Linkhart, President of the National Civic League, presented on the history, purpose, and structure of Model City Charters. Some of the key points included:

- The first Model City Charter was created in 1900 by the National Civic League (then known as the National Municipal League) to professionalize city government at a time when corruption, ineffectiveness, and inefficiency was prevalent at the local level.
- The Model City Charter gave birth to the Council/Manager form of government and the profession of City Management

- In 2021, the ninth edition of the Model was updated by a large international committee of stakeholders that included elected officials, city managers, academia, and representatives of civic organizations.
- City Charters are the constitution of local government – it's governmental structure, procedures, values and principles.
- Wards/Districts vs. At-Large for City Council: NCL would recommend that as a city gets larger, has diverse pockets of populations, and presents more challenges to run for office due to size (knocking on doors, advertisements, costs to campaign), then wards/districts may make more sense.
- What should not go into the Charter:
  - Specific staff positions under departments
  - Dollar Amounts and Technology – due to constant change
  - Fiscal Mandates – due to changing times
  - Commissions – can be an ordinance
  - Anything located in South Dakota Codified Law (SDCL) does not need to be in the Brookings Charter
- Insight for the Committee:
  - If it doesn't need to be said in the Charter, don't say it.

## **V. Identifying Brookings City Charter Topics for Review**

Derek led the commission in an exercise to identify the areas in the existing charter for review. He shared a document that included input from city council and city staff on areas they recommended for review from their day-to-day experience.

The commissioners identified the following areas until time ran out at 8:30:

### **Article I – Powers of the City**

#### **1.04 Limitations**

- Not necessary
- Recommendation: Remove

### **Article II – City Council**

#### **2.04 Compensation; Expenses.**

- Recommendation: Remove salary number

#### **2.06 Vacancies; Forfeiture of Office; Filling of Vacancies**

- Recommendation: Review and potentially change Felons (2.06.c4)
  - State law is moving away from mandatory protocol regarding felons

#### **2.02.c Terms**

Recommendation: Remove all transitional language. Language no longer needed.

## **2.07 Judge of Qualifications**

- Recommendation: Add a process for the judicial appeal process
  - Review SDCL 1.26 State Administration Appeals Section – discuss whether to adopt and include as the Brookings system.

## **2.08 Clerk**

- Recommendation: Review and clarify who appoints and supervises Clerk
  - Currently the CM reviews the Clerk and includes Council

## **2.09 Investigations**

- Recommendation: Clarify what is required and the process to make investigations. Resolution, majority vote, ordinance?

## **2.10 Independent Audit**

- Recommendation: Review language in the Model City Charter, section 5.11, and consider whether to add

## **Article IIA – City Manager**

### **2A.01 Appointment; Qualifications; Compensation**

- Recommendation: Discuss if residency in Brookings should be required of the City Manager.
- Recommendation: Discuss qualifications to potentially add some specific requirements

### **2A.02 Removal**

- Recommendation: Add resignation as an option

### **2A.04 Powers and Duties of City Manager**

- Recommendation: Explore adding visionary language regarding equity and engagement
- Recommendation: Subsections 6 and 7 – review and update; Currently 10-year cycle rather than five-year
- Recommendation: Review #11-13 of Model City Charter to potentially include
- Recommendation: Update #8

## **RE-NUMBER ARTICLE II TO INCLUDE IIA?**

## **Article III – City Attorney**

### **3.02 – Legal Officer**

- Recommendation: Add language that the City Attorney must be a licensed attorney in South Dakota.

#### **Article IV – Financial Procedures**

- Add equity language in Article IV

#### **4.02 Submission of Budget and Budget Manager**

- Recommendation: Update budget date

#### **4.05 – Appropriation and Revenue Ordinances**

- Recommendation: 4.05.a – Add specifics of toward the council control of enterprise fund use
- Recommendation: 4.04.d – add electronic media

#### **Article V – Elections**

Recommendation: Discuss wards/districts

Due to time running out, the exercise stopped at Article V and review of remaining sections will be completed at the next meeting.

#### **VI. Next Steps**

Derek will produce the meeting notes and organize the review recommendations. He will set a meeting with Chair David Gilbertson and Vice Chair Lisa Hager to further organize the commission recommendations with council and staff recommendations. In addition, Derek will work with David and Lisa on prioritizing outreach targets.

#### **VII. Meeting Adjourned at 8:30**

**Next Meeting: August 26, 2024, 5:30-8:30 p.m., City and County Government Center, Community Room 300**