

Chapter 87

2020 Regular Session

Subject City charter commissions

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Overview

Chapter 87, effective August 1, 2020, makes two changes to the law governing city charter commissions. First, it modifies the procedures and time for making appointments to fill vacancies on a commission. Secondly, it increases the amount a city must provide to cover charter commission expenses.

Summary

Section	Description
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1	Commission members; terms, vacancies.
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Gives the chief judge of a district court 60 days to appoint new or reappoint existing charter commission members.

Previously, if the chief judge failed to make an appointment within 30 days of a vacancy, the city council could then make the appointment. However, if during the 30 days the chief judge indicated to the city council that the judge intended to make the appointment, then the judge had 60 days more.

2	Compensation; expenses.
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Changes the method for determining the amounts that a city must pay for its charter commission expenses.

Expenses may be for developing a proposed charter or amending it. The expenses that may be included would also cover costs of informing the public of the charter provisions or suggested amendments. There are 107 home rule charter cities and under prior law, the maximum amount in a year for a first class city (Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth, and Rochester) was \$10,000, and for all other cities \$1,500.

The law now provides for a city to pay the greater of 0.07 percent of the city's current certified general property tax levy or \$1,500 but no more than \$20,000 in a year. Looking at Pay 2019 certified levies, of the 107 home rule charter cities, 105 have an expense cap of \$20,000/year. The other two cities (Alberta and Browerville) have a cap of \$5,232 and \$14,201 respectively.

Section **Description**

Looking at Pay 2019 certified levies and *all* cities, there would be:

- 76 cities with a cap of \$1,500 (total levy is less than \$21,429);
- 332 cities with a cap of \$1,500 to \$20,000 (total levy is \$21,429 to \$285,714); and
- 445 cities with a cap of \$20,000 (total levy is greater than \$285,714).



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