

CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION
Wednesday, February 13, 2008 – 8:10 a.m.
6th Floor Conference Room
Council Office Building

Commission Members Present:

Nancy Soreng, Chair
Michael Cogan
Dianne Felton
Wilbur Friedman
Robert Shoenberg
Judith Vandegriff
Anne Marie Vassallo
Charles Wolff

Staff:

Justina Ferber, County Council Staff
Marie Jean-Paul, County Council Staff
Marc Hansen, County Attorney's Office

Guests:

Michael Faden, County Council Staff
Glenn Orlin, County Council Staff
Robert Drummer, Council Staff
Miranda Spivak, Washington Post

Commission Members Absent:

Alice Gresham Bullock, Vice-Chair
Karen Czapanskiy
Mollie Habermeier

Commission Chair Nancy Soreng called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m. She opened the meeting by expressing the Commission's sorrow for the loss of Councilmember Marilyn Praisner.

I. Meet with Inspector General

Inspector General Thomas Dagley read a statement to the Commission and discussed the following issues:

- How as the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) contributed to the welfare of the County?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of the current selection process for the Inspector General position?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of an Executive-nominated, Council-confirmed Inspector General?

A copy of the Mr. Dagley's statement will be made a part of the meeting minutes. He also distributed copies of the FY2007 OIG Annual Report and the current OIG newsletter which reports on the activities of the office. Commissioners asked additional questions about the function of the office and Mr. Dagley reiterated his position that the current structure was working effectively. He felt that the major advantage to the current structure was the authority of the IG to investigate all taxpayer funded programs. He stated that he works with the Office of Legislative Oversight to avoid duplication. After

further discussion, the Chair noted that there was enough interest on the Commission to study this issue further. The Commission will decide in March whether to make a recommendation on this issue in the May 2008 or May 2010 Commission report to the Council. Judy Vandegriff is researching the structure of IG positions in other counties.

II. Draft Report and Subcommittee Assignments

Chair Soreng asked Council staff to provide an electronic version of the previous CRC report and submittal letter to the Chair for her use. Subcommittees will describe issues and provide options for each.

Chair Soreng suggested that the Commission include a recommendation on moot provisions in the 2008 report and that she was willing to draft wording for the report. Marc Hansen explained that some of the moot provisions were not invalid but “inoperative” and because they were “inoperative” they were not removed from the Charter.

Commission members agreed that they were not in favor of the Ficker amendment petitioned to the ballot but they did not agree on whether the Commission should take a position on the petitioned amendment.

The following writing and subcommittees assignments were made with the understanding that decisions will be made at the March meeting about specific recommendations to be included in the May 2008 report to Council:

- Should moot provisions from the Charter Sec. 311A Limitations on Expenditures for Landfills in Residential Zones, Purchasing, Contracting for Goods, Services with C&P Telephone Company be removed from the charter?
Nancy Soreng
- Should an affirmative vote by all 9 Councilmembers be required to approve any property tax increase (the Ficker petition)?
Michael Cogan, Wilbur Friedman, Nancy Soreng
- Should special taxing districts that cover a limited geographic area be excluded from the limitation on property tax revenue growth?
Bob Shoenberg, Anne Marie Vassallo, Charles Wolff
- Should the Charter be amended to provide for an Executive nominated, Council confirmed Inspector General?
Diane Felton, Wilbur Friedman, Judy Vandegriff

The goal will be for subcommittees to circulate their drafts to all Commission members by March 5th. The March meeting will be an extended meeting, probably to 10:30 a.m.

Mr. Cogan apologized for being late to the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 A.M.

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