

**MINUTES OF RAVENNA CITY PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**April 22, 2019**

The April 22, 2019 meeting of the Ravenna City Personnel Committee was called to Order at 6:30 P.M., by Bruce Ribelin. In attendance were Paul Moskun, Rob Kairis, Amy Michael, Andrew Kluge, Matt Harper and Joe Bica. Also attending the meeting were Mayor Frank Seman; Finance Director, Kimble Cecora; Law Director, Frank Seman; Director of Public Service, Kay Dubinsky; City Engineer, Bob Finney; Fire Chief Geoffrey Cleveland; Tim Calfee of 910 Murray Avenue, Ravenna, Ohio and ; Greg Francis of 558 Coolman Avenue, Ravenna, Ohio; Cliff Soudil of 464 Woodlawn Avenue, Ravenna, Ohio.

Mr. Ribelin said the first item on the agenda is changing the Finance Director position to an appointed position. The reason they are meeting is to determine whether or not to change the charter to make the position appointed by the mayor so it can be put on the ballot. The deadline date is August 7.

Ms. Michael said she thinks it should be as simple as possible. Once it's in the Charter, it's going to be there and will not be easy to change. She doesn't know that she would put a job description into the charter. She thinks she would put in the charter whether it is an elected position or an appointed position.

Mr. Ribelin said he thought most everyone agreed it should be an appointed position and most of the other communities they looked at had it with Council approval.

The clerk noted there are two section of the charter, Article VI under Mayoral Appointments. They can put the position under there. The way she understood it from the last meeting, she wrote the following and sent it along to Personnel Committee members: "There shall be a finance director who shall be appointed by the mayor with the concurrence of a majority of the members of council. The finance director will have qualifications as outlined in Article IX of this charter and as may be fixed by ordinance." They can remove the charter reference and just say "as may be fixed by ordinance". That simplifies everything.

The clerk went on to say that the question came up whether or not to eliminate the entire Section IX which refers to the Finance Director with references to being an elected official and have all the powers and duties. There are over two pages of the powers and duties.

Mr. Kairis said they could just update Article IX. It talks about being an elected position. Do they also want to include it in the mayoral appointments. All of the mayoral appointments do not require council action. Why not just change Article IX instead of having it an elected position to make it appointed by the mayor.

The clerk said that the problem is that if there is a vacancy in the office with powers and duties posted in the charter and if someone wants to change the powers and duties or tweak it somehow, they can't do that. Their hands will be tied.

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Mr. Kairis said he doesn't know why they would want to change it. It's been this way for years and nobody has wanted to change anything.

Mr. Cimino said the concept is they want to make it an appointed position, which is fine. That obviously gets away from the headache they have at this moment as far as being able to fill that position. The issue, as far as how they want to address the job description, whether or not they want to put that in the charter or not. They can remove that portion if they want. They might be able to put everything into one ordinance. So there is not an issue of one passing and not the other passing. Right now, the proposal is to put it into two ordinances. To the extent that they put everything into one ordinance, he thinks they can do that. They both deal with the Finance Director and if they're addressing the issue of the Finance Director, he thinks they can do that because they can't put things from a different subject matter in one ordinance. If it's the same subject matter, you have the ability to put it into one ordinance.

Mr. Kairis asked why they have to change Article VI.

The clerk responded to add the finance director.

Mr. Kairis asked why they can't just leave that alone and tweak Article IX.

The clerk said she would suppose they could do that as well.

Mr. Cimino said that the way to address it so that it's not complicated and more straightforward is to create the position to be appointed. There may be different areas of the charter that relate to that. He thinks they can clean that up and address it. They don't have to have two ordinances. He appreciates the idea that there is a risk that if you have two separate ordinances, you take the chance of one passing and the other not passing. Then they'd be in a quagmire. It seems to him these issues can be addressed. The issue to him is if they want to have that long enumeration of what he's supposed to do included in the charter. It seems that is an ironclad way of doing it. They couldn't modify it without going back to the voters.

Mr. Ribelin said that if it's going to be a mayoral appointment, wouldn't it be prudent to have the HR person write up a job description.

Mr. Cimino said that Mr. Cecora could also provide direction to the HR person regarding this issue.

Mr. Kairis said that it's not a job someone would necessarily apply for; it's an appointment.

The clerk noted she is an appointed person. She had to apply for the job. The other people who the mayor appoints also have to apply for the jobs. There's nothing different in that way. The service director is appointed by the mayor. The only thing in the charter that refers to that position is that it shall be appointed by the mayor. There's no job description in there.

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Mayor Seman said that they are in the process of updating the job descriptions but every employee has a job description.

Mr. Kairis asked if the finance director is significantly different enough that it's not being treated by the other mayoral appointments.

Ms. Michael said she thinks that the finance director position has to have more stability than to be an appointed job. It's been pretty consistent up until now. She doesn't know what they can do to fix it though.

Mr. Kairis said he thinks that the council approval part of it gives an extra level of security. He did note that all the other communities they looked at had that check in it.

Mr. Kluge said he thinks that the appointment of the mayor but with council approval, they would also be able to say when this person has to go. The mayor is elected to make that choice and he's not sure how else to handle it.

Mayor Seman asked if they would want to share the liability of the audit with the mayor. With the mayor being the appointing authority, that moves from the Finance Director and will fall on the mayor.

Mr. Ribelin said that even for lesser positions, for appointments on boards and commissions, council has to approve them.

Mr. Kairis said that the appointed position, even with the council approval, the auditing responsibility would fall on the mayor.

Mr. Cecora asked why they deem this position more important than Chuck Dowdy, Bill Bregant or Tim Stephens?

Mr. Kairis said that he would only say that because historically, it has been an elected position. But should it be any different than those? That's a good question.

Mr. Cecora said that it's just an appointment of the mayor and hopefully that person would use their best judgment in hiring the best candidate for the finance director, as would the chief of police; as would the director of Parks & Recreation, etc.

Mr. Kairis said that when they review all the other communities, they all have the council approval on that position. That position is deviated from standard practice. This is not to say they have to follow every other city.

Mr. Ribelin asked why the other cities do that?

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Mr. Rainone said Mr. Kairis does bring up a good point. If they read through the code sections of the other communities, it is very interesting.

Mayor Seman noted they are in the process of updating all job descriptions for all employees. They want to rewrite the Civil Service so that it is appropriate to the City and another designation would be whether an employee is “at will” or covered under Civil Service so there is no debate about that when there is a problem.

Mr. Cimino asked if they want to have the position to be a mayoral appointment with council approval.

It was the consensus of those present that the position should be a mayoral appointment with council approval.

Mr. Cimino said the next issue would be dealing with the itemization of the job description; should that be part of the charter?

Ms. Michael said she doesn't think it should be on the Charter. Mr. Ribelin concurred. It was the consensus of those present that the job description should not be in the charter and Article IX should be eliminated.

Mr. Ribelin noted that he thinks they need to keep it simple. If they start adding job descriptions, etc., the purpose of the whole thing is going to get convoluted.

It was decided by those present that the issue would be sent to Committee of the Whole for approval of further action.

There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 6:55 P.M.

**ATTEST:**

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Clerk of Council

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Scott Rainone, Chairperson  
Personnel Committee