

**City of Plainfield, New Jersey**  
**Charter Study Commission**  
**Minutes**  
**Minutes of Meeting of Thursday, April 25, 2013, 7:30 p.m.**  
**Plainfield City Hall Library**

**Call to Order:** Mr. Smiley called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

**Salute to the Flag:** Mrs. Davis led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**The Open Public Meeting Act Compliance Statement:** Ms. Criscione announced that the Notice Requirement provided for in the Open Public Meeting Law had been satisfied. Notice was properly given, said notice having been transmitted to the Courier-News and the Star-Ledger on 12/26/12, as well as posting on the City website and on the City Clerk's bulletin board.

**Roll Call:** Mr. Smiley took roll call. Secretary Mary Burgwinkle, Treasurer Jeanette Criscione, Assistant Secretary Marie Davis, Chair Rick Smiley and Vice Chair John Stewart were all present.

**Minutes:** The Minutes of Meeting of April 11, 2013 were approved in a unanimous vote with no dissents or abstentions.

**Interviews:** Live interviews were conducted of Mr. Martin Hellwig (Director of the Division of Police and Director of the Department of Public Affairs and Safety), Ms. Rebecca Williams (City Council Wards 2-3) and Mr. Cory Storch (City Council, Ward 2) Attached as Exhibit A are the interview questions and a brief summary of the remarks of Mr. Hellwig. Attached as Exhibit B are the interview questions and a brief summary of the remarks of Ms. Williams. Attached as Exhibit C are the interview questions and a brief summary of the remarks of Mr. Storch.

**Correspondence to Commission:** Ms. Burgwinkle indicated that there is ongoing correspondence with representatives from other communities about coming to meetings and she should be able to report at the next meeting.

**Treasurer Report:** Ms. Criscione reported that there has been ongoing discussion about finding out the cost of publishing our final report in the Courier and Star Ledger in the event we decide to do that. She has made multiple phone calls to both papers and to Mark Spivey, but has not been able to get responses. She will ask the City Clerk who he goes to when publishing meeting notices.

**New Business:**

**-Discussion of agendas for the next several meetings.**

Ms. Burgwinkle distributed a table of existing and added meeting dates through August 6<sup>th</sup>, the due date of the final report. On May 2, 2013, the next meeting will be held in the Second Floor Planning conference room, which is very small, because the Library was not available. The meeting will be a working meeting (with no interviews) including going through the charter provision by provision critically. Ms. Criscione suggested that the meeting be used for strategy as well and that meetings be added if necessary. Mr. Smiley requested deferring discussion of the remaining meeting agendas to the next meeting.

**-Assignments for Commissioners**

Ms. Burgwinkle requested that each Commissioner bring to the next meeting their copy of the Plainfield Charter (1968), the Faulkner Act provisions that Dr. Reock gave to each of us at the first meeting, and the Hopewell and South Orange Charter reports.

**Short debriefing of interviews by Commissioners:** Mr. Stewart was interested in the topic of term limits. Mr. Smiley commented that he believes that a candidate has a term limit every time they run, because they can lose and Ms. Burgwinkle indicated that she does not like term limits. Ms. Davis commented that she does not understand how 6 wards would improve representation of certain minority groups who do not vote and a short discussion with Mr. Smiley ensued. Mr. Stewart commented that it is a good exercise for us to talk about these ideas that are brought up to us.

**Announce date and time of next meeting:** Thursday, 5/2/13 at 7:30 pm in City Hall Planning Conference Room on the Second Floor.

**Public Participation:** No members of the public requested to be heard (observers were allowed to ask questions during the interviews).

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

### Exhibit A

**Following are interview questions and a brief summary of Mr. Hellwig's comments.**

**1. Please briefly introduce yourself and describe your present or former role in Plainfield's government.**

My name is Martin Hellwig and I am the Director of the Department of Public Affairs and Safety and the Police Director for the City of Plainfield.

**2. To whom do you or did you report?**

I report to the City Administrator.

**3. How frequently do you or did you meet with members of the governing body?**

I meet with members of the governing body once a month, if not more, and regularly meet with Councilor Williams.

**4. If you are or were involved in budgeting for your department or division, describe the budget process.**

I am involved in the budget. I work on the budget with the police and fire divisions. I have regular meetings with my senior staff and look through the budget. I also review the budget with others outside my department, including the Finance Director.

**5. Do you or did you have any contact with your counterparts in other municipalities? How often and in what context?**

Yes, I meet regularly with the Union County Prosecutor and was at the Union County Police Academy today.

**6. Have you read Plainfield's City Charter?**

Yes, I have.

**7. What do you consider to be the most important advantages of Plainfield's present form of local government, the Plainfield City Charter? What are its disadvantages, in your opinion?**

Coming from a law enforcement background, I like the order and organization of the Charter and I like the way that it lays out the responsibilities of the Mayor, Council, Administrator. I do not see any disadvantages.

**8. Is there anything in the Plainfield City Charter that hindered you from carrying out your role in Plainfield's government?**

No.

**9. If your answer to Question 8 was yes, were the provisions of the Plainfield City Charter the problem or do you believe that the Charter was being interpreted incorrectly?**

N/A

**10. If you have had experience with forms of municipal government other than Plainfield's City Charter, how did the operation of the municipal government under those forms compare?**

Yes, both were Faulkner Act forms, both worked well, as does this charter.

**11. What is your opinion on the number of City Council members under the Plainfield City Charter? Is the City Council too large or too small? Should there be one City Councilor from each ward, and three elected at large from the whole City, rather than 1-4, 2-3 and one at large? Should all City Councilors be elected at large?**

My opinion is that the number of City Council members and how they are chosen meets the needs of the community.

**12. Should City Councilors be compensated or should they receive \$1 per year for their services as in some other municipalities? Should the council receive benefits?**

Yes, the City Council should be compensated for the work they do, but he does not believe that they should receive benefits.

**13. In your opinion, should the City Clerk, who acts as clerk of the City Council, be appointed by the Mayor or by the City Council?**

City Council, in his opinion.

**14. Do you think that the Plainfield City Charter could be improved in any way that would enhance the working relationship between the Mayor and City Council?**

He does not believe that anything in the Charter could get people to work together.

**15. The Plainfield City Charter provides for three City Departments, Administration and Finance, Public Works and Public Affairs and Safety.**

**(a) Do you believe that the current city divisions are assigned to the appropriate Departments for peak efficiency?**

**(b) Should the Plainfield City Charter be changed to allow for between 3 and 6 Departments, to be established by ordinance?**

**(c) Does Plainfield need the Department of Public Affairs and Safety in its current form?**

(a) He believes that the responsibility of some of the Department Managers is enormous, and that it would be a good idea to try to expand the number of Departments somehow.

(b) yes

(c) His suggestion is that there should be two departments with civilian oversight for each department - civilian for police and civilian for fire. Both should report to the City Administrator. The current structure bestows an excessive amount of responsibility on one person. This makes it difficult for the current person in the position of Public Affairs and Safety to do either job well. Verona is a good example of how the Police and Fire Departments are structured.

**16. Do you believe that the Office of Corporation Counsel can properly represent both the Mayor and City Council as provided in the Plainfield City Charter? Should there be a provision for separate counsel for the governing body? Should there be full time in-house Corporation Counsel?**

He consults Corporate Counsel on a regular basis, is not otherwise comfortable answering the question.

**17. The Plainfield City Charter provides for initiative and referendum upon petitions with signatures of 20% of registered city voters, and for recall of elected officials with signatures of 33 1/3 % of registered voters. Should the Plainfield City Charter be amended to follow the Faulkner Act (10%-15% of voters who voted in the last election for initiative and referendum under circumstances described in the law and 25% for recall)? Should the recall percentage be less than 25%?**

He does not think that recall should be less than 25%.

**18. In your opinion, should Plainfield have more or fewer Wards? Would more or fewer Wards provide better representation for all constituencies?**

He does not believe that he is qualified to answer this question.

**19. What is your opinion of non-partisan local elections (for Mayor and City Council) rather than primaries and partisan local elections?**

He thinks non-partisan is a good idea.

**20. How does the Plainfield City Charter work with the Plainfield Municipal Code? Were they used together consistently in your experience? If NO, what is your recommendation?**

Work well together.

**21. Are there any provisions of the Plainfield City Charter that you think can be improved? If so what do you suggest?**

Position of Public Safety should be reviewed.

**22. Do you have any other observations that you would like to share about the provisions of Plainfield City Charter?**

No, not really.

## Exhibit B

Following are interview questions and a brief summary of Ms. William's comments.

### Interview Questions

**1. Please briefly introduce yourself and describe your present or former role in Plainfield's government.**

Elected to City Council in 2010, took office in 2011. Also, was employed in a prior administration as head of public access TV for 20 months, to get the station up and running with some content.

**2. Have you read Plainfield's City Charter?**

Yes

**3. What do you consider to be the most important advantages of Plainfield's present form of local government, the Plainfield City Charter? What are its disadvantages, in your opinion?**

It is well organized, provides for professional management. Outdated in some parts (fines and penalties) and does not provide for term limits. She likes that it addresses a ban on dual office holding.

**4. Is there anything in the Plainfield City Charter that hindered you from carrying out your role in Plainfield's government?**

Outdated provisions, such as fines in the Charter, but no enforcement power. There are inconsistencies with updates from State Law

**5. If your answer to Question 4 was yes, were the provisions of the Plainfield City Charter the problem or do you believe that the Charter was being interpreted incorrectly?**

It was the actual provisions of the Charter, not the interpretation. She would like Charter to address legislative aides for the council

**6. If you have had experience with forms of municipal government other than Plainfield's City Charter, how did the operation of the municipal government under those forms compare?**

No Experience.

**7. What is your opinion on the number of City Council members under the Plainfield City Charter? Is the City Council too large or too small? Should there be one City Councilor from each ward, and three elected at large from the whole City, rather than 1-4, 2-3 and one at large? Should all City Councilors be elected at large?**

Right now, I am thinking 5-6 wards and 7-9 Councilors, all Councilors and Mayor should run at the same time once every 4 years, and City Council should have legislative aides.

**8. Should City Councilors be compensated or should they receive \$1 per year for their services as in some other municipalities? Should the council receive benefits?**

City Council should be compensated, it is important to me that people are compensated for their work. I do not think that an uncompensated City Council is a good idea because it could result in an elitist council with some of the councilors less interested due to lack of compensation.

**9. In your opinion, should the City Clerk, who acts as clerk of the City Council, be appointed by the Mayor or by the City Council?**

By the Council.

**10. Do you think that the Plainfield City Charter could be improved in any way that would enhance the working relationship between the Mayor and City Council?**

No. Issues are not with the Charter but rather personality issues.

**11. The Plainfield City Charter provides for three City Departments, Administration and Finance, Public Works and Public Affairs and Safety.**

**(a) Do you believe that the current city divisions are assigned to the appropriate Departments for peak efficiency? No, see below.**

**(b) Should the Plainfield City Charter be changed to allow for between 3 and 6 Departments, to be established by ordinance? Yes, at least 5.**

**(c) Does Plainfield need the Department of Public Affairs and Safety in its current form? see below**  
Departments –

- 1) Public Safety: Director/Police Director/Fire
- 2) Admin and Finance: Tax Assessor, Tax Collector, Audit and Control, Purchasing
- 3) Public Affairs: IT, Recreation, Health & Social Services, Municipal Court
- 4) Public Works: Inspections, City Yard, Building Dept, Engineering Dept
- 5) Urban Development: Economic Development, Planning, Community Development

**12. Do you believe that the Office of Corporation Counsel can properly represent both the Mayor and City Council as provided in the Plainfield City Charter? Should there be a provision for separate counsel for the governing body? Should there be full time in-house Corporation Counsel?**

Counsel should appoint, hard to get straight advice sometimes. If there is a full time in-house counsel, that person should not be allowed to do outside work for their law firm. They should be a full time city counsel with no other commitments.

**13. The Plainfield City Charter provides for initiative and referendum upon petitions with signatures of 20% of registered city voters, and for recall of elected officials with signatures of 33 1/3 % of registered voters. Should the Plainfield City Charter be amended to follow the Faulkner Act (10%-15% of voters who voted in the last election for initiative and referendum under circumstances described in the law and 25% for recall)? Should the recall percentage be less than 25%?**

Plainfield City Charter should be amended to follow the Faulkner Act so that people can participate in government. Should be a reasonable percentage of signatures for initiative and referendum, and even for recall, to get on the ballot, because after all, once the item gets on the ballot, the voters still get to decide. For recall, 25% sounds reasonable, but that should be 25% of the people who voted in the last election.

**14. In your opinion, should Plainfield have more or fewer Wards? Would more or fewer Wards provide better representation for all constituencies?**

One or two more wards, maybe 5 is good, lines should be redrawn. In my experience over the past 12 years, there are some areas where people do not come out to vote, Apartment dwellers vs. Homeowners is one. Perhaps redrawing the lines would make some people feel more invested, that should be the goal.

**15. What is your opinion of non-partisan local elections (for Mayor and City Council) rather than primaries and partisan local elections?**

Non-partisan, all at the same time, every four years. Could take a little bit of the politics out because it would be before the partisan primary. Looking at Newark as an example, everyone gets a line, not a column, take Democrat and Republican bashing out of it. Also, she believes in term limits for mayor and council, should be able to run one or two times, then take a break. No one should feel entrenched.

**16. How does the Plainfield City Charter work with the Plainfield Municipal Code? Were they used together consistently in your experience? If NO, what is your recommendation?**

Worked together pretty well but should look at some of the language to update it, acknowledge electronic communications, etc.

**17. Are there any provisions of the Plainfield City Charter that you think can be improved? If so what do you suggest?**

I would say provisions that deal with the preparation and delivery of the budget. There are deadlines and dates, and they are never adhered to. Should be looked at. Appointments to commissions and boards need to be looked at as well, many stay vacant for a long time. It is a failure of responsibility not to appoint, that should be looked at as well. Section 7.4, Conflicts of Interest. The terms "agency or instrumentality of the city" should be clarified as to PMUA. If you are serving the City, should not be able to have contracts or business interests with the any City Agency, for instance. 7.6, Fraud provisions. The provision discusses consequences, but does not set forth who has the power to enforce, may be deliberately vague.

**18. Do you have any other observations that you would like to share about the provisions of Plainfield City Charter?**

One more, in 2013, the Charter should be updated for gender neutral language, default seems to revert to male, which is not acceptable. Also, regarding the Human Relations Commission at 4.9, she presumes there was a time it was extremely necessary. If it is to have any meaning now, it provides for the City to appoint an Executive Director with no compensation, should be updated along with all Commissions. We do not take Commissions seriously now. As indicated before, consider implementing term limits for Council and the Mayor. Mayor role is important in a City our size, candidates for Mayor should be a legal voter for 4 consecutive years.

## Exhibit C

Following are interview questions and a brief summary of Mr. Storch's comments.

### Interview Questions

**1. Please briefly introduce yourself and describe your present or former role in Plainfield's government.**

I am second ward councilman, am serving my third term. Served 6 years on Board of Education prior to election to Council. Served about 5 or 6 years on Citizen's School Budget Advisory Council, and on Planning Board for about 10 years, both before and after election to Council.

**2. Have you read Plainfield's City Charter? yes**

**3. What do you consider to be the most important advantages of Plainfield's present form of local government, the Plainfield City Charter? What are its disadvantages, in your opinion?**

Charter is adequate to our needs, will make some specific points in answers to future questions.

**4. Is there anything in the Plainfield City Charter that hindered you from carrying out your role in Plainfield's government? Will cover in answers to future questions.**

**5. If your answer to Question 4 was yes, were the provisions of the Plainfield City Charter the problem or do you believe that the Charter was being interpreted incorrectly?**

We have problems with local government, but they are not caused by our charter, in my opinion they are caused by lack of leadership.

**6. If you have had experience with forms of municipal government other than Plainfield's City Charter, how did the operation of the municipal government under those forms compare?**

No other experience.

**7. What is your opinion on the number of City Council members under the Plainfield City Charter? Is the City Council too large or too small? Should there be one City Councilor from each ward, and three elected at large from the whole City, rather than 1-4, 2-3 and one at large? Should all City Councilors be elected at large?**

Size now, 7, is a good working group, thinks 7 works better than 9 which others have suggested. Plainfield needs more wards, might result in more representation of certain groups, such as the Hispanic population, a long time issue. He thinks that having single ward council seats helps with getting representation and participation for each ward. Ideal would be 6 wards, 6 single ward councilors, and one at large. Would minimize at large because it is hard to overcome certain advantages that the party has running candidates for those seats, should be a more even playing field if you are running against the party.

**8. Should City Councilors be compensated or should they receive \$1 per year for their services as in some other municipalities? Should the council receive benefits?**

It is appropriate to pay City Councilors, current level is fine. If some Councilors want to receive health benefits, that would be fine, but the cost of the benefits should be deducted from their pay so that the dollar value of compensation is the same for everyone.

**9. In your opinion, should the City Clerk, who acts as clerk of the City Council, be appointed by the Mayor or by the City Council?**

This is an issue because our charter refers to a "clerk of the council", that is not the City Clerk. The charter should provide that the "clerk of the council" is the City Clerk, and that it should be appointed by City Council. The City Council is labeled a "strong council" because it gets to approve all of the actions of the Mayor, however, it is difficult to be a strong council without support staff. Most City Councilors have full time jobs, and without any support staff to do research the Council can be at the mercy of the Mayor and cabinet, who can put their spin on information that is given to Council before it makes a decision. Important for Council to have a City Clerk that it can trust because it is the appointing body, as well as support staff in the Clerk's office for Council.

**10. Do you think that the Plainfield City Charter could be improved in any way that would enhance the working relationship between the Mayor and City Council?**

Short answer is no. Other things are required.

**11. The Plainfield City Charter provides for three City Departments, Administration and Finance, Public Works and Public Affairs and Safety.**

(a) Do you believe that the current city divisions are assigned to the appropriate Departments for peak efficiency?

(b) Should the Plainfield City Charter be changed to allow for between 3 and 6 Departments, to be established by ordinance?

(c) Does Plainfield need the Department of Public Affairs and Safety in its current form?

Agrees with Director Hellwig's recommendation that there should be a police and fire division with civilian oversight for both, reporting to the City Administrator. He believes that the Department of Administration and Finance is unwieldy, but he does not think that it should be divided into two departments, as the trend for the future will be outsourcing and shared services. Does not think that we need a lot of Departments, believes that Charter should look to the future, should set out a maximum number of departments, but leave flexibility to have fewer departments.

**12. Do you believe that the Office of Corporation Counsel can properly represent both the Mayor and City Council as Should there be full time in-house Corporation Counsel?**

Tough issue, not sure that the Charter can solve all of these problems. He recalled a prior corporation counsel who represented the Mayor first and the Council Second, and a Corporation Counsel before that who would push back against the Mayor, which was helpful to the Council. He noted the perception among some corporation counsel that while they are appointed by the Mayor with advice and consent of the City Council, that they can be fired by the Mayor. The Charter should give recourse to the Council to reinstate fired Corporation Counsel, the same way that it gives recourse regarding the City Administrator and Department Heads. Regarding full time Corporation Counsel, the Charter should not be prescriptive about the number of hours. A really good risk management program may be able to reduce lawsuits, and the Mayor and Council should evaluate risk management on a yearly basis.

**13. The Plainfield City Charter provides for initiative and referendum upon petitions with signatures of 20% of registered city voters, and for recall of elected officials with signatures of 33 1/3 % of registered voters. Should the Plainfield City Charter be amended to follow the Faulkner Act (10%-15% of voters who voted in the last election for initiative and referendum under circumstances described in the law and 25% for recall)? Should the recall percentage be less than 25%?**

In general we should follow the Faulkner Act, and give some consideration to making the recall % lower. It should be very difficult to recall an official, but not so difficult that citizens or a grass roots group would be so intimidated by the requirement that they would not even try. Ms. Williams said 20% of people who voted, but that can be far fewer than 25% of registered voters, given voter turnout. We should fall somewhere in the middle of those numbers, like 15% of registered voters.

**14. In your opinion, should Plainfield have more or fewer Wards? Would more or fewer Wards provide better representation for all constituencies?**

6 wards.

**15. What is your opinion of non-partisan local elections (for Mayor and City Council) rather than primaries and partisan local elections?**

Has not given this question serious consideration. Even though he has thought about it from time to time when frustrated about our local government and the candidate selection process, he is not sure it would be a solution, and does not believe that this could happen in his lifetime given the environment in Plainfield, so has not given it serious thought.

**16. How does the Plainfield City Charter work with the Plainfield Municipal Code? Were they used together consistently in your experience? If NO, what is your recommendation?**

Generally fairly consistent.

**17. Are there any provisions of the Plainfield City Charter that you think can be improved? If so what do you suggest?**

Section 2.8, regarding investigations. Provides ability to fine \$200 and give 30 day jail time. Council advised by Corporation Counsel that they did not have the right to fine under State law, not sure that is right because of the way that the Corporation Council's office was functioning. Set the fine higher, maybe \$1,000, if we can fine. Section 2.11, Expenses of City Councilors, Charter should say that expenses should be approved by Council as a whole, so the whole Council is accountable, as he has seen some abuse of this provision. Section 2.13, already covered in another answer, City Clerk is clerk of Council and should be appointed by Council. Section 3.5, already covered in another answer, need to have City Council empowered to reinstate Corporate Counsel if necessary. Sections 5.5 and 5.7, we are operating under the state local budget law that has crazy deadlines for budget submission, makes no sense. Largely out of our control, and at best we will get done several months after the year end, but there should be consequences for Mayor who does not submit budget on time and Council that does not approve it on time as provided in the Charter. Section 6.15, already dealt with (recall percentages). Charter should provide for mandatory training for City Council and for the Mayor.

**18. Do you have any other observations that you would like to share about the provisions of Plainfield City Charter?**

City Council should have legislative aides. They can probably provide for this by ordinance and budget items, have been reluctant to spend tax payer money, but would be better with help.

On April 30, 2013, a subcommittee of the Plainfield Charter Study Commission conducted a telephone interview of Mr. Norton Bonaparte, former City Administrator of Plainfield and present City Manager of Sanford, Florida. The interview was conducted in City Hall Library at 6:00 p.m. by Rick Smiley, Chair and Mary Burgwinkle, Secretary. The interview was recorded and the following is a summary of the interview.

**1. Please briefly introduce yourself and describe your present or former role in Plainfield's government.**

I served as City Administrator under Mayor McWilliams until his term ended. Currently City Manager of Sanford, Florida.

**2. To whom do you or did you report?**

Mayor Mc Williams and the City Council

**3. How frequently do you or did you meet with members of the governing body?**

Was at each meeting of City Council, was at table at work sessions and at formal meetings. I met with the Mayor when he was in his office sporadically, and met with Councilors when they wanted to come over and talk.

**4. If you are or were involved in budgeting for your department or division, describe the budget process.**

He does not remember the budget process, worked with Finance Director, Ron West on that. Knows that in NJ, after the budget is approved by the City Council it goes to Department of Community Affairs for their blessing, but does not remember process specifics.

**5. Do you or did you have any contact with your counterparts in other municipalities? How often and in what context?**

New Jersey Municipal Managers Association, an affiliate of International Municipal Managers Association, met on a monthly basis, was president of the Association when he left Plainfield. Good opportunity to meet other managers from Union County and around the state.

**6. Have you read Plainfield's City Charter?**

Not recently.

**7. What do you consider to be the most important advantages of Plainfield's present form of local government, the Plainfield City Charter? What are its disadvantages, in your opinion?**

Can't speak to disadvantages, having the City Administrator position is very good, perhaps the City would consider going to a City Manager, the difference being that a Manager is appointed by both the Council and the Mayor so reports to both. In Plainfield, the City Administrator was appointed by and associated with the Mayor.

**8. Is there anything in the Plainfield City Charter that hindered you from carrying out your role in Plainfield's government?**

No

**9. If your answer to Question 8 was yes, were the provisions of the Plainfield City Charter the problem or do you believe that the Charter was being interpreted incorrectly?**

n/a

**10. If you have had experience with forms of municipal government other than Plainfield's City Charter, how did the operation of the municipal government under those forms compare?**

That relates to my prior comment. The strictest form of Council Manager has a manager that is appointed by the Mayor and City Council and reports to both. Up to the citizens and elected body which they like best. His preference is that he finds that Council Manager, where Manager is selected by the City Council and Mayor, that the Manager is more responsible to everyone, and not just a partisan to the Mayor, and not just the interests of the person who appointed him.

**11. What is your opinion on the number of City Council members under the Plainfield City Charter? Is the City Council too large or too small? Should there be one City Councilor from each ward, and three elected at large from the whole City, rather than 1-4, 2-3 and one at large? Should all City Councilors be elected at large?**

He has worked in Cities where all councilors are elected at large, he thinks that at large was good as there was a perception that all were acting for everyone in the community. He has also worked where councilors were elected by district, and that is good for the perception that everyone has a councilor of their own. He thinks that 4 districts and 7 councilors is good for Plainfield with the mix of at large and districts that we have.

**12. Should City Councilors be compensated or should they receive \$1 per year for their services as in some other municipalities? Should the council receive benefits?**

City Councilors serve out of a sense of loyalty, but I think that there should be reasonable compensation, he recalls between five and ten thousand in NJ when he was there. \$1 is not reasonable, there should be a stipend that certainly does not compensate them for the hours they put in but helps to defray the cost of working for your constituents. Looks cleaner to him if they get compensation and not benefits, but could do it so that some can purchase health insurance with the compensation if they need it. He believes that the challenge is giving something that makes well qualified people willing to serve, but not so much that people want the job just for the compensation and benefits.

**13. In your opinion, should the City Clerk, who acts as clerk of the City Council, be appointed by the Mayor or by the City Council?**

Similar to the City manager and cleaner line of responsibility if appointed by both council and mayor. Otherwise risk that person feeling allegiance to one person and not the entire governing body

**14. Do you think that the Special Charter could be improved in any way that would enhance the working relationship between the Mayor and City Council?**

He has worked for a number of cities and regardless of what is written, the dynamics between an elected official, the mayor and the council will depend on who the mayor and councilors are.

**15. The Plainfield City Charter provides for three City Departments, Administration and Finance, Public Works and Public Affairs and Safety.**

**(a) Do you believe that the current city divisions are assigned to the appropriate Departments for peak efficiency?**

**(b) Should the Plainfield City Charter be changed to allow for between 3 and 6 Departments, to be established by ordinance?**

**(c) Does Plainfield need the Department of Public Affairs and Safety in its current form?**

He thinks that the Department of Administration and Finance is way too big, would do well to consider separating some of the divisions in that department. Thinks that three departments for a city the size of Plainfield is too few. Public Works is fine, Public Safety with Police and Fire reporting to one person is unusual, used to Police Department and Fire Department, not divisions. He thinks that there is some value, but he saw the Director doing admin and personnel and he thinks that there is an argument that Police and Fire heads should be directly working on budget and admin with the City Administrator. Thinks 6 departments would be fine. having the police chief and fire chief report directly to City Administrator would be fine, no need for Director of Public Affairs and Safety. In general, it is not unusual to have 6 to 8 reports to the City Administrator.

**16. Do you believe that the Office of Corporation Counsel can properly represent both the Mayor and City Council as provided in the Plainfield City Charter? Should there be a provision for separate counsel for the governing body? Should there be full time in-house Corporation Counsel?**

Having a person to facilitate assigning work out and being corporate counsel is good, must realize that a generalist will not be able to handle everything that comes in such as environmental litigation, for instance. I think that the Corporation Counsel should be appointed by both Mayor and City Council,

because the office will be seen as more aligned with the Mayor if the Mayor appoints, and then the Council will want its own representation.

**17. The Plainfield City Charter provides for initiative and referendum upon petitions with signatures of 20% of registered city voters, and for recall of elected officials with signatures of 33 1/3 % of registered voters. Should the Plainfield City Charter be amended to follow the Faulkner Act (10%-15% of voters who voted in the last election for initiative and referendum under circumstances described in the law and 25% for recall)? Should the recall percentage be less than 25%?**

Citizens should decide that, in a referendum.

**18. In your opinion, should Plainfield have more or fewer Wards? Would more or fewer Wards provide better representation for all constituencies?**

Four wards for the demographic and the way that Plainfield is laid out, 4 is fine. should the citizens want more, that should be a ballot question for them.

**19. What is your opinion of non-partisan local elections (for Mayor and City Council) rather than primaries and partisan local elections?**

I do not think that there is a Democratic or Republican way to do trash collection or fix potholes so favor non-partisan, but recognize that some people want parties.

**20. How does the Plainfield City Charter work with the Plainfield Municipal Code? Were they used together consistently in your experience? If NO, what is your recommendation?**

Does not recall.

**21. Are there any provisions of the Plainfield City Charter that you think can be improved? If so what do you suggest?**

Look at City Government as a corporation where the City Council is the elected Board of Directors, who hire someone to run the city on a day to day basis. Suggestion that City Manager, Clerk and Corp Counsel, be selected by both Mayor and Council, so that they are not seen as favoring one or the other or representing everyone.

**22. Do you have any other observations that you would like to share about the provisions of Plainfield City Charter?**

When he worked in Plainfield, he had a competent staff and thought that the City had many successful operations going. He enjoyed working for the 'Queen City'.