

CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION
Wednesday, February 12, 2020 – 8:00 a.m.
6th Floor Potomac River Conference Room
Council Office Building
Minutes

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| <p>Commission Members Present: George Margolies, Chair Laura Goddeeris, Vice Chair Christopher Danley Katherine Gugulis David Hill Larry Lauer Ronald Stubblefield Susan Miles</p> <p>Commission Members Not Present: Perry Paylor Nichole Thomas Courtney Walker</p> | <p>Staff Present: Ed Lattner, Office of the County Attorney Christine Wellons, Office of the County Council Marie Jean-Paul, Office of the County Council</p> <p>Guest: Marlene Michaelson, Executive Director, Office of the County Council</p> |
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Commission Chair George Margolies called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.

I. Opening Remarks

Mr. Margolies acknowledged the presence of a quorum. The agenda was adopted without objection. The minutes of the December 11, 2019 meeting were adopted without objection.

II. Discussion/ Q&A with the Executive Director of the Council’s Staff

Mr. Margolies introduced Marlene Michaelson, Executive Director of the Office of the County Council. Ms. Michaelson was asked by the Chair to speak to the Commission regarding constituent services provided by the Council; the impact of population growth and/or technology on the demands placed on the Council; Council staff resources; and impressions about the size and structure of the Council.

Ms. Michaelson thanked the Commission members for their service and explained that she has served on the Council staff for over 30 years, most recently as its Executive Director.

In terms of constituent services, Ms. Michaelson explained that demands on Councilmembers and their staff are greater than ever due to population growth and technological changes over time. She noted that over the past 25 years, the population of the county has grown by about 30%, but the central staff of the Council has grown by only about 3%. Individual Councilmembers’ staffs have grown by about 10%.

Ms. Michaelson noted several strengths of having a mix of district Councilmembers and at-large Councilmembers under the current structure of the Council. In her experience, it is beneficial not only to have Councilmembers who know their districts inside and out, but also to have Councilmembers who can focus more broadly on Countywide issues, such as affordable housing and education.

According to Ms. Michaelson, an additional benefit of the current makeup of the Council is that each resident has five Councilmembers who are directly responsible to the resident – one district member and four at-large members. The resident might choose to contact his or her district member for an issue specific to the district, but the resident might choose instead to contact an at-large member who is most interested in a particular Countywide issue, such as the environment.

Ms. Michaelson agreed to provide an organizational chart of Council central staff.

III. Discussion about Redistricting

At Mr. Margolies's request, Mr. Lattner discussed dates for the next redistricting under Charter Section 104. The dates include –

- Feb. 2021 – County Council appoints Redistricting Commission members under Section 104.
- Nov. 15, 2021 - Redistricting Commission issues plan and report.
- Feb. 15, 2022 - Redistricting Commission plan becomes law if no other law reestablishing the boundaries of the Council districts has been enacted.

IV. Discussion regarding Listening Sessions

Commission Members discussed the Listening sessions held in Bethesda and Burtonsville on January 26 and February 8, respectively. The next Listening Sessions are –

- Olney: Saturday, Feb. 22, 2020, 2:30 p.m. – 4 p.m.; Olney Community Library, Medium Room #2, 3500 Olney-Laytonsville Road, Olney
- Rockville: Wednesday, March 4, 2020, 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.; Council Office Building, 3rd Floor Hearing Room, 100 Maryland Ave., Rockville
- Germantown: Monday, March 23, 2020, 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.; Upcounty Regional Services Center, Conference Room A, 12900 Middlebrook Road, Germantown

V. Conclusion

The Chair stated that the next Commission meeting is scheduled for March 11, 2020. The tentative topic is a preliminary discussion of Commissioner proposals related to the County Council's composition and structure, with straw votes.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.