



# CHARTER COMMISSION

Public Safety Building—Training Room, 825 41st Ave NE

Thursday, January 19, 2023

7:00 PM

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## AGENDA

### **ATTENDANCE INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC**

Members of the public who wish to attend may do so in-person, by calling **1-312-626-6799** and **entering meeting ID 860 9017 0729** or by Zoom at

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86090170729>. For questions please call the Administration Department at 763-706-3610.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

### **ROLL CALL/STATUS OF MEMBERSHIP**

- 1. Reappointment of Commissioner Sloat.**
- 2. Resignation of Commissioner Eubank.**
- 3. Election of 2022 Officers.**  
Election of President, Vice President and Secretary.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- 4. Approval of October 20, 2022 Meeting Minutes.**

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

### **OLD BUSINESS**

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- 5. Approval of City Attorney Review of Questions from Commissioner Laine in Relation to the Process for Recall Election.**
- 6. Approval the 2022 Charter Commission Annual Report.**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

*Auxiliary aids or other accommodations for individuals with disabilities are available upon request when the request is made at least 72 hours in advance. Please contact Administration at 763-706-3610 to make arrangements.*

State of Minnesota  
Anoka County

District Court  
Tenth Judicial District

Court File Number: **02-CV-18-3485**

Case Type: Administrative File

**Notice of Filing of Order**

FILE COPY

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**IN THE MATTER OF THE FRAMING OF A CITY CHARTER COMMISSION FOR  
THE CITY OF COLUMBIA HEIGHTS, ANOKA CNTY,MN AKA HOME RULE CHTR**

You are notified that the following order was filed on December 16, 2022.

Order Appointing member to the City of Columbia Heights Charter  
Commission (Gregory Sloat).

Dated: December 21, 2022

Lori O'Brien, Court Administrator  
Anoka County District Court  
2100 3rd Avenue  
Anoka MN 55303-2489  
763-760-6700

cc: Sara Ion, City Clerk  
James Hoeft, Esq.  
Gregory Sloat

A true and correct copy of this notice has been served upon the parties pursuant to the Minnesota  
Rules of Civil Procedure, Rule 77.04.

STATE OF MINNESOTA

DISTRICT COURT

COUNTY OF ANOKA

TENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

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**ORDER APPOINTING MEMBER TO THE  
CITY OF COLUMBIA HEIGHTS CHARTER COMMISSION**

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**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:**

That Gregory Sloat is hereby reappointed to the City of Columbia Heights Charter Commission for a term to expire on January 1, 2027.

Dated: December 16, 2022

BY THE COURT:



Digitally signed by Hiljus,  
Stoney (Judge)  
Date: 2022.12.16 15:24:58  
-06'00'

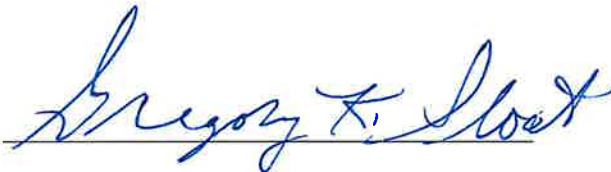
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Stoney Hiljus, Chief Judge  
Tenth Judicial District

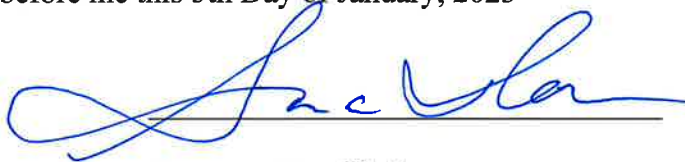
OATH OF OFFICE

State of Minnesota )  
  ss.  
County of Anoka    )

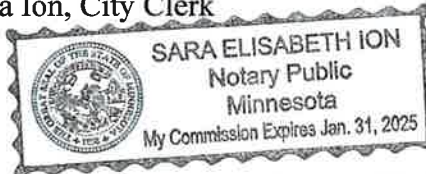
I, Gregory Sloat, do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States, and of the State of Minnesota, and discharge faithfully the duties devolved upon me as a Charter Commission member of the City of Columbia Heights, to the best of my judgment and ability.



Subscribed and sworn to before me this 5th Day of January, 2023



Sara Ion, City Clerk



My commission expires January 31, 2025



**CHARTER COMMISSION**  
**Public Safety Building—Training Room, 825 41st Ave NE**  
**Thursday, October 20, 2022**  
**7:00 PM**

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**MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Charter Commission President Steve Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**ROLL CALL**

Members present: Matt Abel, Ramona Anderson, Kathy Ahlers, Larry Betzold, Tyler Eubank, Ben Harris, Bill Hugo, Cliff Johnson, Veronica Johnson, Carolyn Laine, Frost Simula, Gregory Sloat, Steve Smith, Susan Wiseman.

Members Absent: Nick Zeimet

**STATUS OF MEMBERSHIP**

**1. Appointment of Veronica Johnson to Fill Position Left Vacant by Commissioner Schluender.**

Commissioner Veronica Johnson introduced herself to the Charter Commission. She is involved with the Sister City, Kiwanis, SACA, and a variety of volunteer organizations. She is very excited to be a part of the important work of the Charter Commission.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion by Commissioner Abel, seconded by Commissioner Laine, to approve the agenda. All Ayes, motion approved unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commission Vice President Laine requested a correction on Page 2 of the July 21, 2022, meeting minutes.

Commissioner Laine moved to approve the corrected minutes. Commissioner Simula seconded. All Ayes, motion approved unanimously.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Clerk Ion stated that there was no correspondence at this time.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**2. City Council Vacancies (Chapter 2 Section 9).**

Commission President Smith stated that Ordinance 1681, related to shortening the appointment process when a council vacancy occurs that the Commission sent to the Council was not passed. Overall, the issue with the Ordinance passing was that the mayor could have two votes for appointing a member of the Council.

The Commission has two options to move forward; update the amendment and send it back to the Council or prepare it for a vote on a ballot.

Commission Vice President Laine stated that she thinks everyone on the Commission should come to the table with proposed ideas to review and discuss at a later date. She would like to table the subject until another time.

Commissioner C. Johnson mentioned having two separate work groups related to the topics of the timeline and the mayor having the tie breaking vote.

Commission President Smith clarified what it was that the group would like to see.

Commissioner Wiseman asked how strongly the Council objected to the mayor having the tie breaking vote.

Commission President Smith stated that it was more than one council member that voted against the Ordinance.

Commissioner Laine stated that many Statutory Cities have this process that the mayor breaks the tie.

Commissioner Harris stated that this is not necessarily the case for Charter Cities.

Commissioner Smith asked if the Commission wants to hash this out tonight or reconvene after we review this later.

Commissioner Ahlers feels that the Council is not fully informed on the issue. She would like to see it go to a vote on the ballot.

Commissioner Wiseman would like to have the Council vote on the Ordinance again and Commissioner Abel confirmed that he would also like to see this.

Commission President Smith clarified that the Council has already voted on this Ordinance. He asked the Commission about making a motion to table the discussion about amending the Ordinance or sending the issue to the public to vote on.

Commissioner Wiseman made a motion to send the Ordinance back to Council for Vote or Referendum, Betzold seconded.

Commissioner Ahlers stated that she would like to table the motion to a future date. Commission Vice President Laine clarified that she would also like to table the motion to a future date.

Commission President Smith asked for a vote to table the motion. All Ayes, motion approved unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Clerk Ion Stated that there was no new business at this time.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Charter Commission President Smith adjourned the meeting at 7:31pm.

Respectfully Submitted

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Sara Ion, City Clerk/Recording Secretary

**CITY OF COLUMBIA HEIGHTS CHARTER COMMISSION  
2022 ANNUAL REPORT**

**MEMBERSHIP:**

The following members served in 2022:

Matt Abel	Bill Hugo	Steve Smith
Kathy Ahlers	Clifford Johnson	Frost Simula
Ramona Anderson	Veronica Johnson*	Susan Wiseman
Larry Betzold*	Carolyn Laine	Nick Zeimet
Tyler Eubank	Joe Schluender**	
Ben Harris	Gregory Sloat	

\* Commissioner Larry Betzold was appointed in April 2022, and Veronica Johnson was appointed in September 2022.

\*\*Commissioner Joe Schluender resigned following the April 2022 meeting.

At the end of 2022, there were 15 Commissioners.

**OFFICERS:**

The following members served as officers for the Charter Commission in 2022:

President: Steve Smith  
Vice President: Carolyn Laine  
Secretary: Frost Simula

**MEETINGS:**

The Charter Commission held three meetings in 2022: April 21, July 21, and October 20.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

The Commission discussed the following issue in 2022:

Council Vacancies:

At the April 2022 meeting, the Charter Commission continued the 2020 and 2021 discussion of using special elections to fill City Council vacancies as well as keeping an appointment process but modifying it. During the discussion Commission Vice President Laine made a motion for a first hearing of language shortening the appointment process from 105 days to 45 days. In addition to shortening the appointment process language was added that if the council failed to make the appointment in the 45-day time period the mayor must appoint a person from the remaining applicants to fill the vacancy within 15 days.

The Charter Commission held a second hearing on this amendment at the July 2022 meeting and the amendment was approved as written. Ordinance 1681, Amending Chapter 2 Section 9 went to the City Council for a first hearing on September 12, 2022. It failed to have a second reading set.

At the October 2022 Charter Commission meeting, the Commission discussed options for moving forward with the amendment. The Commission decided to table the amendment to a later time.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Sara Ion, City Clerk/Recording Secretary