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Minutes from the Special City Council Meeting on Monday September 25, 2023 at 6:30 pm in the Auditorium are as follows:

CITY COUNCIL  
DORCHESTER MA

Laflamme, Frank N., President	At-Large Councilor	Present
Roy, Gerard (Jerry) A.	At-Large Councilor	Present
Tillotson, James K.	At-Large Councilor	Present via Zoom
Zygarowski, Robert J.	At-Large Councilor	Present
McAuliffe, Joel D.	Ward 1 Councilor	Present via Zoom
Brooks, Shane D.	Ward 2 Councilor	Present via Zoom
Lopez, Delmarina	Ward 3 Councilor	Present
Balakier, George A.	Ward 4 Councilor	Present
Krampits, Fred T.	Ward 5 Councilor	Present
Dobosz, Derek Gregory	Ward 6 Councilor	Present via Zoom
Courchesne, William C.	Ward 7 Councilor	Absent
Labrie, Gary R.	Ward 8 Councilor	Present
Pniak-Costello, Mary Elizabeth	Ward 9 Councilor	Present

Meeting opened by Councilor Laflamme at 6:30.

Public Input-Sean Goonan, 6 Lincoln Street, disagree with extending the mayor's term. Michael Pise, 44 Bonneville Avenue, personal opinions not here representing the mayor's office. Served on the School Committee for some time. The At-large positions were four years. Should be some differentiation in the at-large terms. Terms should be put in as a 4-year term with 2 people being elected every two years. Alternate the 4-year terms every two years. Worked well for the school committee. Lisa Bienvenue, 34 Everett Street, terms, 4-year term/2-year terms understand what people say about the 2 & 4 year terms. Should be voted on by the taxpayers. At-large or Mayor's position, we the people should have the decision on how that occurs. Don't think people realize that's being talked about.

--Motion made by councilor Labrie to close public input. Motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote. Councilor Courchesne absent.

Clerk Rattell read the letter from the Mayor calling the meeting.

Councilor Laflamme thanked the Charter Review Committee, brought a lot forward. Ideas of what to look at in the charter. Counselor Riley gave the charter rules from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. There are two different processes by which to change the charter. Recommendations were made by the Rules Committee. If you're making major changes to the charter voter approval is recommended. A Charter Commission is voted on. The next regular election they would fill out nomination papers to be on the ballot to be a commissioner. The recommendation of the Law Department is to go before the voters at the next regularly scheduled election. Law department recommends the 3 main or 44 total but not on the agenda. Councilor Laflamme stated not voting on any changes, this is informal. Counselor Riley stated 10 days before there should be a special meeting where councilors can submit their wishes. Could debate as long as it is on the agenda. Councilor Laflamme stated some are clerical, group as one item. Councilor McAuliffe has some questions, would like to clarify. Recommendations is there any reason the City

Council can't vote one by one for change. Non-binding referendum to back this up. Counselor Riley stated only two ways to do that. Councilor McAuliffe stated glad to see this coming forward. Charter is long overdue to be updated. Require the City Council to act. Not enough voter participation, make the changes as councilors. Come up numerous times. Mayor's term, one of the last in the area with a two year term. At-large should mirror the school committee. Fooling ourselves if we think a Charter Commission would happen in a timely manner. Councilor Pniak-Costello stated was there a reason to do a committee and not a commission? Not everyone agrees with the four-year terms. Changes that are major should go on the ballot. Two choices. Councilor Brooks stated with respect to distinction, between the commission or committee. Commission is elected. Could an elected official serve on both? May have to chose between commission or being elected. Do believe in the staggered format. At-large can help new members. In favor of a four-year term for Mayor especially if there is a recall provision in place. Councilor Labrie stated reading the recall provision who determines the reason for recall? Council would. Can all Councilors suggest items and the body would vote on it? Law Department would review and revise. Can be a debate. Councilor Lopez stated thank the residents. Let the residents decide the length of terms. Do not think it should be a home rule petition. Counselor Riley stated can be debated and presented at the next meeting. Councilor Lopez stated don't have to use one method for each change. Can require voter approval, can do either one. Councilor Balakier stated agree this is overdue. Needs to be updated. Great work, thank the committee. Inclined to think the 44 items should be handled individually. In favor a four-year Mayor term. Councilor Krampits stated appreciate the work of the committee. Can we start off with a report without adding from the council? Some, what's current to where it's at. Actual changes. Make the document clearer. Break down into changes. Will get our own chance to make changes? Councilor Laflamme stated ask Counselor Riley don't put anything in there that says were going to change this. Charter review commission, vote for positions, binding questions on the ballot. Special act or charter commission. Councilor Zygarowski asked about a recall provision. Not a lawyer, like to know what other various cities have had to do with the recall provision. In favor of a four year term but want it on the ballot. Should have background. Councilor Pniak- Costello stated look at the recalls in other city and towns. Not guilty once charged. Very careful with recall. Can't condemn a person before they are tried or convicted. Do research, don't want to condemn people. Councilor McAuliffe stated are we past the deadline for non-binding questions? Legal opinion of Law Department? City Clerk Keith Rattell stated not clear on the lead time to put a question on the ballot but the ballot is all drafted and ready to go. Councilor McAuliffe stated if we are past the time, we are past the time. If not a good time to get it on the ballot. Clarifying of committee recommendations. Committee is dissolved. No longer exists. Helpful, if adopted would be extremely helpful. Councilor Lopez stated non-binding, 35<sup>th</sup> day preceding the election by vote of the city council, so it is not too late. Clerk Rattell stated he would ask the Secretary of State. Councilor Labrie stated how many more days before the election. Has to be on the Council agenda. Councilor McAuliffe stated can we put the question for 44 items on the ballot? Councilor Lopez stated 44 items is not the right thing to do to put it all on one item. Each item should be separate. Be judicious about what goes on the ballot or not. Counselor Riley stated bring the recommendations to Agnes, pick a date for the meeting so it can go on an agenda. Can be made. Councilor Lopez stated packet needs to be distributed to the public. If the non-binding is on the ballot, we can meet after the election.

--Motion made by Councilor McAuliffe to take the 3 charter review recommendations and put on the council agenda.

--Motion made by Councilor McAuliffe to place the following agenda items for a special meeting agenda to have a non-binding question on this years ballot: 4 year term for Mayor and a 4 year at large term rotating each 2 years and a recall petition. Motion amended by Councilor Brooks to be just 4 year term for Mayor and 4 year term for council on a rotating basis. Motion defeated by a roll call vote of 3 yes, 9 no. Councilors Roy, McAuliffe and Brooks voting yes.

Councilor Lopez stated can't put the recall referendum on the ballot, can be on the next council agenda. Councilor Tillotson stated rushing these things, give the public an opportunity to look at this. Don't think we should do so hastily. You have the Mayors 4 year term, recall petition, gender neutral, 4 year at large rotating. Councilor Lopez stated place on the next council agenda, separate orders, still in the time frame. Non-binding questions, don't need a public hearing. Counselor Riley stated provide the exact wording and it will be appropriate to have at the next meeting. Councilor Laflamme stated want to do it right, public meeting law. Councilor Krampits stated were talking about slow and methodical, now there is a race to get it on the ballot before the election. Don't agree with filing orders to rush through this. Councilor Zygarowski stated agree with Councilor Krampits. Give the attorney and the public a chance to look at this. Don't think it's the time to do this. Don't think the Clerk will have enough time to do this. Councilor McAuliffe stated don't rush to judgement, non-binding. Not super complicated stuff. Will speed up the process and make sure it gets done. Lets hear from the public. Make some impactful change. Get two items done here. Avenue to make sure we don't have to wait another two years. Councilor Roy stated committee worked on this for over a year. Did the work, did their due diligence, two items should be brought forth immediately. Councilor Labrie stated would go with two of the items, not the recall petition. Councilor Lopez stated talking in circles. Have a clear pathway. Have to hear from the Clerk. If Councilor McAuliffe can submit the items as orders for the agenda for Thursday. He can put all three motions, put the motion on the floor. This may not even be possible. Councilor Pniak-Costello stated make sure we talk about conflict of interest. If they are a councilor at large currently can they vote for this? Question for ethics committee. Councilor Laflamme stated have to look into as ourselves. Clerk Rattell stated if we are looking to put a non-binding question in a municipal year, about 14% turnout. Presidential would be about 70%. Low turnout, won't get representation of the city. Councilor Zygarowski stated how would it reflect on the at large? Councilor McAuliffe stated in terms of process, if we do the way the law dept. suggested will take 2 years at least. If we do the question now we have one legislative session. Opinion of voters. Comfortable with the municipal voters voting on this. May draw more interest from the ones that elect all of us. Common agreement on. Happy to put on the next agenda just don't want to be the one writing it. Councilor Brooks stated people want to put on the next ballot if there is a dialogue going on can you silence by putting on a motion to table? There has been dialogue going on with no motion on the floor. Entertain an additional motion or table. Counselor Riley stated there is no motion on the floor. Councilor Brooks stated no motion on the floor.

--Motion made by Councilor McAuliffe to reflect trust Councilor Laflamme would work with the law dept. for wording. Clerk Rattell stated motion to table would end all discussion. Counselor Riley stated all by voice, nothing to consider. Need to have something in writing from the Councilor. Councilor Lopez stated Councilor Brooks was right. Thought he was being silenced because everyone thought he was done speaking. Councilor Brooks stated wasn't done speaking, larger discussion in a friendlier fashion. Counselor Riley stated you can't just say you want this done. Can't draft something I haven't proposed. Councilor McAuliffe stated going in circles. Councilor Brooks stated friendly to reword to include any resources to craft the question? We would always work with the attorney to make sure it makes sense. Craft best order to make sure it is what is wanted. Most succinct order possible. Not Joel's motion, while it looks similar is not the same motion. Councilor Zygarowski stated were all councilors, file an order. Proper procedure. Just file the order. Councilor McAuliffe said end the debate and call the question.

--Motion made by Councilor Lopez to table. Motion passed by a roll call vote of 8 yes, 4 no. Councilors Laflamme, Roy, McAuliffe, and Brooks voting no. Councilor Courchesne absent.

Adjournment: --Motion made by Councilor Labrie to adjourn at 8:30. Motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote. Councilor Courchesne absent.

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Rattell", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Keith W. Rattell, City Clerk