

Clearwater, Florida, January 26, 2004

A meeting of the Pinellas County Charter Review Commission (as created by Chapter 80-590, Laws of Florida) was held in the Public Works Technical Services Building, First Floor Conference Room, 440 Court Street, Clearwater at 5:00 P.M. on this date with the following members in attendance:

Robert C. Decker, Chairman  
Louis Kwall, Vice-Chairman  
Everett S. Rice, Sheriff  
Susan Latvala, County Commissioner  
John Bryan, City of St. Petersburg Councilmember  
E. D. Armstrong, III  
Ricardo Davis  
George Jirotko  
Mayme Hodges  
Elizabeth Mannion  
Roger Wilson

Absent:

Jim Sebesta, State Senator  
Roy Harrell

Also Present:

Susan H. Churuti, County Attorney  
Stephen M. Spratt, County Administrator  
James L. Bennett, Chief Assistant County Attorney  
Chris Staubus, Assistant Director, Utilities  
Kurt Spitzer, KS&A  
Other interested individuals  
Cathy Fickley, Board Reporter

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes
3. Public Comment
4. Overview of Pinellas County Government

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5. Recommendations From Board of County Commissioners (BCC)
6. Discussion of Charter Review Commission (CRC) Voting Procedures
7. Discussion of CRC Meeting Locations
8. Discussion of Issues for Consideration by CRC
9. Other Business
10. Adjournment

#### CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Decker called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.; and at his request, the members introduced themselves.

#### MINUTES OF MEETING OF JANUARY 16, 2004 – APPROVED AS AMENDED

Commissioner Latvala moved, seconded by Mr. Jirotko, that the minutes of the regular meeting of January 14, 2004 be approved; whereupon, Councilmember Bryan requested that bullet number three under “Other Business” be amended to read, “At the request of the members, Attorney Churuti circulated a list for member input as to names, e-mail addresses, et cetera; and Councilmember Bryan suggested that they forward their biographical material for distribution,” and no objections were noted. Thereupon, upon call for the vote, the motion carried unanimously.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT – NONE

In response to query by Mr. Armstrong, Chairman Decker indicated that the rules regarding public comment would be addressed later in the meeting.

#### OVERVIEW OF PINELLAS COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Mr. Spratt presented a PowerPoint program titled *Pinellas County*, a copy of which has been filed and made a part of the record; and provided historical background information, a fiscal overview and a description of how the County’s government is organized.

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Alluding to citizen and business opinion surveys, Mr. Spratt related that areas of major concern are transportation and traffic congestion, mass transit and traffic flow; and that the issues have been extremely difficult to address due to the division of jurisdictional responsibilities. He provided examples of similar duties and powers prescribed in the County Charter and by special acts of the legislature; and suggested that the members address the issue of improving the way County authority is vested. Referring to the administration of County government, he discussed the following issues:

- appointment or removal of non-classified positions;
- budget officer clarification; and
- non-interference provisions.

Mr. Spratt referred to the power and duties of the County Commission and suggested that the members review the issue of auditing power; whereupon, Mr. Kwall requested that Mr. Spratt's suggestions, and all future presenter suggestions, be submitted in writing for the members' review; and no objections were noted. Thereupon, Mr. Wilson requested that Mr. Spratt also provide the graphics presented in the PowerPoint program, and a listing of all County Commission appointments. Discussion ensued with regard to Countywide expenditures; potential judiciary costs; Clerks' fees; and the provision of County building inspection services to municipalities.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS (BCC)

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Commissioner Latvala concurred with Mr. Spratt's suggestions; and discussed the following BCC recommendations:

- non-interference policy;
- transportation and Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) issues;
- County auditing services; and
- Pinellas Planning Council.

During discussion and in response to queries by the members, Commissioner Latvala provided brief historical background information and an overview of the PSTA structure;

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and urged the members to review the Countywide transportation issues; whereupon, Attorney Churuti provided input with regard to dual referendum requirements and Charter procedures; and Mr. Spratt referred to a task force proposal presented to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) that addresses government structure changes; and indicated that a copy of the proposal would be forthcoming.

Alluding to duplication of services, Commissioner Latvala suggested that the members consider a transfer of the County's financial auditing services; and discussed the elimination of the Pinellas Planning Council, noting that the County has a Planning Department. She referred to a document prepared by staff at the request of Mr. Spratt that recommends changes to the laws and Charter provisions governing them; and Attorney Churuti indicated that the changes may be placed on referendum as administrative or housekeeping items; whereupon, Mr. Spratt indicated that the document will be provided to the Commission in the near future.

Thereupon, Chairman Decker requested that Commissioner Latvala submit her BCC suggestions in writing to the members for review.

During further discussion and in response to queries by the members, Mr. Spratt reviewed road improvement procedures; indicated that the Intelligent Transportation System process has not concluded; provided an update of the Pinellas Assembly process; and discussed Charter references to voluntary annexation procedures; whereupon, Councilmember Bryan noted that a major issue to be considered is fair representation of the cities and the County.

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At the direction of Chairman Decker, there being no objection, the meeting was recessed at 6:15 P.M. and reconvened at 6:22 P.M.

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#### MISCELLANEOUS

Deviating from the agenda, Chairman Decker referred to a document titled *Pinellas Charter Review Commission*, a copy of which has been filed and made a part of the record, and indicated that his telephone number is listed incorrectly; and requested that the members review the document and provide any changes to Mr. Spitzer; and that biographical sketches be submitted to Mr. Spitzer as soon as possible.

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Referring to a framework for public comment, Chairman Decker requested input by the members; whereupon, Commissioner Latvala suggested that public comment be placed at the beginning of the meeting with a three-minute time limit; and no objections were noted.

Chairman Decker requested that staff provide a sign-in sheet and cards for public comment; whereupon, Mr. Davis suggested that the subject matter be limited to Charter review issues; and no objections were noted.

#### DISCUSSION OF CRC VOTING PROCEDURES

Mr. Spitzer provided historical background information pertaining to the voting procedures of previous Charter Commissions. During discussion, Mr. Bryan moved, seconded by Mr. Kwall, that a majority vote be required at the time an issue is discussed, and at the meeting prior to the final meeting; and that a majority plus one vote be required for final approval. During further discussion, it was determined that a quorum shall consist of seven members; and that an issue that is initially voted down could be reconsidered later in the process; whereupon, upon call for the vote, the motion carried 10 to 1, with Mr. Davis casting the dissenting vote.

#### DISCUSSION OF CRC MEETING LOCATIONS

Mr. Staubus referred to a document titled *Charter Review Commission Potential Meeting Facilities*, a copy of which has been filed and made a part of the record, and described several facilities that have been considered for future meetings; and indicated that staff has recommended the Swisher Building, 509 East Avenue South, Clearwater; whereupon, following discussion, Mr. Armstrong moved, seconded by Commissioner Latvala and carried, that staff recommendation be approved.

#### DISCUSSION OF ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE CRC

Mr. Spitzer referred to a Timeline attached to his Memorandum of January 20, 2004, a copy of which has been filed and made a part of the record, and indicated that the members need to decide the issues to be discussed at upcoming meetings. He conducted a PowerPoint presentation titled *Charter Discussion Issues*, a copy of which has been filed and made a part of the record, and provided a review of Charter powers; key policies; the legislative and executive branches; County-City relations; the Pinellas Assembly process and other related matters.

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Chairman Decker suggested that the Pinellas Planning Council be the topic for discussion at the February 9, 2004 meeting; whereupon, following discussion and input by Mr. Spitzer, Mr. Wilson moved that the Pinellas Planning Council and the Pinellas County Planning Department be the topic placed on the February 9, 2004 agenda for discussion, followed by a review of the subjects presented by Mr. Spratt and Commissioner Latvala for calendaring purposes thereafter. During discussion, Mr. Spratt indicated that he would provide a report of the issues organized by article and section of the County Charter, beginning with Article II; whereupon, following further discussion, Ms. Hodges seconded the motion. Following additional discussion and upon call for the vote, the motion carried 9 to 2, with Councilmember Bryan and Mr. Kwall casting the dissenting votes.

OTHER BUSINESS – NONE

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 P.M.