

Revised City Charter Now Available

Marquette City Charter Commission - May 9, 2012

A public hearing is scheduled at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, May 16, 2012, in the Marquette City Hall Commission Chambers. This hearing is intended to provide residents of Marquette with an opportunity to comment on the contents of the proposed new charter before it is sent to the State for review. The state will have 90 days to review the proposed draft. After the State approves the draft the proposed charter will be placed on the November 6, 2012 ballot. Prior to the vote in November there will be a period of approximately two months during which the citizens of Marquette will have the opportunity to review and discuss the proposed new city charter.

A draft of the proposed new city charter is available for review on the City's website www.mqtcty.org. Hard copies of the charter may also be reviewed in the City Clerk's office at the City Hall and at Peter White Public Library. The Charter Commission encourages citizens of Marquette to review the proposed draft of the proposed charter. The hearing on May 16 provides an opportunity to comment on the draft prior to its submission to the State. After the State approves the draft of the proposed new charter, that draft will be placed on the November ballot.

The Charter Commission conducted a series of public hearings, a work-session with the City Commission and numerous public meetings with city staff, representatives of the Board of Light and Power and other concerned groups and individuals. Discussions during these meetings revealed that the current charter often impedes the effective and efficient operation of city government. For example, provisions in the current charter established dollar thresholds for bidding and purchases based on 1951 dollars. The city's fiscal year is not in line with the state and federal fiscal years. And scores of provisions in the current charter have been nullified by changes in state and federal laws, regulations and court decisions.

The Charter Commission's primary mission has been to draft an updated, understandable, modern charter that will enable the City to operate in an efficient and effective fashion. In addition to eliminating redundant, antiquated and confusing provisions, the Charter Commission has also added several new provisions. These provisions are intended to make Marquette City Government more responsive to citizen concerns and capable of responding to changing conditions.

Included among these changes are provisions regarding the following topics:

- 1) Ethical standards covering elected officials, employees and volunteer members of boards and committees;
- 2) A communication plan using the most current print, electronic and other appropriate media;
- 3) Requirements for periodic review of the city charter;
- 4) Regular strategic planning;
- 5) Continuing economic development planning;
- 6) Promotion of intergovernmental relations and cooperation;
- 7) Clarification of the relationship between the City and the Board of Light and Power;
- 8) Establishment of procedures related to the long term leasing of city property;
- 9) Requirements for the annual evaluation of the City Manager and City Attorney.