MINUTES

OXFORD CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION
COURTHOUSE
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2026 AT 4:30 PM

Approval of Agenda

Ms. French called the meeting to order at 4:33 p.m. Members in attendance were Kevin McKeehan, Alan Kyger, Carla Blackmar, Alex French, and Michael Smith. Staff members in attendance were Chris Conard, Jessica Greene, Douglass R. Elliott Jr., Sam Perry, and Heather Barbour. Members of the public were Steve Chaffin and Katelyn Aluise.

Motion – To Approve the Agenda.
(Voice Vote) 1st Mr. McKeehan 2nd Ms. Blackmar
AYE # 5
NAY # 0
ABS # 0

Approval of Minutes

Motion – To Approve the Minutes.
(Voice Vote) 1st Ms. Blackmar 2nd Mr. McKeehan
AYE # 5
NAY # 0
ABS # 0

1. Minutes from the April 9, 2026, Charter Review Commission Meeting.

Old Business

None.

New Business

1. Further Discussion of Section 2.11(4) with Sam Perry, Community Development Director

The commission had no formal old business and proceeded directly into new business, focusing on a series of proposed charter amendments. Mr. Perry began the discussion centered on Section 2.11 regarding dwelling unit restrictions in the mile square. The commission considered removing outdated language limiting the number of units per structure, noting that the provision dates back to 1976 and creates unnecessary barriers to development. Members discussed the benefits of modern zoning practices, flexibility for redevelopment, and potential impacts on housing patterns.

Motion – To Remove Most of Section 2.11, While Retaining the First Sentence
(Voice Vote) 1st Ms. Blackmar 2nd Mr. Smith
AYE # 5
NAY # 0
ABS # 0

2. Review proposed language for Articles I through V

The commission also revisited concerns related to Section 2.04 about the timing of swearing-in of elected officials relative to election certification. After discussion and review of state requirements, it was determined that no changes were necessary. Attention then shifted to Section 2.12 regarding utility billing. Members reviewed the financial impact of unpaid tenant utility bills, noting that the city loses approximately $10,000 to $20,000 annually and that the burden is shifted to other users. Because most municipalities allow property owners to be held responsible.

Motion – To Eliminate Section 2.12.
(Voice Vote) 1st Ms. Blackmar 2nd Mr. Smith
AYE # 5
NAY # 0
ABS # 0

Additional updates included revising Section 3.04 to align ordinance publication requirements with state law by allowing posting on the city website and one public location instead of three.

Motion – To Allow Posting on the City Website and One Public Location.
(Voice Vote) 1st Mr. McKeehan 2nd Ms. Blackmar
AYE # 5
NAY # 0
ABS # 0

Motion – To Update Section 3.05 to Replace Outdated References from "Auditor" to "Clerk of Council."
(Voice Vote) 1st Ms. Blackmar 2nd Mr. Smith
AYE # 5

NAY # 0
ABS # 0

Further amendments addressed administrative and governance provisions. In Section 4.01, the commission approved language requiring the city manager to reside within the city unless the Council grants an exception, balancing preference with hiring flexibility.

Motion – To Amend Section 4.01, Requiring the City Manager to Reside Within the City Unless the Council Grants an Exception.
(Voice Vote) 1st Mr. McKeehan 2nd Mr. Kyger
AYE # 5
NAY # 0
ABS # 0

Section 4.02 was updated to replace references to the Civil Service Commission with the Personnel Appeals Board, reflecting current practice.

Motion – To Replace the Civil Service Commission with the Personnel Appeals Board.
(Voice Vote) 1st Mr. McKeehan 2nd Ms. Blackmar
AYE # 5
NAY # 0
ABS # 0

3. Discussion of Articles VI through XI

The commission also approved the removal of Article 10.01, which required official bonds for finance personnel, citing changes in state law and the availability of broader insurance coverage that reduces personal liability risks.

Motion – To Remove Article 10.01 and Renumber the Remaining Sections.
(Voice Vote) 1st Mr. Kyger 2nd Mr. Smith
AYE # 5
NAY # 0
ABS # 0

Additional discussion included a pending legal review of Section 8.08 related to board and commission authority, as well as whether proposed charter amendments should be bundled or presented separately on the ballot, with particular attention to potentially controversial items.

Public Comments

Public Comment - Mr. Steve Chaffin- Suggested to strengthen language in the charter to better ensure public participation in meetings, beyond simply allowing attendance.

Future Meeting Dates

The commission agreed to hold one additional meeting to finalize recommendations, address outstanding legal questions, and determine how to present amendments to voters. The next meeting was scheduled for May 13, 2026, at 4:30 PM at the Courthouse.

Adjournment

Motion – To Adjourn at 5:33 p.m.
(Voice Vote) 1st Mr. Kyger 2nd Ms. Blackmar
AYE # 5
NAY # 0
ABS # 0