FERGUS FALLS CHARTER COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes, April 9, 2019

Attendance:

Present: Mark Hovland, Nicole Hansen, Richard Edinger, Kris Svingen, John Wagner, Dan Edwards, Gordon Hydukovich, Tim Brennan, Mary Jo Igelstad, Gary Nelson, Virginia Portman, Daryl Synstelien
Absent/Excused: JoEllen Thacker, Dave Prazak (participated by teleconference)
Absent/Unexecused:

Call to order: Vice Chair Hovland called the meeting to order at 7:00 am.
Adoption of Agenda: The agenda was adopted by consensus.
Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the November 27, 2018 meeting were approved by consensus.
Public Comment: There were no public comments.
Introductions: All members introduced themselves, new members were welcomed. New members are Dan Edwards, Nicole Hansen, Gordon Hydukovich, David Prazak, Kris Svingen, and John Wagner
Overview of Commission Process: Vice Chair Hovland gave a description of the process the commission has followed for periodically reviewing the charter in its entirety and addressing specific questions and concerns which arise from citizens or commission members. He reviewed the most recent (2017-2018) thorough review of the charter and the adoption of proposed revisions by ordinance of the city council. He also described the example of a citizen approaching the commission to request we consider setting term limits for the city council in the charter – the result was discovering MN Statute does not allow term limits for the city council to set in the charter.
Reports: Vice Chair Mark Hovland and Secretary Daryl Synstelien reported on City Council’s action to adopt the December 2018 proposed revisions to the Charter by ordinance.
Business

1. Use of Teleconference for Attendance: Members considered the question of using teleconferencing as viable for meeting attendance. With a full commission membership of fourteen, there is little concern of attaining a quorum for meetings in person. There are significant limitations to teleconference usability with only one telephone line available. Members referred to past deliberation by the city council on the same issue, citing concerns pertaining to the open meeting laws. The consensus was that the commission would take no action at this time, considering future use of teleconferencing for participation as an “Excused Absence”, without ability to vote on matters at that meeting.
2. Charter Issues
   a. Vice Chair Hovland asked members if there were any issues which members thought the commission might take up in the future. As an example, he reviewed the discussion the commission wrestled with in recent years about the number of city council members from each ward of the city and whether we would consider some combination of ward representatives and members-at-large.
b. Gordon Hydukovich asked if the commission had ever taken up the issue of the charter speaking to a statement of ethics for city operations and governance.  
MMSC: (Motion - Mary Jo Igelstad, 2nd - Tim Brennan) “To ask the city attorney to determine if MN statute determines whether the charter may speak to ethics in city operations, and/or if that issue is addressed in any other manner, and to make any recommendations on this issue for the Charter Commission.”

3. Reminder: New members were reminded to meet with Lynne Olson to sign the oath of office.

Next Meeting. MMSC: (Motion – Richard Edinger, 2nd – Gary Nelson) “To affirm the Annual Meeting date (and next scheduled meeting date) of September 10, 2019, at 7:00 a.m.”

Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 7:32 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Daryl Synstelien, Secretary