

Brooklyn Park Charter Commission Meeting Minutes Wednesday, November 12, 2025

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Present: Chair Dennis Secara, Commissioners, Sunday Alabi, Barbara Bor, Shamara Freeman Amy Hanson, Peggy Larkin, Gregory Szach; Paula Weakly, Council Liaison Nichole Klonowski, and Staff Liaison Devin Montero

Absent: Susan Mabera (excused), Sheldon Willaims (excused), LaDawn Severin

2. Public Comment – None.

3. Additions/Approval of the Agenda of October 8, 2025

Chair Secara stated he would like to add Item 7.2, Election of a new Chair. He stated due to a shift change at his employment; he would take a leave from the Charter Commission and step down as Chair.

Motion Chair Secara, Second Commissioner Hanson to approve the agenda as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1 OCTOBER 8, 2025, MEETING

Chair Secara asked the Commissioners if there were any substantial changes to the minutes.

Motion Commissioner Weakly, Second Commissioner Larkin to approve October 8, 2025, meeting minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Old Business – None.

6. Reports of Officers, Boards, and Standing Committees – None.

7. New Business

7.1 Charter City Petition Requirements

Chair Secara briefed the Commissioners on the attachments and the amended petitions for review.

Staff Liaison Montero stated there were ten lines for registered voters on the Nomination Petition and added ten lines on the Initiative and Referendum petitions to keep it consistent. He stated the city attorney also reviewed the amendments to the petitions.

Commissioner Larkin suggested the quotation marks be removed from:

“I swear (or affirm) that I know the contents and purpose of this petition and that I signed this petition only once and of my own free will.”

“All information on this petition is subject to public inspection”

Commissioner Hanson asked if one motion was needed for each petition.

Staff Liaison Montero stated one motion would be needed to recommend the amendments to the Council.

Commissioner Bor stated the nomination petition was on 8x14 paper and asked how it would appear in the Charter if it was printed out.

Staff Liaison Montero stated it would appear on two pages in the Charter. He stated when the candidates picked up petitions, they would receive them in 8x14 paper.

Commissioner Larkin stated that it looked like some of the fonts were different and asked if they would be uniform throughout.

Staff Liaison Montero stated the city charter was in Times Roman font and when he printed the Nomination Petitions, it would be in Arial font as it was standard use for the city.

Commissioner Hanson asked about printing the form from home if a candidate wanted to do it.

Staff Liaison Montero stated the candidate packets would be available two weeks prior to the candidate filings. He stated the nomination petitions would be printed in Arial font and on 8x14 paper. He stated he would meet with each candidate to go over the nomination petition.

Chair Secara asked if there was a motion to approve the nomination petition, initiative petition and referendum petition amendments.

Motion Commissioner Hanson, Second Commissioner Alabi, to approve the nomination petition, initiative and referendum petitions amendments and forward the recommendation to the Council. The motion carried unanimously.

Staff Liaison Montero presented the timeline of events to the Commissioners; November 24, the Council would set the public hearing; December 4, the public hearing notice would be published; January 5, 2026, the public hearing and first reading of the ordinance would be held; January 12, the second reading would be held; January 22, the ordinance was published in the newspaper; and April 21, the amendment would become effective. He stated the candidate filings would begin on May 19, 2026.

7.2 Election of a New Chair

Chair Secara stated the new Chair would take over the next meeting in December. He stated there was more responsibility as a Chair, setting the agenda a week before the meeting, the staff liaison would email a draft agenda to be reviewed, adjusted and sent back. The staff liaison would then send out the electronic packet and paper packet. He stated the Chair uses Robert's Rules to conduct the meeting and if there was anything to present to the Council, either the Chair, Vice Chair or Second Vice Chair would be in front of the Council answering their questions. He stated the Chair would communicate directly with the city attorney through the Staff Liaison and probably with the Mayor and other Council members. He stated being Chair was a rewarding position, enjoyed his tenure and was honored to have served another term.

He stated he wouldn't be able to serve the full term and asked if anyone was interested in being

Chair.

Commissioner Hanson stated she would be interested in serving as Chair. She stated she served as Chair of the Planning Commission prior to the Charter Commission and was used to what went on behind the scenes with staff and Council when it came to Commission work. She stated her term was up next year and hadn't decided if she was going to serve another term because she sat on another board but would be happy to fill in.

Chair Secara stated his term expired in 2027 as she would serve for 12 to 14 months.

Commissioner Hanson stated that it also meant there would be a vacancy for the Secretary/Treasurer position.

Commissioner Bor stated she was the Vice Chair and had partnered with Chair Secara for a long time and he had done a great job as Chair and was sad to learn about it. She stated she was hoping she could write a letter to his employer as to what he contributed and affected the Commission and if that would make any difference. She stated she would like to continue as Vice Chair but didn't want to serve as Chair.

Motion Chair Secara, Seconded by Commissioner Larkin to nominate Commissioner Hanson as Chair. The motion carried unanimously.

Staff Liaison Montero asked Chair Secara if his intent was to resign from the Charter Commission.

Commissioner Secara stated he stepped down as Chair and might as well resign. He asked if he could take a leave of absence.

Staff Liaison Montero stated he would have to look at the bylaws and contact the city attorney on that.

Chair Hanson suggested Commissioner Secara take a month to consider it.

Commissioner Bor stated he took the first step that he would no longer represent the Commission as the Chair and acted on it, followed by whatever he continued in his status and then he could resign.

Commissioner Secara stated it would depend on how long the tenure on the second shift lasted and whether he could find another job that had better hours in 6 to 12 months.

Commissioner Alabi stated that a new Chair was elected and now had the Secretary/Treasurer to fill. He asked if they could elect someone tonight or do it at the next meeting.

Commissioner Secara stated they needed to elect someone and wanted to have a smooth meeting next month without having to do an election.

Chair Hanson suggested filling the Secretary/Treasurer position tonight.

Commissioner Alabi nominated Commissioner Larkin as Secretary/Treasurer. Commissioner Larkin accepted the nomination.

Motion Commissioner Alabi, Seconded by Commissioner Secara to elect Commissioner Larkin as Secretary/Treasurer. The motion carried unanimously.

8. Correspondence/Communications

8.1 Council Liaison Update on Council Actions.

Council Liaison Klonowski briefed on the following:

LaQuinta Inn. The Council had a person addressing the Council during public comment about the LaQuinta Inn. She stated Hennepin County had contracted with LaQuinta Inn and was in the business district. She stated a contract was established for two years to house families in transition and was built around families. She stated it was supposed to be very short-term until they could find more stable housing and with the encampments being emptied, they started moving some people into the Inn, which was causing some issues for safety for some of the residents in the business community nearby. She stated it was a very different population than what the Council had thought was going to be there.

She stated they were reviewing the contract with Hennepin County as the County was providing some financial resources but were trying to determine what the contract was, if there were more resources needed, etc. She stated it was challenging in a business heavy area, especially access to the site.

Cannabis Dispensary. The Council was exploring a city owned and operated cannabis dispensary. She stated they didn't have many lines of revenue for the city and was exploring that and a lot of neighboring cities were already starting to explore it. She stated the Council wanted to know what that was going to look like and had a feasibility study RFP going out.

PUPS Facility. The city was building the PUPS facility onto the police department building. She stated the city had partnered with Maple Grove, who had a facility, in the past and was about to charge the city a substantial amount of money to renovate there and the Council decided to have its own PUPS facility. She stated Brooklyn Center was going to contract with the city to pay for it and kept the city operating and maintaining its own building rather than building on Maple Grove's facility.

Drones. The police department was going into an agreement with Axon, a drone company for first responder drones. She stated Minnetonka was already doing it and Minneapolis and Duluth were exploring it.

She gave an example of how the drones worked: if there was a crowd of kids in a park, and there was a call to the park, the drone could get there rapidly and assess the situation and provide real time feedback to the police that were enroute.

She stated it could also be tied to existing camera systems. If a school wanted to allow the city to have access, they could be monitoring hallways and things like that and had an AI detection for weapons and people could be notified immediately if there was a weapon visible in a school or park. She stated state laws around the use of drones were tight.

She stated the drone had a camera that had to stay on the horizon until it got to the location, only then was it allowed to look down. She stated if it was going to fly over houses, it couldn't look in yards and anything like that.

Council Member Klonowski stated there was also going to be a transparency portal. If anyone saw a drone in the air and wondering if it was a police drone, they could log in and the record of the drone would be available for three days. If it went over a property, anyone could ask and see the footage on just their property. She stated if it was not listed, it could be a commercial drone or some other drone.

She stated the Council agreed to a two-year contract with Axon to test the software. She thought Axon wanted to partner with the city in light of the tragedies that occurred recently. She stated she saw a drone in action when she went to Minnetonka and was amazing and thought it would be a great tool for the police if they weren't needed somewhere. She stated they didn't have to send a bunch of police cars to a location and it would also provide more safety for the police officers as they would know what they were going to be walking into.

She stated Chief Bruley worked with a community group, a diverse group of leaders in the community and they saw it in action. She stated Chief Bruley wanted to make sure the community was comfortable with it before approaching the Council and the Council was in full support of it.

After Action Review. The city was doing an Internal Association of Chief of Police After Action Review. She stated it was a nonpartisan neutral group that would look into every aspect of the June 14 assassination of the Hortmans and attempted murder of the Hoffmans. She stated they were going to look at New Hope, Brooklyn Park, Champlin, all the police activity to see if processes needed to be better and if there were mistakes made along the way. She stated it was a very serious report that would come out and Chief Bruley felt it was vital. She stated the state was amending some of the laws.

She stated that a city Council member, school board member, state representative or senator address was public. She stated that the gentleman who went on a rampage in Brooklyn Park on June 14, all the information he got was publicly available online. She stated they were now allowed to remove the address from some paperwork. She stated with campaign financial reports for local candidates, they had to provide the address and that address was public but didn't have to put the physical address on it. She also thought when filing to be a candidate, they also had to provide the address which was public too. She stated a lot of states were trying to figure out ways to contact people more rapidly and protect people's safety.

Budget. The Council had moved forward with the budget, and she briefed the Commissioners on it at the last meeting. She stated it was not 12% as was put in the newspaper and the Council had it under 7.5% and being able to maintain a lot of the public safety services.

Commissioner Larkin asked if there was any discussion regarding making addresses private, like how the public could verify that a candidate lived where they said they lived for purposes of an election. She asked how the public would be able to ensure that a candidate lived where a candidate said they lived and thought of the special election that occurred in Roseville where a candidate didn't live at an address.

Council Liaison Klonowski stated the address would be verified at filing and didn't know how it was done at the state level.

Staff Liaison Montero stated he would use Google and Hennepin County to verify that the candidate lived in the district when filing. He stated if anyone knew that a candidate lived

outside the district, they should contact the city clerk about it and he would coordinate with Hennepin County and the Secretary of State's office.

9. Adjournment

Motion Commissioner Secara, second by Commissioner Larkin to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Devin Montero
Staff Liaison