

**CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION
OTHER BOARDS AND AGENCIES SUB-COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting
March 2, 2010**

A meeting of the Other Boards and Agencies sub-Committee of the Charter Review Commission was held at the Administration Complex, Room 106B, Port Charlotte, Florida.

Roll Call

The following members were present:

Bill Folchi (Chairman), Ken Doherty, John Hitzel

Absent Members:

Connie Kantor (alternate)

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:01 p.m. EST by *Chairman Folchi*

Agenda Items

(1) Approval of Minutes of meeting February 2, 2010. *Chairman Folchi* confirmed that the members had previously reviewed these Minutes and there being no additions nor deletions a Motion was made and seconded and the Minutes were approved as submitted.

(2) Interviews had been scheduled with representatives from the three (3) Chambers of Commerce as well as with representatives from the Charlotte County School Board.

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE INTERVIEW

The first entities to be interviewed were the Chambers of Commerce, represented by John Wright, President of the Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce; Teri Ashley, Government Affairs Liaison of the Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce; and Elaine Miller, Government Affairs Liaison of the Englewood-Cape Haze Chamber of Commerce. *Chairman Folchi* began the meeting by welcoming those representatives and thanking them for giving their time. *Chairman Folchi* explained that he had compiled a list of questions, the purpose of which was to gather information from the interviewees and if appropriate to propose changes to the County Charter based on that input. *Chairman Folchi* further elaborated that even if no proposals were submitted to the Charter Review Commission, the public would be made aware of the issues and responses in this sub-Committee's report. *Mr. Folchi* assured those present that there

were no rules nor limitations, all that was needed was to brainstorm for a short period of time to see if the Charter can be improved. He stated that another objective would be to see if there are any areas in the County that would benefit from improvement outside of the scope of the Charter. *Mr. Folchi* explained that the Charter was quite narrow, dealing with the Executive Branch, Legislative Branch and the Constitutional Officers interaction with the County. He further said that there does not appear to be a lot of leeway for change, but it was necessary to air all issues. *Mr. Folchi* explained the structure of the Charter Review Commission (fifteen voting members and three alternates), and described that the CRC was broken into sub-Committees as follows: the Board of County Commissioners sub-Committee which looks at interaction between the Charter and the County Commissioners; the Administration Staff sub-Committee which looks at the Charter and the Executive branch; the Constitutional Officers sub-Committee and this Other Boards and Agencies sub-Committee. *Mr. Folchi* said that this sub-Committee will get input from influential people who are interacting in the business community in the County. *Chairman Folchi* then began the conversations by saying that the sub-Committee had developed some group specific questions as well as general questions discovered from an earlier public meeting.

Do the Chambers of Commerce have any recommendations for changes, deletions or additions to the Home Rule Charter to improve the business climate? Teri Ashley of the Port Charlotte Chamber of Commerce was the first to respond, saying that not being a student of the Charter it was hard to come up with recommendations, but in her opinion anything to streamline business opportunities, business growth, re-vitalization and prosperity would be valuable. John Wright of the Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce inquired where the City interacts with the County Charter, if at all. *Chairman Folchi* responded that the Punta Gorda city officials were going to be interviewed later in the month as they come under the purview of this sub-Committee. He further elaborated that there is a section in the Charter that defines what is excluded and how the City interacts. *Chairman Folchi* said that generally speaking the function of the Charter was to provide guidance and background for the areas that are not covered by the City. He further said that the Charter provides the ability for the County to make rules and govern in a similar way that the City can without having to go outside for guidance. Ms. Ashley pointed out that many businesses located outside of the City limits are members of the Punta Gorda Chamber. Mr. Wright then said that the CRC could make a business-friendly recommendation that could be rejected by the City. *Ken Doherty* commented that was correct, the City of Punta Gorda has its own Charter. *Mr. Doherty* supported *Chairman Folchi's* earlier description of the Charter and how the adoption of this Home Rule Charter retained the existing governmental structure of the County but gave the County the powers to adopt municipal ordinances without going to Tallahassee. In response to a question by Mr. Wright, *Chairman Folchi* referred to the example of impact fees, stating that the City controls impact fees in its jurisdiction and the County controls impact fees outside the City. He said that previously it had been possible for the City to have different impact fees that would override an incentive that the County wanted to offer, but that had changed and the City no longer has that capability as far as impact

fees. Mr. Wright stated that the Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce was mandated by City of Punta Gorda to work in conjunction with the City on business development within the City. Mr. Wright said that is clearly defined quite differently than what is done by Mr. Don Root and the Economic Development Office. Mr. Wright noted that Mr. Root's mandate is to go to very sector specific/high paying/industry specific jobs. Mr. Wright then said that if as a result a company moves to Charlotte County close to the Punta Gorda area, his Chamber will be calling on that company at an early stage to ascertain their needs as far as smaller area businesses which Mr. Root would not be pursuing. Mr. Wright said that although the Punta Gorda Chamber has been successful in recruiting new smaller business, they have not been working too much with Mr. Root as he does not have the funding comparable to neighboring Counties (Lee, Sarasota and DeSoto) to bring those larger businesses to Charlotte. Mr. Wright stressed the importance of finding a way to "level the playing field" in that regard, saying that although Charlotte County does not need to be better, they must be able to be competitive. Mr. Wright pointed out that when prospects compare Charlotte County to the rest of Southwest Florida it is a tough sell and there needs to be some incentive package that can be funded. *Ken Doherty* then said that the question was intended to find out from all three Chambers what they hear from new companies about Charlotte County. Elaine Miller from the Englewood-Cape Haze Chamber responded to that, saying that she is an architect and deals with the Planning Department, Building Department, Zoning Department on a regular basis. Ms. Miller said that the existing structures of those Departments in Charlotte County is not project friendly, elaborating that there are too many layers. *Ken Doherty* asked for clarification by inquiring if she meant that the Development Review process was too cumbersome. Ms. Miller responded that in order to facilitate new construction Charlotte County is still known as the county that is the most difficult to get things through. She stated that although there has been a verbal shift in welcoming new development, in practicality that has not occurred. *Bill Folchi* asked if she meant that this County is seen that way in comparison to neighboring counties and Ms. Miller responded affirmatively. To be specific, she said that the County is un-predictable. Ms. Miller referred to overlay Codes (as on Manasota Key) that conflict with the base Codes. She said she has had several projects thwarted as a result. Ms. Miller continued by saying that she thought the process could be more streamlined, suggesting that putting the Zoning Department underneath the Building Department might be more efficient, resulting in one permit entity. Ms. Miller remarked that there really is no cohesive plan in the County for an overall development package as to what the County wants to grow to be. *John Hitzel* remarked that he thought that was part of the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Miller responded that Plan is parcel specific instead of area specific. *Chairman Folchi* asked Ms. Miller if she felt that Charlotte County was different from other counties in that respect. Ms. Miller responded that she believes there is more community involvement in other counties that make the development process more specific to that area and that Charlotte as a whole is less engaged in development of certain parts of the County. *Ken Doherty* said that they are trying to identify how Charlotte County can be more competitive, and acknowledged that from being in the industry he knows that Charlotte has the reputation of being unfriendly to new development. Ms. Miller added

that the County is unpredictable, which she feels is a key issue. *Mr. Doherty* agreed that even though there are rules the policies change frequently. Ms. Miller again referred to overlay areas, concluding by saying that the County was “talking the talk but not walking the walk”. *Mr. Doherty* asked Teri Ashley if she agreed in general, and Ms. Ashley responded that in general she did when talking about the Comprehensive Plan and the Development Review process, but inquired if there was a certain area of the Charter that could help with those issues. *Chairman Doherty* responded that some upcoming questions may address that. Ms. Ashley further said that the Charlotte County Chamber, for the last fifteen years, has been grappling with these issues. She said that it always comes back to the need for streamlining. Ms. Ashley acknowledged that she felt there were some improvements made a few years ago, but with the onset of the economic downturn and loss of budgets they are hearing the same issues arising again. Ms. Ashley agreed that the process could be described as dysfunctional. Ms. Miller suggested one big umbrella to unify Building, Zoning and Planning so that there is one area of responsibility instead of competing departments who do not communicate well. Mr. Wright referred to The Loop coming to the area and the endless difficulties, citing that Mr. Wilder himself had to deal with so many individuals that did not communicate. Mr. Wright also referred to the legal and logistical costs encountered in that project. Mr. Wright mentioned Mr. Wilder’s suggestion of a project manager to oversee from start to finish. *John Hitzel* observed that there needed to be more than a facilitator, there needed to be someone with authority. *Ken Doherty* agreed and mentioned that he has seen this as he works in other parts of the country. *Ms. Ashley* agreed that might eliminate all of the waiting that is involved. Mr. Wright said that he knows that both Lee and Broward counties have gone to project managers and he and Ms. Ashley said they thought Collier was in the process also. Ms. Miller said that it would be an incredible boost for attracting developers. *Chairman Folchi* pointed out that there were two results that could occur from these meetings: (a) a specific change to the Charter to provide for a new way of organizing the County and/or (b) meeting and having the entire CRC in the Sunshine enables them to expose information that may cause the County to react and improve upon the symptoms that people are describing. *Mr. Folchi* said he did not know of a specific article in the Charter that could be fixed to make the Departments more reactive. *Mr. Folchi* then said that the next series of questions are general and may reveal some ideas that could be explored to facilitate implementation of the ideas being discussed today, and Ms. Ashley agreed. *Mr. Folchi* pointed out that in his opinion the problem was that the Charter is only a three page document with very little texture and that if it could be expanded there would be a better sense of direction.

The question then asked of the Chamber members was Should there be more or less County Commissioners? Ms. Miller responded that she thought five Commissioners is workable but seven may be better. She acknowledged with *Chairman Folchi* the cost of adding Commissioners and said that five may be the best idea. Ms. Ashley agreed that five is a good number, asking if that was the norm for a County this size. *Ken Doherty* referred to Jacksonville and Miami-Dade which have consolidated a lot of the municipalities. *Bill Folchi* pointed out that Charlotte is the twenty-seventh largest

County in the State. Ms. Ashley and Ms. Miller agreed that they have never heard of anyone not being able to get in touch with a Commissioner, approving of the “open door” atmosphere. Ms. Ashley further stated that she was in favor of an appointed rather than elected County Administrator, and *Chairman Folchi* said that would be coming up in a subsequent question.

The next question asked was Should the Commissioners be elected from single districts or elected at-large? *Chairman Folchi* indicated that the Commissioners are currently elected at-large and that is something that the Charter can address. By way of explanation, *Mr. Folchi* said that if a Commissioner were to be elected from a single district, he or she could be considered the representative working on behalf of your district. *Mr. Folchi* pointed out that Commissioner would still need the approval of at least two other Commissioners to accomplish anything. *Mr. Folchi* said that an at-large Commissioner would presumably be responsible to the County as a whole, perhaps making him or her less responsive to the needs of one district. *Ken Doherty* referred to other Charters that are a mixture, with some elected at-large and some from single districts. Ms. Ashley indicated that she is comfortable with the at-large method, saying that she personally is going to vote for the most qualified and most knowledgeable candidate, pointing out that in four years the voter will know if that individual had not been responsive. Ms. Ashley said that she looks for that representation and the non-specific agenda as much as an elected official can deliver that. Ms. Miller agreed, saying that the breadth of information and responsibility that a Commissioner must possess is daunting. Mr. Wright referred to the cost to the candidate for running at large and *Mr. Folchi* said that the cost was four times as much as running from a single district. Mr. Wright said he would prefer a few district-specific Commissioners and some at large. Ms. Miller said she could agree with that also. *Ken Doherty* referred to an earlier comment about communities with that mixture, saying that might be a good alternative. *John Hitzel* said there is one County that has three single member Commissioners and two at-large. Mr. Wright commented that Charlotte County could not really be divided into three districts but Ms. Ashley said that there could be South County, Mid County and West County. *Mr. Doherty* said he thought it had to be population based. *Chairman Folchi* said that it could be designed if this were to be suggested as an Amendment.

The next question asked was Should the County Administrator be elected rather than appointed? *Mr. Folchi* explained that currently the County Administrator is appointed and serves at the pleasure of the Board of County Commissioners. *Mr. Folchi* said that the Charter also provides for two other forms of County Executive, in both of which the Administrator is elected. *Mr. Folchi* suggested that an argument in favor of the current system may be that a strong Commission would be knowledgeable of the requirements for a County Administrator, perhaps more knowledgeable than the general public. *Mr. Folchi* then indicated that on the other hand an elected Administrator would be accountable to the public which may allow that Administrator to operate more independently of the Commission. Ms. Ashley spoke in favor of an appointed

Administrator and Mr. Wright agreed, citing financial concerns also. *Ken Doherty* said that one of the theories as to why the County is perceived to be dysfunctional is the belief by the citizens that the elected Commissioners can get the job done for them. *Mr. Doherty* referred to the separation of powers clause in the Charter that prohibits them from getting things done unless it is through the County Administrator. *Mr. Doherty* expanded upon *Mr. Folchi's* earlier statements by describing three available Statutory options and outlining their respective powers: County Executive form (similar to the President or the Governor), County Manager form and County Chair-Administrator plan (comparable to a County mayor). To augment *Mr. Doherty's* statements, Ms. Miller observed that is exactly the problem she has observed, that staff is not controlled by the Commissioners. *Mr. Doherty* said he wondered if an elected Mayor, accountable to the people, would be a better system of government. Ms. Miller acknowledged there is a disconnection as the system currently exists, but does not know what the corrective measure would be. All agreed that accountability is the key factor. Ms. Ashley referred to other Counties which have switched their Executive form and asked if there had been research on that subject. *Mr. Doherty* said that is one of the things that the Charter Review Commission is currently doing. Ms. Miller recognized the need to explore other options and *Mr. Folchi* observed that the ultimate question would be if the change would bring improvement or not. *Mr. Folchi* further said that he thought the important message he is hearing from the meeting is that Charlotte County is hard to deal with, and he felt that particularly in a recession the County should be trying hard to attract businesses. Ms. Ashley said that the current system works well with the Constitutional Officers, referring specifically to the elected Sheriff's Office. Ms. Ashley said she thought that people have understood the immense administrative capabilities that the Sheriff must have.

The next question asked was What is your opinion on setting term limits for Elected Officials? If they should be proposed how long should they be? Ms. Ashley responded that she is not in favor of term limits, stating that if the constituents are happy and objectives are being accomplished then an individual be able to continue to serve. Ms. Miller agreed. *Chairman Folchi* commented that term limits occur as a result of the vote, and Ms. Ashley and Ms. Miller agreed. Ms. Ashley further said that she has observed that on the State level sometimes momentum and continuity is lost as a result of term limits. *Chairman Folchi* gave an example of an individual remaining in office even though they are not doing a good job, saying that person may continue to serve only because no acceptable opposition runs against them. Ms. Miller and Ms. Ashley said that problems cannot be fixed by limiting terms.

Chairman Folchi indicated that this was the last of the questions which the sub-Committee had prepared. Mr. Wright asked about the current term limits for the Board of County Commissioners. Ms. Miller asked if there were minimum education and

experience requirements for a County Commissioner. *Ken Doherty* responded that he was told many years ago that the requirements were only age and residency, Ms. Ashley added that the key element is residency and *Mr. Folchi* said that a candidate had to reside in his District. Ms. Miller asked if this is something the Charter can amend. *Mr. Doherty* said that had been brought up in the past and could be re-visited, but that the determination had been to make sure that the hired staff had the expertise, leaving the responsibility to the voters to select the most qualified Commissioners. Ms. Miller observed that seemed to be the wrong order of priority. *Chairman Folchi* asked Ms. Miller what type of qualifications she thought should exist. Ms. Miller answered that she was not an authority on that but expressed concern that in some cases it appears that a Commissioner may not have the required knowledge to make good decisions. Ms. Ashley commented that the Charlotte County Chamber has a list of questions that they submit to each candidate for written response. She said that each candidate is given the same questions at the same time with the same amount of space to reply, and that sometimes responses are alarming in their lack of writing ability. Ms. Miller agreed with this concern and said that requiring a college degree would certainly seem reasonable. *Ken Doherty* commented that as Chairman of the Charter Review Commission he will present a final report to the Board of County Commissioners, and even though all issues may not be addressed by Charter amendment they will all be documented. *Chairman Folchi* added that the message will get through and *Mr. Doherty* added that all comments are appreciated. Ms. Ashley observed that more is needed than an education requirement, saying that there are some PHD's that would not be able to handle the job. Ms. Miller commented that there should be a minimum level that is reasonably definable. In response to a question by *Chairman Folchi*, *John Hitzel* indicated that he had all of his questions answered. Ms. Miller indicated that she had further comment, saying that the business community feels left out of the process as they are often unable to attend the morning BCC meetings. Ms. Miller said they feel disconnected as a result and suggested that at least e-mail or some other form of input should be allowed to effectively include the business community. *Chairman Folchi* observed that as a legal requirement a letter is not the same as oral testimony, saying that was explained to him by an attorney because a letter would have been submitted out of context. Ms. Miller accepted that explanation. *Mr. Folchi* said he had expected Ms. Miller to suggest that the meetings be held at night and both Ms. Miller and Ms. Ashley responded that had been tried. Ms. Miller said maybe allocating an Agenda item to a certain time would allow attendance on the matters that someone wanted to hear. *John Hitzel* asked if she would consider a suggestion that one meeting may not be enough for an issue to be voted on and passed. Ms. Miller responded that she thought that would just create extra time and expense. Ms. Ashley added that it would be helpful to the business community to receive issues in a more timely manner so that it can be addressed by the appropriate Chamber committee(s). Ms. Ashley said that her organization is very attuned, but still occasionally hear at a BCC meeting that they are not receiving any input from the business community. Ms. Ashley remarked that the business community is working at those times. She suggested that the Commissioners could call the Chamber executives at any time but they do not. Mr.

Wright agreed. *John Hitzel* said that perhaps there should be more time allowed between putting an item on the Agenda and voting on it. Ms. Ashley agreed and observed that if there is a controversial issue her Chamber will do a pro and con presentation at the Government Affairs committee. *Mr. Doherty* added that a suggestion he heard during an earlier speaking engagement in the West County was that, as an experiment, BCC meetings be scheduled at regular intervals in other County locations to see if that will enhance attendance. Mr. Wright observed that what is being discussed here is nothing new, the same concerns apply to City Council meetings and Agenda times. Ms. Ashley said that she thought communication should be opened up at an earlier stage of an issue. Ms. Miller commented again that it is continually brought up at Chamber meetings that the Board of County Commissioners is not conducive to input from the business community. The interview session with the Chambers of Commerce ended at 1:58 p.m. EST and *Chairman Folchi* thanked all of the representatives for their time and attendance.

CHARLOTTE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD INTERVIEW

The second entity to be interviewed was the Charlotte County School Board, represented by all of its members as well as Superintendent Dr. David Gayler. The School Board members are Sue Sifrit/Chairman, Andrea Messina/Vice Chairman, Lee Swift, Alleen Miller and Barbara Rendell. At the outset, *Ken Doherty* apologized that he would be leaving the meeting early due to work obligations. *Chairman Folchi* began this session by welcoming the representatives and briefly explaining the Charter Review Commission and the sub-Committee structure, just as he had done for the preceding Chamber of Commerce interviews. *Mr. Folchi* further explained that the authority of the CRC in relation to the School Board is quite limited, citing a proposal during a past Commission calling for the election of the Superintendent. *Mr. Folchi* said that although the State Statutes provide for either election or appointment, the determination of the CRC attorney is that the position of Superintendent in this County will remain appointed. *Mr. Folchi* indicated that this sub-Committee had included that question on their list anyway in an effort to obtain input from the School Board.

The first point of discussion presented to the School Board representatives and Mr. Gayler was How does the School Board relate to the Board of County Commissioners?

Sue Sifrit began discussion by saying that as a result of both the Commissioners and the School Board members being elected public officials their paths cross frequently at functions, creating an informal relationship that serves the community well. Ms. Sifrit pointed out that on a more formal level, there is a concurrency requirement and representatives of the school district meet with Commissioners and City Council members on issues of concurrency and the interlocal agreement every week. Ms. Sifrit stated this is a wonderful vehicle of communication. *Ken Doherty* inquired who sat on that and Ms. Sifrit replied that currently it is Jerry Olivo, prior to that it was Dr. Donna Widmeyer. In response to a question by *Chairman Folchi*, Superintendent Gayler said

the name of the committee was the Concurrency Committee. *Chairman Folchi* confirmed that this Concurrency Committee has a delegate from the County and Dr. Gayler and Ms. Sifrit responded that it was someone from Staff, the primary one at this time being Steve Ellis (Planning). *Mr. Folchi* inquired about the delegate from the City of Punta Gorda and was told it is Joan LeBeau. *Chairman Folchi* remarked that at a recent City Council meeting an issue about school bussing had been brought up, and Ms. Sifrit responded that has been in reference to a change of boundaries and there had been numerous communications and meetings regarding this change of boundaries. Ms. Sifrit suggested that Dr. Gayler address the communications issue. Dr. Gayler advised that regular meetings throughout the year culminate in an annual meeting (this year will be May 3, 2010) with the County Commissioners, the Punta Gorda City Council and the School Board. Dr. Gayler said that at this meeting they discuss concurrency issues. In response to a question from *Chairman Folchi*, Dr. Gayler confirmed that this meeting was at the Board level. He further said that other Staff communication normally occurs on an issue by issue basis.

Chairman Folchi asked the School Board members present if there was anything that they would like to see changed in the Charter that would enable the School Board to function or interact better with the County. No suggestions were made.

The next point of discussion was: The portion of the “Ad Valorem taxes” paid by Charlotte County property owners for education is about 42%. A third of this is charged by the Charlotte County School Board. The largest increase in Ad Valorem taxes in 2009 was from the State and the School Board for education. An increase in the cost of education to property owners in a year of declining student population should be under a great degree of public visibility. Should the Charter Review Commission create an advisory board to provide the public with greater visibility into rising costs of the operation of the School Board?

Dr. Gayler responded that the increases in Ad Valorem taxes is by formula, and the School Board has little control over the Ad Valorem taxes. He pointed out that the greater share of the budget for education Statewide over the last few years has come from Ad Valorem taxes and not by any local School Board’s decision. Dr. Gayler indicated that any advisory board formed would be a waste of time as the taxes are set by formula. *Chairman Folchi* inquired if there was a mechanism for the public to gain a larger degree of knowledge as to what was going to take place so that they could voice their opinions. Dr. Gayler replied that path would be through the local Legislators. He added that as far as the public being able to access information, there are eighteen regularly scheduled Board meetings per year as well as twenty to twenty-five workshops which are advertised. Dr. Gayler remarked that during his experience there has been little interest/attendance until the tax bills are generated in November. He indicated that the Legislature sets the budget in March, the Ad Valorem rates are set in June and July and there are multiple workshops and Board meetings to address the issue. Mr. Lee Swift indicated that at one point in the budgetary process last year Charlotte County had the

seventh lowest school millage rate in the State, excluding the factor of the quarter mill discretionary tax. He further stated that there is a vast misunderstanding of how much control the School Board has. Mr. Swift said that the School Board still has a lower millage rate than they did seven years ago, indicating that the fact that it came up is actually a function of the assessed values going down. Mr. Swift said that for the last several years they have been part of a rule that mandates that the millage rate cannot raise more than ninety (90%) percent of the formula dollars that the State sets. Ms. Sifrit referred back to the issue of community participation and said that typically there is at least one specific article that lets people know when they can come and hear about the budget. She mentioned past budget forums which they put on at the request of the Chambers of Commerce to educate the public, indicating that there was very low attendance. Mr. Swift added that an independent party had been included in the presentations. He again referred to the misconception that the School Board has as much control over their budget as the County Commission, indicating that there are not the same processes available. *Chairman Folchi* observed that there appears to be little that can be done, and the group agreed. Ms. Sifrit said that one avenue would be for citizens to go to the Legislators themselves, saying that would carry more weight than going through the School Board and having them communicate the issues. Mr. Swift described a Legislative shift over the last few sessions, which has resulted in local property tax dollars paying greater than fifty (50%) percent of the State education budget. He said that is becoming an issue statewide, further indicating that is a problem in any State where education funding is based on property taxes.

Chairman Folchi mentioned that the outcome of this meeting could be two things: a change in the Charter (from which the School Board would not be affected); and providing all of the fact finding information and explanations to the public. Mr. Swift indicated that he has a presentation that he does for Edison about school funding. He said he would be happy to do for any group that would be interested. *Chairman Folchi* mentioned that local civic groups might be a good audience. Ms. Sifrit referred to some informational sheets she had provided at the beginning of the meeting, indicating that page two had a good breakdown of the budget. (NOTE: This handout is attached to these Minutes as "Attachment A"). *Chairman Folchi* asked about State lottery funds. Mr. Swift responded that for the last couple of years the discretionary lottery money for the District is virtually zero. He said that sixteen years ago the District got \$3 million in discretionary funds and it was used to support salaries. Mr. Swift said that the growth in the Bright Futures scholarship program and rising costs have eaten up most of the lottery money, and also said that a portion of it has been bonded to use in new classroom construction throughout the State (as a result of the class size limitations). He said that what little money the District now gets goes towards the A+ school recognition program, thus everything that comes in is accounted for and there is nothing to use for discretionary spending. *John Hitzel* observed that this is all fairly well controlled by the State. *Mr. Hitzel* asked if there were any purchases or functions that could be a benefit if combined with the County. *Dr. Gayler* said that has been explored and that the

Purchasing departments participate in piggy-backing when feasible. He said that the HR functions do not fit together very well as they have totally disparate hiring needs. Mr. Gayler said that the respective HR Departments do work together well in the area of advising each other. *John Hitzel* mentioned vehicle maintenance and Mr. Gayler said that although they do not have the same garages they cooperate in the area of repairs and also utilize each other's fuel tanks. He said this is a good partnership, especially during times of emergency. *Mr. Hitzel* asked about the County and School Board HR departments and the issue of no recent raises. Dr. Gayler responded that the School Board was not mirroring the County in that regard, it was simply a conclusion reached in examining their own budget. *Andrea Messina* pointed out that even though he should have had one the Superintendent has not had a raise in the previous two years. Mr. Swift returned to the issue of purchasing, saying that this District has joined with a number of other districts statewide to form a purchasing consortium, which although in early stages will hopefully result in better pricing than piggy-backing.

The next question presented was The School Board manages the Charlotte Performing Arts Center. Should the management of this property be changed to enable more benefit to the community? Dr. Gayler pointed out that the School Board also owns the property, saying that the County and the City contributed about twenty five (25%) of the funds to build it during 2002-2003. He said there had been a committee called Friends of CPAC that attempted to develop a variety of ways to bring in musical attractions, etc.. Mr. Gayler said those efforts had failed completely and they were unable to garner any operational support from them. In response to a question from *Chairman Folchi*, he said this had not been a franchise but a group that was set up to oversee in an advisory capacity to attract programming. Dr. Gayler said that since the City and County had helped with the construction the School Board wanted to try and get the facility to really operate as a Performing Arts Center and benefit the community. Dr. Gayler said that after about three years, due to lack of community support and funds to pay for those acts that did come to the Center, the Friends of CPAC disbanded. He said that when Charlotte High rebuilt they decided not to build another auditorium but to use CPAC instead, with the continuing promise that local groups would have access to it as needed. Dr.. Gayler further elaborated that they had been warned by the Van Wezel and Barbara B. Mann PAH that the facility was too small and ticket prices would be in excess of what the community would pay. Dr. Gayler said that CPAC continues to have a pretty vibrant schedule of community activities, but no outside programming. He said they are open to all suggestions, but as far as bringing in a management company they have done that and it has not succeeded. Ms. Sifrit added that if any organization wanted to bring in an outside act they could use the facility as long as they agreed to assume the financial risk. There was discussion of the high quality of local school performances. Dr.. Gayler said that even though it remains primarily an auditorium, they are looking at more ways for community involvement which may improve use of the facility. Ms. Sifrit stated that it was understood from the beginning that management of the facility would remain with the Schools, and that was the intent of the City and County as well.

The next question asked was Should there be more or less County Commissioners or is five the right number? Dr. Gayler said that he did not really have an opinion but appeared that five was the preferred number for a population of this size, just by looking around the state.

Should the Commissioners all be elected at- large or from single Commissioner districts? Mr. Swift responded that in a community of this size “at-large” was probably best. Ms. Sifrit expressed the concern that Charlotte County basically has three distinct communities, and there might be a community that feels it is not being represented. Ms. Messina said that single member districts would be very territorial and less altruistic. *Mr. Folchi* pointed out that from a practical point of view if they are elected at-large then every election there is an opportunity to retain or remove a Commissioner, but if they are elected from a single district the voter would have to wait four years before being able to do anything about their particular Commissioner.

Should the County Administrator be elected rather than appointed? Dr. Gayler referred to the discussion of this question during the earlier conversation with the Chambers of Commerce. He said that the voters cannot count on the level of expertise they may get from a candidate, and said that you need Staff with the education and experience to balance that. In response to *Chairman Folchi*, Dr. Gayler said he would support an appointed rather and elected County Administrator. Mr. Swift agreed, saying that an Administrator could be hired from a pre-determined set of qualifications developed by the elected officials and could be held accountable by them. He said he also based his opinion on what he has seen across the State in areas where the School Superintendent is elected rather than appointed. Ms. Messina said that essentially the County Administrator position is that of CEO, which needs professional expertise.

What is your opinion on setting term limits for elected officials? If proposed, how long should they be? Mr. Swift replied that in his opinion the ballot box is the most effective method of term limits. Discussion ensued among several of the other members that term limits were necessary, and they determined that term should be eight years. Mr. Swift disagreed based on what he sees at the State level, saying that the public is going to respond at the ballot box. Ms. Messina indicated that the problem she sees with term limits is that staff becomes the keepers of knowledge, essentially waiting out a politician’s term. Mr. Swift added that staff members then generate the initiatives because if no one else is there with the experience or historical knowledge they become the de facto legislator. *Chairman Folchi* agreed that these are not easy questions.

Ms. Sifrit said that the greatest change she could think of in a positive direction would be to eliminate citizen apathy. Ms. Sifrit indicated there are many systems in place which would allow citizens to get involved and influence an outcome, but they do not get involved. She said that what she sees happening is sometimes a very few people with a

very strongly held position will influence a decision which may not be in the best interest of the community. *Mr. Folchi* observed that less than one (1%) percent could run this county if they came forward because that is the only opinion the Commissioners will get. He says that he hears that frequently from the Punta Gorda City Council. *Mr. Swift* agreed that the biggest complaints come after an action has been taken. *Mr. Folchi* referred to the early Public Meeting that the CRC held to obtain input, remarking that there was minimal attendance. *Mr. Swift* gave an example of his own that the School Board can hold a meeting to discuss a major curriculum issue and have no members of the public attend, but if a bus time is altered the room is full. *Mr. Folchi* remarked on an issue he had seen on television about other parts of the country where text books are being altered to support a political objective. *Dr. Gayler* assured him that in Charlotte County they only have textbooks which are approved and adopted by the State.

Chairman Folchi expressed his thanks to the School Board members and *Dr. Gayler* for coming, and said that he had enjoyed it and learned a lot from these conversations. *Mr. Swift* requested that if anything comes up in the Public Hearings that affect the School Board he would appreciate it if they were informed so they can respond appropriately. *Ms Sifrit* said that she thought most people in the community know that the School Board and the Superintendent function well, and she attributed that success to the training they receive. She explained that the five School Board members have a clear understanding of their roles as policy makers and *Dr. Gayler's* role as Superintendent handling the daily operations of the District. *Ms. Sifrit* said that she felt similar training would benefit the Board of County Commissioners. *Mr. Swift* said that the Statutes are very clear in defining the positions of School Board members and the Superintendent, but he does not know if there is anything that definitive about the relationship and roles between County Commissioners and Administration. *Ms. Messina* said she agreed with *Ms. Sifrit's* statement that training is essential. *Ms. Messina* further stated that she does not know if that kind of training is available to the Commissioners, but as far as the functioning of the School Board is concerned the component of team training is essential. *Mr. Swift* pointed out that around the State the most efficient School Boards are those that work as a team. *Ms. Messina* observed that because *Dr. Gayler* is leaving and *Ms. Sifrit* is not going to run for another term they will all go for new training. *Mr. Swift* said that in order to maintain their status as a Master Board it is required. The members are individual Master Board members and the Board as a whole is a Master Board. *Mr. Swift* cited the stability of leadership as another factor in their success. *John Folchi* thanked them as a citizen, saying that the schools in this County are excellent and they are the reason for that.

THESE MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL
UNTIL ADOPTED BY THE
Other Boards and Agencies Sub-Committee

BOOK_____PAGE_____

(3) Public Input: None

(4) Committee Comments: None

(5) Adjournment: Upon motion made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m. EST.

Bill Folchi, Chairman

ATTACHMENT 'A'



1445 Education Way, Port Charlotte, FL 33948
 941-255-0808
 www.yourcharlotteschools.com

Achieving Success at CCPS...
District Recognitions in Florida

- ❖ Designated a "High Performing District"
- ❖ 94% of CCPS schools graded "A" or "B"
- ❖ Neil Armstrong recognized as a Florida Title 1 Distinguished School
- ❖ #3 for having 87% of schools making adequate yearly progress (AYP) under the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)
- ❖ Ranked in top three for writing scores
- ❖ #1 for percentage of students passing Advanced Placement (AP) exams, second year in a row
- ❖ Ranked in the top 25% of *Reading First* districts
- ❖ Increased graduation rate from 68% to 85%

District Recognitions in Nation

- ❖ Port Charlotte High awarded Bronze Medal by US News & World Report Best High School
- ❖ Headstart Program awarded "Program of Excellence" distinction one of 25
- ❖ 62 Nationally Board Certified teachers

District Highlights

We have:

- ❖ Partnership with Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
- ❖ Developed a 5-year Plan for Student Success
- ❖ Graduated over 125 practical nurses with a licensure pass rate of 100% (2009)
- ❖ Won 5 LEEDS Awards ("Green Schools") for our new school buildings
- ❖ Instituted Parent Connect, a web-based tool for parents to monitor their student's progress throughout the school year

Vision: Student Success!

District Mission: We will provide an innovative educational environment that allows and inspires success for everyone.

SCHOOL BOARD

Lee Swift, District 1 ❖ Alleen Miller, District 2
 Andrea Messina, District 3 ❖ Sue Sifrit, District 4
 Barbara Rendell, District 5
 David Gayler, PhD, Superintendent

Schools

Elementary Schools (two are year-round)	10
Middle Schools	4
High Schools	3
Centers	4

Student Population

Total (PreK-12)	16,153
White: 75% Black: 9% Hispanic: 9% Other: 7%	
English Language Learners (ELL)	181
Exceptional Student Education (ESE) (includes 366 gifted students)	3,351
Home school students	412
Homeless students	101
Students qualifying for free/reduced meals	58%

Employees— CCPS is the largest employer in Charlotte County

Total	2,381
Instructional	1,181
Instructional support (e.g., teacher aides, departments of transportation, food service)	1,061
School-based administrators	49
District administrators	26

NOTE: We rank 43rd out of 67 districts for administrative costs per student (\$555).

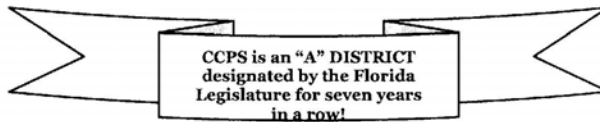
CCPS beginning teacher salary	\$37,440
CCPS average teacher salary (10th in the state)	\$48,069
Florida average teacher salary	\$46,938
United States average teacher salary	\$52,308

Transportation

90 buses transport 8,000 students each day
 1.5 million miles traveled each year

Food Service

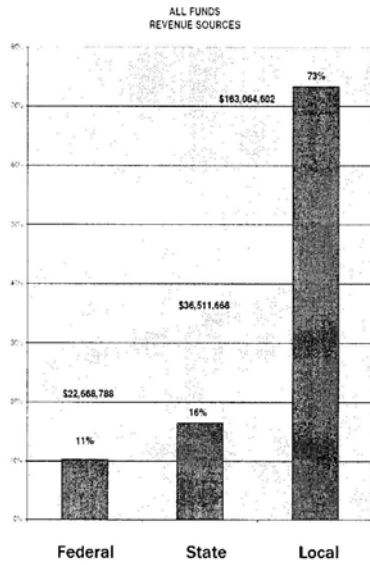
12,200 lunches served each day; 2.1 million each year
 3,780 breakfasts served each day; 659,000 each year



February
 2010

2009-2010 School Year Budget

AGE _____



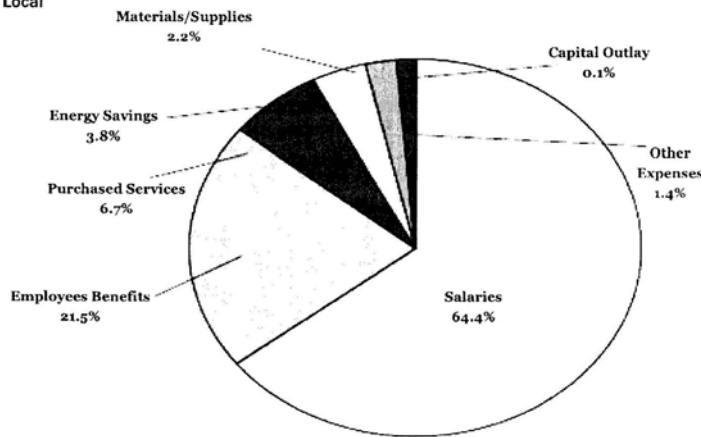
GENERAL FUND SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA REVENUE PER STUDENT

YEAR	Dollars per unweighted full time student	Annual percent increase decrease
2009-2010*	\$6,859.75	0.31%
2009-2010	\$6,513.10	-4.76%
2008-2009	\$6,838.27	-4.82%
2007-2008	\$7,184.39	5.61%
2006-2007	\$6,803.01	11.94%
2005-2006	\$6,077.38	6.42%
2004-2005	\$5,710.84	7.24%
2003-2004	\$5,325.11	6.63%
2002-2003	\$4,993.89	4.29%

*includes Federal Stabilization funds

GENERAL FUND—APPROPRIATIONS BY OBJECT

The District has served as good stewards of YOUR tax dollars, prioritizing classroom spending and using fiscal responsibility.



◆ Total General Fund (Operational) Revenues \$144 million

—Includes fund balances and transfers of \$15 million and \$5.8 million of Federal Stabilization

◆ Total Capital Revenues \$59 million

—Includes fund balances from previous years of \$35 million
—Includes local Capital Improvement Tax revenues of \$24 million

ASSESSMENTS AND TAX LEVIES

	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
A. Gross Taxable Value (billions):	\$12.938	\$16.125	\$23.947	\$23.589	\$19.997	\$16.862
B. Tax Levies on Non-Exempt Property (Mills)						
Nonvoted						
1. District School Taxes						
Required Local Effort	5.6250	4.6860	3.4260	3.6110	4.0210	4.8590
Discretionary	0.5100	0.5100	0.5100	0.5100	0.4980	0.7480
Supplemental Discretionary	0.0740	0.1130	0.0780	0.0780	0.0910	0.0000
Total District School Taxes	6.2090	5.3090	4.0140	4.1990	4.6100	5.857
2. Capital Improvement						
Total Nonvoted	8.2090	7.3090	6.0140	6.1990	6.3600	7.3570
Voted *						
3. Debt Service - County Wide						
	0.2600	0.2000	0.1400	0.0398	0.0000	0.0000
DISTRICT TOTAL	8.4690	7.5090	6.1540	6.2388	6.3600	7.357
Millage Increase (+) Decrease	0.0510	-0.9600	-1.3550	0.0848	0.1212	0.997
Millage percent Increase (+) Decrease	0.6%	-11.3%	-18.0%	1.4%	1.9%	15.70%

*Approved by bond referendum held in September, 1967.

Florida Lottery Money

Where does the money go?

- ▶ 50% for prizes
- ▶ 38% for education (K-12 and higher)
- ▶ 12% administration

From 1987-2008, CCPS received an average of \$1 million a year for construction and \$2.9 million a year for PreK-12 and FCAT school recognition money. From 1997-2008, CCPS' students have received an average of \$1 million a year for Bright Future scholarships.

View complete budget on our website: www.yourcharlotteschools.com

Selection Procedure and Timetable

Candidates should apply by April 16, 2010. All applications will be reviewed by school board members and Dr. Wayne Blanton, Executive Director of the Florida School Boards Association.

Selected candidates will be interviewed by the school board between May 10-21, 2010. The top candidates may then be visited in their home districts. The school board's final selection will be made by June 1, with a preferred starting date around December 1, 2010—January 1, 2011.

Application Procedure

Interested candidates should complete the on-line superintendent's application and submit a resume that includes the following information (in hard copy or email):

- A brief description of personal leadership style and philosophy of public education
- Work experience with specific reference to the field of education
- Significant professional and personal qualifications and accomplishments
- Three to five letters of reference

IMPORTANT NOTICE

 All applications are subject to the Florida Public Records Act and "Government in the Sunshine" provisions of Florida law. Applications cannot be held in confidence. Public interviews will be held.

Contract Terms

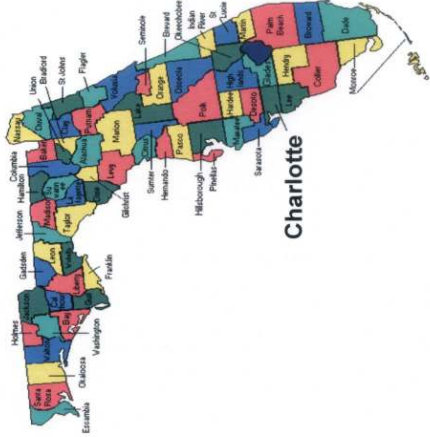
The salary range is \$145,000-\$165,000 with a negotiable benefits package and a three-year contract.

For more information on the Superintendent's Search, Charlotte County Public Schools, and Charlotte County, please visit our website: www.yourcharlotteschools.com

The School Board of Charlotte County, Florida is an equal opportunity employer.

Board Members

- Sue Sifrit
Chairman
- Andrea Messina
Vice Chairman
- Alleen Miller
- Barbara Rendell
- Lee Swift



Charlotte

Submit application materials by April 16, 2010 to:

Barbara Melanson, Assistant Superintendent
 Charlotte County Public Schools
 1445 Education Way
 Port Charlotte, FL 33948
 941-255-0808, x3030
 email: barbara_melanson@ccps.k12.fl.us

For further information contact:

Dr. Wayne Blanton, Consultant
 Florida School Boards Association
 850-414-2578



SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH

Vision
Student Success!

Mission
 We will provide an innovative educational environment that allows and inspires success for everyone.





Charlotte County, Florida

Located in the heart of Southwest Florida, the communities of Charlotte County are situated on or around the pristine Charlotte Harbor, Florida's second-largest estuarine system. Charlotte County's location, its natural tropical beauty, and its ideal sub-tropical climate make it a desirable place to live, work, and vacation.



The School District

Charlotte County Public Schools has established a solid reputation throughout Florida for its progressive efforts toward excellence in education. As the largest employer in the county, our district employs over 2,300 personnel who are committed to the district's vision of **Student Success!** for all of its 16,000 students.

Superintendent Search

The School Board of Charlotte County is seeking a strong educational leader with extraordinary ability and character to serve as Superintendent of Schools. The current superintendent is retiring with distinction after completing almost nine years in the position.

Charlotte County Public Schools is regarded as one of the premier school systems in Florida. The school board is committed to the continued pursuit of excellence on all levels. We are looking for an individual who embodies and exemplifies the qualities necessary to ensure our district's vision, fulfill our mission, and lead our unique culture of collaboration and high trust.

Qualifications

- Doctorate preferred, master's degree required, earned from an accredited college or university
- A minimum of ten years administrative experience in education leadership, with a minimum of five years at the district level in a district with at least 5,000 students (equivalent experience in business will be considered)
- Knowledge of Florida Statutes as they apply to school districts, including Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP), budgeting, fiscal planning, collective bargaining, Administrative Procedures Act, the Sunshine Law, and federal initiatives including AYP and differentiated accountability

Leadership Qualities

- Committed to the district's priority of student achievement and success
- Exhibits visionary leadership with a collaborative spirit
- Possesses a strong educational and instructional background
- Creates a work climate that enables employees to develop to their full potential
- Demonstrates a strong commitment to interest-based collaborative problem-solving in all facets of school operations
- Committed to professional growth for self and staff
- Demonstrates a positive working relationship with the school board
- Demonstrates community presence and acts as ambassador for the school system
- Works effectively with federal, state, and local officials to support and enhance public education

Personal Qualities

- Demonstrates a high degree of ethics and integrity
- Leads by example
- Demonstrates strong interpersonal human relations and communication skills
- Shows trust and respect toward employees

