

## CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

February 13, 2008

The Willmar City Council met in work session at 4:50 p.m., Wednesday, February 13, 2008, in Conference Room No. 2 at the City Office Building.

Members present included Mayor Les Heitke and Council Members Denis Anderson, Doug Reese, Steve Gardner, Bruce DeBlieck, and Jim Dokken. Others present included City Administrator Michael Schmit, City Attorney Rich Ronning, and West Central Tribune Reporter David Little.

Mayor Heitke opened the meeting and explained that the purpose of the work session was to discuss the possibility of convening the City's Charter Commission. Consideration to convene the Charter Commission was the result of Rice Hospital and Municipal Utilities requesting that term limits for respective board members be extended from two to three-year consecutive terms. The Hospital and Utilities were encouraging these changes to deal with the increased complexities of managing healthcare and utility operations, and the time commitments and educational investments needed for members to competently lead and provide oversight of their respective organizations. City Administrator Schmit reviewed handouts including the Charter, correspondence from the Rice Hospital Board and Willmar Municipal Utilities, and a summary of statutory provisions and procedures for establishing and implementing charter commissions.

Council Members discussed the pros and cons of convening the Charter Commission noting that in the past the Commission had recommended, and the Council approved, limiting term limits. Mayor Heitke pointed out that he felt the concerns of Rice Hospital and Municipal Utilities could be addressed under current provisions which allow the Mayor to reappoint Board and Commission Members following their two consecutive terms after a one-year absence. The Mayor reminded Council Members that the City has, in fact, reappointed members under those circumstances.

Following a lengthy discussion, a consensus was developed whereby Council Members were comfortable with the current process and that unless other Charter Commission issues surfaced, there was not a need to convene the Commission. Rice Hospital Board, Municipal Utilities Commission, and all other board and commission members expressing an interest in serving more than two consecutive terms would be encouraged to continue working with their respective governing bodies by either attending regularly scheduled meetings or serving in an advisory capacity during the one-year absence from official board/commission membership.

Future work session agenda items included the City's recent space study needs analysis and participation in various member organizations, i.e. League of Minnesota Cities and Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities.

The work session adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Schmit,  
City Administrator