

**CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION**  
**Wednesday, January 10, 2018 – 8:00 a.m.**  
**4th Floor Conference Room**  
**Council Office Building**

**Commission Members Present:**

Paul Bessel, Chair  
Wendy Cohen  
Greg Decker  
Sharon Freeman  
Larry Lauer  
Timothy Lighter  
Joshua Lipsky  
Aryeh Shudofsky  
Ed Wisneski

**Staff:**

Ed Lattner, Office of the County Attorney  
Marie Jean-Paul, County Council  
Josh Hamlin, County Council

**Guests:**

Barbara Braswell  
Mary Lanigan, League of Women Voters of  
Montgomery County

**Commission Members Absent:**

Randy McDonald  
Jonelle Williams

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Commission Chair Paul M. Bessel called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

**I. Administrative items:**

- The agenda was adopted without objection.
- The minutes for the December 13, 2017 meeting were approved without objection.
- The Commission agreed to reschedule the meeting scheduled for February 14 to February 21, 2018.

**II. Comments by any members of the public about anything within the jurisdiction of the CRC:**

None.

**III. Discussion and vote on possible proposed amendment to Charter provisions for the selection of the Redistricting Commission.**

Commissioners discussed a recommendation to amend Section 104 of the Charter, providing for the appointment of a Redistricting Commission every 10 years to establish boundaries for Council districts. The purpose of the proposal was to provide for a neutral County Redistricting Commission, eliminating the use of party affiliation in the selection of members. The proposal included three key changes to the existing Charter provisions. As proposed, it would:

1. change the composition of the Commission from nine members to 11 members;

2. eliminate the role of the Central Committees of political parties in the selection process, and instead provide that the Commission include at least one resident of each Council district and at least one, but no more than four members of each political party which polled at least 15 percent of the vote in the preceding regular election; and
3. provide that the Commission must:
  - a) follow Section 103's requirements concerning district composition;
  - b) not consider other voter details or incumbents addresses; and
  - c) be subject to all State and County open meetings and open records laws.

A proposed amendment to delete the language related to the changes identified in numbers 3.a) and 3.c) above failed (4-4).

A proposed amendment to delete the language related to the change identified in number 3.a) above passed (5-3).

A proposed amendment to delete the remaining language in number 3. above passed (5-3).

The proposal, as amended, passed (9-0), recommending amendment to Section 104 as follows:

**Section 104      Redistricting Procedure**

The boundaries of Council districts shall be review in 1972 and every tenth year thereafter. Whenever district boundaries are to be reviewed, the Council shall appoint, not later than February 1 of the year before the year in which redistricting is to take effect, a commission on redistricting. The Commission shall be composed of [four members from each political party chosen from a list of eight individuals submitted by the central committee of] eleven registered voters who reside in the County. The Commission shall include at least one but no more than four members of each political party which polled at least fifteen percent of the total vote cast for all candidates for the Council in the last preceding regular election. [Each list shall include at least one individual who resides in each Council district. The Council shall appoint one additional member of the Commission. The Commission shall include at least one member who resides in each Council district, and the number of members of the Commission who reside in the same Council district shall not exceed the number of political parties which submitted a list to the Council.] At least one member of the Commission shall reside in each council district. The Commission shall, at its first meeting, select one of its members to serve as its chair. No person who holds any elected office shall be eligible for appointment to the Commission.

**IV. Discussion and vote on possible proposed amendment to Charter provisions governing the structure of the County Council.**

Commissioners discussed three proposals related to the district/at-large structure of the County Council as established in Sections 102 and 103 of the Charter. The proposals were:

- recommend amendment to restructure the County Council to include 7 district and 2 at-large seats;
- recommend amendment to restructure the County Council to include 9 district seats and no at-large seats: and
- recommend no change to the current Council structure of 5 district and 4 at-large seats.

The Commission voted (6-3) to recommend no change at this time, but to indicate that this issue merits further study by the next Charter Review Commission.

**V. Reports from Research Groups:**

a) **Financial**

b) **Government Structure**

c) **Personnel**

None.

**VI. Other business:**

None

**VII. Adjourn.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:57 a.m.