

BY DETROIT CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE MARY SHEFFIELD

**RESOLUTION URGING THE ADMINISTRATION TO ADDRESS THE DEFICIT IN
FUNDING FOR THE DETROIT CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION BY
ADVANCING A FY 2021 BUDGET AMENDMENT IN THE AMOUNT PROPOSED BY
THE COMMISSION**

WHEREAS, On August 7, 2018, the citizens of Detroit voted in the affirmative on Proposal R, to revise the 2012 Charter of the City of Detroit, by a vote of 33,272 to 33,088. The nine-member 2018 Charter Revision Commission (the Commission) was elected at the general election on November 6, 2018, and was sworn in at its first meeting on November 20, 2018; and

WHEREAS, The revision process is dictated by The Home Rule City Act, Act 279 of 1909 (HRCA), and section MCL 117.18 indicates that the proposed revised Charter can be submitted to the voters for approval up to three times. The Commission intends to submit the proposed Charter to the voters on the August 3, 2021 primary ballot. The HRCA further provides, “If the Charter is rejected 3 times, or if no revised Charter is adopted during 3 years following the adoption of the proposition to revise, then the Charter revision commission shall terminate and cease to exist.” Therefore, the Commission shall terminate on August 6, 2021; and

WHEREAS, The Commission has worked diligently for the past two and one-half years to research and draft a proposed Charter responsive to the community and the City’s needs, overcoming the roadblocks placed in its path by the global pandemic, and has submitted the draft to the Governor for review and approval; and

WHEREAS, Now that the work of engaging the citizens, hearing their concerns and proposals, and drafting a proposed Charter is nearly complete, the remaining three months of the process consists of a massive educational campaign to educate the voters about what the proposed new City Charter contains. Without this effort, the City’s electorate will not have the tools to make an informed judgment as to whether to adopt the Charter or not; and

WHEREAS, The City has provided funding for the operations of the Commission throughout its existence, including, but not limited to, meeting stipends for the commissioners as well as funding for staff salaries. In fiscal year 2021 (FY 2021), which ends on June 30, 2021, the Commission’s budget was reduced to \$300,000, leaving the Commission with a funding gap to achieve its goals. For the five weeks of FY 2022 during which the Commission will continue in existence, the Mayor proposed funding of \$116,500; however, City Council increased that amount to \$120,000; and

WHEREAS, The Commission has, therefore, requested a budget amendment for the current budget year in the amount of \$496,000: \$129,000 to cover a deficit in the Commission’s current operations, and \$367,000 to fund the educational campaign, requesting funds for a community engagement director, printing of the document, translation services, purchase of mailers, and television, radio, and social media advertising, as well as field staff; and

WHEREAS, The Office of the Chief Financial Officer proposes a significantly lesser amount - \$159,000: \$129,000 to cover a deficit in the Commission's operations, and \$30,000 to print the proposed Charter and provide translation services as a way of educating the public, an amount deemed insufficient by the Commission, which is now struggling to meet the salary demands of its three paid staffers; and

WHEREAS, The citizens voted to initiate a Charter revision and elected commissioners to do the job. The Commission has accomplished the task it was elected to complete. The City has funded the effort. The process is now in its end stage – educating the public – but without adequate funding to complete its job; and

WHEREAS, The Detroit City Council understands that completion of the Commission's job is of paramount importance for the good of the citizens and urges full funding of the Commission's current budget amendment request for FY 2021. **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT**

RESOLVED, The Detroit City Council urges the City Administration to prepare and recommend a FY 2021 budget amendment for the Charter Commission in the amount of \$496,000 for submission to City Council; and **BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the City of Detroit provide a copy of this resolution to Mayor Mike Duggan, and CFO Jay Rising.

April 30, 2021