

CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION

August 11, 2021

A Charter Review Commission (CRC) Meeting was held at the Murdock Administration Center, 18500 Murdock Circle, Room B106, Port Charlotte, Florida at 3:00 P.M. on August 11, 2021.

Call to Order

The Meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chairman William J. Dryburgh.

Roll Call

The following CRC members were present:

William C. Abbatematteo, V-Chair
Donna L. Barrett
Cherie A. Burnette
William J. Dryburgh, Chair
Donald McCormick
Theresa H. Murtha

Donna C. Peterman
Richard J. Pitz
Adam James Riley
William B. Schafer
Cyril F. Schrage
Stephen J. Vieira

Alternates
Steve A. Drake

The following members were absent: Patricia W. Aho, Jeffrey K. Anlauf, and Colleen C. Palinski-Ferrara.

Others present: Robert H. Berntsson, Attorney.

Chairman Dryburgh reported on Membership changes since the CRC June meeting.

Effective July 23, 2021 William Adkins resigned from the Charter Review Commission. First Alternate Colleen Palinski-Ferrara was made a full voting member of the Commission effective that date.

Effective August 11, 2021, Dr. Joyce Cream resigned from the Charter Review Commission. Second Alternate Cherie Burnette is made a full voting member of the Commission effective today.

Citizens' present:

David Kesselring.

I. Approval of Minutes:

MOTIONED WAS MADE BY DONNA BARRETT TO APPROVE THE JUNE 9, 2021 MINUTES AND SECONDED BY STEPHEN VIEIRA.

MOTION CARRIED 12:0

II. Citizen Input on Agenda Items

None

III. Old Business

Chairman Dryburgh asked for reports from any of the sub-committee chairs wishing to update the CRC on their progress to date. He reminded the members that this was the time that they could talk together and share thoughts as well as ask questions of Attorney Robert Berntsson as he is present at these CRC Board meetings.

a. Sub-committee Reports

i. Administrative Staff: Committee Chair Donna Barrett reported that the committee had finalized their questions for the ten Administration/Staff personnel to be interviewed. The interview process begins next week with the final interview early in October. The Committee added to the list Assistant Administrator, Claire Jubb whose position was not interviewed previously.

ii. Board of County Commissioners: Chair William Abbatematteo reported that this committee met for the first time last week with only two in attendance. They began with setting ground rules for Public Input and then discussed prior issues from the past which they may re-visit. Chair Abbatematteo stated he had a conversation with Attorney Robert Berntsson regarding a legal opinion on the scope of what the Charter Review Commission may change. He reported that the County must yield to the State in most matters, such as with the School Board.

iii. Other Boards: Chair Theresa Murtha reported that the committee spent a few meetings discussing issues and writing their questions and developing an Operating Plan laying out scope and objectives as well as deciding which boards and agencies they would invite for interviews. The Commission asked her to elaborate on which ones and she reported the following: Punta Gorda, Englewood and Port Charlotte Chambers of Commerce, Punta Gorda City Manager and Mayor, the Superintendent of Schools and the Chair of the School Board, Board members from the Airport Authority, a representative for Veteran's Organizations and the Charlotte/Desoto Building Association, to name a few.

Member Richard Pitz raised the issue of why the School Board should be off limits as half of the tax money is used to educate children. He stated the County should have some control on budget and spending. Attorney Robert Berntsson reported that the schools in Florida are regulated by the Florida Constitution, but he would be willing to research any specific issue that may be raised by the CRC.

Member William Schafer raised the issue of making sure both the Economic Development Office and the Economic Development Partnership be interviewed. Member Donna Barrett stated that Dave Gammon from the Charlotte County Economic Development Office was on the list to be interviewed by the Administration Staff sub-committee. Member Theresa Murtha stated that the Other Boards subcommittee would add a representative from the Economic Development Partnership to their interview list.

Discussion continued regarding the School Board and taxing. Member William Schafer raised issues with the 1% Local Option Sales Tax concerning funding to the School District and how other projects are chosen and approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

Member Don McCormick reported some of the discussion held in the Constitutional Officers sub-committee with Vicki Potts and Paul Polk and how these offices are funded from state fees or the county budget. The Trim Notice shows what the state collects for the School Board.

Member Donna Barrett reported that in 2014 the School District presented the need for additional funds for security which was voted on by the taxpayers.

Attorney Robert Berntsson reported that the 1% Local Sales Tax Option was a separate issue by the Board of County Commissioners who made the final decision on which projects were placed on the ballot for the Charlotte County voters. He further stated that as elected officials, the Board of County Commissioners are accountable to the voter.

Member Theresa Murtha reported that the issue of a possible oversight or follow-up committee for the 1% Sales Tax Option came up in committee interviews. She asked that the following question the committee will be asking to be read into the minutes:

“Is the project selection allocation process for the 1% Sales Tax Option in the best interest of the overall County and fair to every region of the County?”

After further debate and discussion, Attorney Robert Berntsson suggested that someone from Administration be invited to attend the next CRC meeting to give an overview of the 1% Local Sales Tax Option and answer many of the questions and issues on the minds of the members. Members Theresa Murtha and Donna Peterman affirmed that this would be an excellent idea and the CRC agreed by Consensus. Chairman Dryburgh stated that he would make the arrangements to have someone present to discuss this issue at the next meeting.

IV. New Business

a. Approval of two Big W Law Firm Statement for Services provided: July 1, 2021 for \$225.00 and August 1, 2021 for \$225.00 for a total payment of \$450.00.

MOTION WAS MADE BY DONNA BARRETT AND SECONDED BY WILLIAM SCHAFFER TO APPROVE THE BIG W LAW FIRM’S TWO STATEMENTS FOR SERVICES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$450.00

MOTION CARRIED 12:0

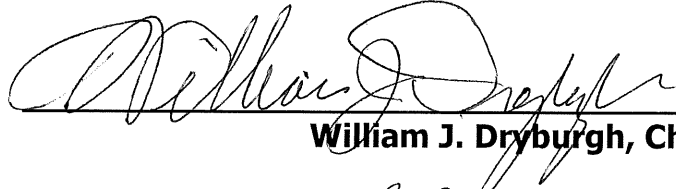
V. Discussion:

None

VI. ADJOURNMENT:

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 3:41 BY CONSENSUS.

Next meeting will convene on September 8, 2021 at 3 p.m. at the Murdock Administration Center, 18500 Murdock Circle, Room B106, Port Charlotte, Florida.



William J. Dryburgh, Chair

DATE ADOPTED: 9-8-21