

CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION  
Draft of Minutes  
October 15, 2009

A meeting of the Charter Review Commission (CRC) was held at the Administration Complex, Room B-106, Port Charlotte, Florida.

Roll Call:

The following members were present:

*Andrew Dodd, Ken Doherty (Chairman), William Dryburgh, Bill Folchi, Maureen Garrard, Joseph Goggin, Suzanne Graham, Paula Hess, John Hitzel, Julie Mathis, Donald McElroy, Thomas Rice, Kevin Russell (Vice Chairman), Johnny Vernon, Frank Weikel.*

Alternates present: *Michael Grant, Bill Weller, Connie Kantor.*

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. EST by Chairman Doherty. *Chairman Doherty* noted that the audio taping equipment was not working at that time and instructed the meeting to begin and the proceedings were recorded manually at the inception of the meeting.

Agenda Items:

I. Approval of Minutes of September 17, 2009 CRC Meeting:

*Chairman Doherty* instructed that said Minutes should be corrected to reflect the following:

- a) Attendance will be amended to show that Richard Holden was not present and that Connie Kantor was present (paragraph 1, page 1)
- b) The word "country" should be substituted for "county" in paragraph 6, Section III, Page 2

The motion to approve the minutes subject to these changes was made and seconded.

II. Recommendation for secretarial support staff:

*Chairman Doherty* described the interview process conducted by the County Administrator's Office, based on previous CRC experience and requirements. *Chairman Doherty* recommended applicant Ann Pinder for the position of administrative assistant for the 2009 – 2010 CRC term. The recommendation was seconded and approved by unanimous vote. Ann Pinder was present and thanked the members accordingly.

III. Selection process for legal counsel:

Vice Chairman *Kevin Russell* had undertaken the task of identifying candidates to serve as legal counsel, and advised that he had sent out letters to the Presidents of Lee and Charlotte County Bar Associations and asked for responses. He had contacted Dick Smith, past counsel who served in this position, but Mr. Smith declined to serve. *Vice Chairman Russell* had received four(4) responses, copies of some already provided to other Commission members, and noted upon questioning from *Chairman Doherty* that two (2) respondents were from Manatee county. *Paula Hess* asked *Chairman Doherty* what input was needed from the Commission; *Chairman Doherty* indicated that the applicants should all be interviewed by the

Commission. Discussion ensued among some Commission members as to the advisability of hiring from within or outside the county with *Vice Chairman Russell* stating that there were some negatives to hiring locally (for example pending lawsuits) and it may be better to go outside the county. *Paula Hess* asked if it was okay to hire from within the county and *Vice Chairman Russell* responded affirmatively. *Andy Dodd* asked about compensation and *Chairman Doherty* said that he thought the budgeted amount for this legal service was \$21,000. There was brief discussion about hourly rate, billing for travel time, etc. Alternate *Michael Grant* expressed concern about hiring someone specifically with experience in this charter process in order to have items presented correctly for the ballot. He also indicated a preference to hire from outside the county. *William Dryburgh* also expressed that preference. *Chairman Doherty* acknowledged that there were points of discussion on both sides and recommended that all four (4) attorneys be interviewed at the next regular meeting (to be held on November 19, 2009). A motion was made to limit the selection from these four (4) only and to interview each one at that November meeting. This motion was seconded and approved unanimously. *Chairman Doherty* asked everyone to prepare their questions for these applicants, e-mail them to administrative support, and *Vice Chairman Russell* will submit them in advance to the applicants. The respective attorneys will be contacted for interview and *Chairman Doherty*, *Vice Chairman Russell* and administrative support will meet to prepare.

IV. Division of members to form sub-committees:

*Chairman Doherty* pointed out the benefit of splitting the large group into smaller sub-Committees as was the practice in 2004. At that time there were five (5) committees established as follows: Commission Outreach, Administration Staff, Board of County Commissioners, Constitutional Officers and Other Boards and Agencies. There was discussion of keeping the same committees and speculation about the types of matters that would be addressed. *Chairman Doherty* mentioned the importance of obtaining public input and *Paula Hess* indicated the importance of developing a website, to which there was widespread agreement. *Chairman Doherty* instructed the Commission to indicate their sub-committee preference on the papers provided and submit them to administrative support. *Vice Chairman Russell*, in response to a question, advised that the various sub-committees were not exclusive and all members could attend all meetings. Every sub-committee will develop their issues and present to the entire Commission. A motion was made and seconded and approved unanimously to establish the four (4) sub-committees outlined below. *Donald McElroy* indicated that Other Board Agencies was also important as that could represent a large financial consideration in the county and a motion was made, seconded and approved unanimously to include that sub-committee. *Chairman Doherty* asked for volunteers to chair the various sub-committees, receiving the following responses:

*Johnny Vernon* - Board of County Commissioners

*Maureen Garrard* – Constitutional Officers

*Julie Mathis* – Administration Staff ( note: *Paula Hess* will be on this committee but cannot chair)

*Bill Folchi* – Other Boards and Agencies

*Chairman Doherty* will organize a meeting with the chairpersons, to be held prior to the next scheduled CRC meeting. Alternate *Michael Grant* inquired about the status of the alternates and was told that even though they cannot vote they can attend any and all sub-committee meetings. Also, the Commission members requested copies of the Minutes from previous sub-committees as these would be helpful in determining their actions, and these Minutes will be provided by e-mail to the Commission members.

V. Commission Comments:

Each member of the commission introduced themselves and provided a brief biography of what brought them to this Commission. After this there was more discussion about the CRC function and effectiveness and concern to increase public participation. It was confirmed that administrative support will meet with IT regarding establishing a website. It was mentioned that the following is a helpful website for the members to visit:

<http://www.fl-counties.com/>

*Paula Hess* expressed the desirability of having the new CRC website be linked to:

<http://www.smartcharlotte2050.com>

*Julie Mathis* recommended that there also be newspaper publication, and *Chairman Doherty* agreed and also said it may be necessary later in the process to have some speakers groups. *Frank Weikel* asked about the Sunshine Law and was advised that it was not appropriate for the Commission members to discuss among themselves but they could discuss with outside parties. *Chairman Doherty* confirmed that he would not be present at the next meeting and *Vice Chairman Russell* will facilitate.

VI. Public Input: None

VII. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm EST

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Kenneth W. Doherty, Chairman