

Largo, Florida, May 18, 2016

A meeting of the Pinellas County Charter Review Commission (CRC) (as created by Chapter 80-590, Laws of Florida) was held at the County Extension Services Center, Largo, Florida, on this date with the following members in attendance:

James Olliver, Chairman
Thomas Steck, Vice-Chairman
Larry Ahern, State Representative
Ken Burke, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller
Janet C. Long, County Commissioner
Johnny Bardine
Keisha Bell
Todd Pressman
James Sewell
Joshua Shulman

Not Present

Sandra L. Bradbury, City of Pinellas Park Mayor
Ashley Caron
Barclay Harless

Also Present

Wade Vose, Vose Law Firm, General Counsel
Diane Meiller-Cook, Diane Meiller & Associates, Inc. (DM&A), Facilitator
Flo Sena, DM&A
Mary Scott Hardwick, Pinellas County Intergovernmental Liaison
Other Interested Individuals
Michael P. Schmidt, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk
(Minutes by Helen Groves)

AGENDA

1. Call to Order (CRC Chairman)
2. Public Comment on Items on this Agenda (CRC Chairman)
3. Approval of Minutes – May 4, 2016 Meeting (CRC Chairman)
4. Language for Amendments (Vose)
Fiscal Impact
5. Draft Final Report Review (DM&A)

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6. Presentation for Public Hearings (DM&A)
7. Concluding Remarks (CRC Chairman)
8. Dates/Time/Location (CRC Chairman)
9. Adjournment (CRC Chairman)

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Olliver called the meeting to order at 3:30 P.M. and welcomed those in attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

In response to the Chairman's call for persons wishing to be heard, the following individuals appeared and expressed their concerns:

David Ballard Geddis, Jr., Palm Harbor, re Change in Charter (presented document).

Freddy Ferro, St. Petersburg.

Barbara Haselden, St. Petersburg, re Citizen Initiative

Discussed signature requirement to get a citizen initiative on the ballot in Pinellas vs. Hillsborough County. Requested that the Charter amendment language call for either eight percent of the ballots cast in the last presidential election or six percent of registered voters.

Marcus Harrison, Palm Harbor (Unincorporated Area)

1. CRC composition seems heavily weighted for St. Petersburg.
2. Allow citizens three minutes to comment on an item immediately before vote is taken even if it means limiting the time allowed at the beginning of the meeting under *Public Comment*.
3. Supports Ms. Haselden re citizen initiative. CRC is commissioned to represent the citizens. If the CRC approves the proposed Charter amendment regarding the number of signatures required to get an initiative on the ballot, it will place a greater burden on citizens.

Attorney Vose confirmed that Ms. Haselden is correct in her claim that the Hillsborough County Charter specifies...*eight percent of the votes cast in the last presidential election*; and that the associated documentation he provided was incorrect.

MINUTES OF MAY 4, 2016 MEETING – APPROVED AS AMENDED

Chairman Olliver noted that the minutes had been amended after they were submitted; whereupon, Mr. Sewell moved, seconded by Ms. Bell and carried unanimously, that the minutes of the meeting of May 4, 2016 be approved as amended.

LANGUAGE FOR AMENDMENTS

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT - APPROVED

Attorney Vose read the ballot title and summary of the Charter amendment; noted that the CRC had instructed that the language be modelled on the Broward County Charter; and pointed out that for the sake of clarity, he had tweaked the language in both the title and summary to specifically reference the Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller as the provider of the Financial Impact Statement.

Thereupon, Mr. Pressman moved, seconded by Mr. Sewell and carried unanimously, that the language be approved as written.

DRAFT FINAL REPORT REVIEW – APPROVED AS AMENDED; CHARTER AMENDMENTS PRIORTIZED AND REORDERED

Ms. Meiller-Cook displayed a document titled *Report to the Citizens of Pinellas County, Draft Version 1.7, 2015-2016 Pinellas County Charter Review Commission*, and indicated that the Report has been divided into the following sections:

- Introduction
- CRC Members and Staff
- Summary of Charter Review Commission Actions
- Amendments Approved by the 2015-2016 CRC to be Voted On in the 2016 General Election

In response to a comment by Mr. Pressman, Chairman Olliver indicated that the changes from the previous versions are highlighted in Version 1.7; that additional changes are shown that will appear in Version 1.8; and that he is expecting unanimous approval of the Report and would like everyone to be comfortable signing off on it; whereupon, Ms. Meiller-Cook, with input by Ms. Sena, reviewed the changes shown on Pages 10 and 19.

In response to query by Commissioner Long regarding Item 11 on Page 10 about electronic citizen comment cards, Clerk Burke discussed the link on his website and confirmed that the correspondence would not be read aloud at the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) meetings.

In response to query by Attorney Vose regarding whether the members have a preference as to the order the amendments will appear on the ballot, Mr. Pressman moved that the Final Report be approved as presented. Disagreeing, Representative Ahern recommended that the members

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prioritize the Amendments according to their importance. In response to query by Mr. Shulman, Attorney Vose advised that the BCC cannot change the order of the Charter ballot amendments after they receive the report, and discussion ensued.

Mr. Pressman clarified that the intention of his motion is to approve the Report as it is, with the Charter ballot amendments in chronological order, and Mr. Shulman seconded the motion.

In response to query by Mr. Steck, Attorney Vose related that while there are several theories, he cannot state definitely that the number of items on a ballot adversely influences the level of approval for items further down the list. Later in the meeting, Clerk Burke related that a quick search of the last two general elections did not show a drop in approval.

Following discussion, Mr. Pressman indicated that his motion was in regard to the summary document and not where the Charter amendments would appear on the ballot; whereupon, he withdrew his motion and the seconder concurred.

Thereupon, Clerk Burke moved, seconded by Mr. Pressman, that the Report be approved as to content, and the order of the Charter amendments as they will appear on the ballot be addressed following the vote. During discussion, Clerk Burke suggested that the Report be bifurcated, with the Final Report itself being comprised of Pages 1 through 26 and a separate Appendix being comprised of Pages 27 through 217. Mr. Pressman concurred, and Ms. Meiller-Cook provided input, noting that there will be links throughout the document.

Upon the Chairman's call for citizens wishing to be heard, Ms. Haselden expressed concern that the mistakes she found in the data presented by Attorney Vose and called to the attention of the members had not been considered and discussed; whereupon, Mr. Pressman stated that the CRC did hear and discuss her concerns regarding citizen ballot initiatives and made significant changes, noting that the CRC has allowed much more public input than is usual.

Thereupon, upon call for the vote on the motion to approve the Final Report as written and amended, the motion carried 9 to 1, with Representative Ahern casting the dissenting vote.

Chairman Olliver, with input by Attorney Vose, called for discussion on the reordering of the Charter Amendment ballots. Following discussion, Mr. Pressman moved, seconded by Representative Ahern, that the proposed Charter Amendments appear on the ballot in the following order:

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1. Citizens Initiatives
2. Fiscal Impact
3. Redistricting Advisory Board
4. CRC Membership Residency
5. Oversight of the County Attorney
6. Charter Cleanup

During discussion, Mr. Shulman stated that the order seems arbitrary, as some of the Charter amendments were not unanimous.

The motioner and the seconder accepted Mr. Steck's friendly amendment that the order of Nos. 4 and 5 be switched, agreeing that the oversight of the County Attorney seems to be the more important issue.

In response to the Chairman's call for citizens wishing to be heard, Mr. Geddis appeared and expressed his concerns.

Upon call for the vote, the motion carried 9 to 1, with Mr. Shulman casting the dissenting vote.

PRESENTATION FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS

Ms. Meiller-Cook reviewed the presentation for the public hearings as outlined in the agenda memorandum, and Attorney Vose provided input. Discussion ensued regarding the time to be allotted to the presentation before the public hearings and, in response to the concerns of Representative Ahern, Chairman Olliver agreed that as the purpose is to inform the public, the slides provided by Ms. Meiller-Cook will be shown, and no objections were noted.

Chairman Olliver, with input by Attorney Vose, indicated that at the end of the second public hearing, a last vote on the Final Report and its transmittal to the BCC will be taken; and that it will be a majority plus one vote per the Rules adopted by the last CRC and approved by this CRC.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Chairman Olliver thanked the DM&A staff, Attorney Vose, and Ms. Hardwick for their assistance and Mr. Pressman commended Chairman Olliver for his leadership.

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DATES/TIME/LOCATION

Chairman Olliver indicated that the first public hearing will be held June 1 at 6:00 P.M. in the City Hall in St. Petersburg, and the last public hearing will be held June 15 at the Clearwater Courthouse in the County Commission Assembly Room on the fifth floor.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Mr. Sewell, seconded by Mr. Steck and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 4:32 P.M.