



BHC-MSS 0216

Guide to the Select Records of the Charter Revision Committee

by Meg Rinn

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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Charter Revision Committee

Title: Select Records of the Charter Revision Committee

Dates: 1967-1974

Quantity: 1 ½ manuscript boxes

Abstract. The City of Bridgeport's charter has gone through several revisions over the centuries in order to keep the document pertinent and relevant to the modern needs of Bridgeport. In the 20th Century, the first revision was completed in 1907 and the second in 1939. When Mayor Curran began to explore updating and revising the charter again, it was 1967 and that 1939 version had been in place for decades. This collection contains some drafts and public hearing transcripts related to the 1968 committee.

Language: English

Repository: Bridgeport History Center

Biographical History:

The City of Bridgeport's charter has gone through several revisions over the centuries in order to keep the document pertinent and relevant to the modern needs of Bridgeport. In the 20th century, the first revision was completed in 1907 and the second in 1939. When Mayor Curran began to explore updating and revising the charter again, it was 1967 and that 1939 version had been in place for decades.

In 1968, following an exploratory study completed in 1967, a 13 member bipartisan group was appointed to create a new draft of the charter. Members included Michael Simko and Sidney Dworkin (later judge of probate), and other members of Bridgeport's political scene. Their draft continuously incorporated public hearings, and feedback was accepted.

Among changes proposed in the 1968 charter was the expansion of the mayor's term limit from two years to four, giving the mayor the power to appoint the department heads for the fire and police departments, changes to the pay for aldermen and civil service, and a host of other changes. The Bridgeport History Center's newspaper clipping collection on the various changes to charters and ordinances in the city, box 55, contains exacting details of these changes.

Unsurprisingly, some proposed suggestions did not go over well – the ability of the mayor to appoint the new heads of the fire and police departments in particular. In a November election, these charter changes were rejected. However, this did not deter Curran, and he ordered a new study in late November of that same year.

Charter revision work continued in 1973 and 1975.

Scope and Content note:

It is unclear who these records belonged to, only that they were the gift of Linda Grossberg who worked at the Koskoff law firm, now Koskoff, Koskoff and Bieder. The material contains the original 1967 survey, some of the charter revision drafts and partial public hearing transcripts, and annotated and revised charter drafts.

Arrangement Note:

Material privileges the initial survey done by the city, before drafts, hearing transcripts, and completed charters in that order.

Administrative information:

Provenance: 1985.27, gift of Linda Grossberg, former lawyer as Koskoff

Preferred Citation:

Select Records of the Charter Revision Committee (BHC-MSS 0216), Bridgeport History Center, Bridgeport Public Library.

Names and Subject Tracings

Personal names

Simko, Michael

Dworkin, Sidney

Corporate names

City of Bridgeport. Charter

City of Bridgeport

Subject tracings

Revisions and referendums

Charters and ordinances

Detailed box/folder listing

Box 1

1. Survey of the administration of the City of Bridgeport, 1967
2. Survey of the administration of the City of Bridgeport, 1967
3. Third draft, June 1968
4. Drafts, undated
5. Drafts, undated
6. Public hearing transcript, 1968
7. Partial transcript of third public hearing, undated
8. Charter, annotated to 1971

Box 2

1. Charter, annotated to 1971
2. Revised charter after June 26, 1974