

**CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION**  
**Wednesday, April 11, 2012**  
**6th Floor Conference Room**  
**Council Office Building**

**Commission Members Present:**

Molly Mahoney Matthews, Chair  
Mark Feinroth, Vice-Chair  
Jeannie Cho  
Diane Nash Dillon  
Wendell Holloway  
Guled Kassim  
Thomas King  
Albert Pearce

**Staff:**

Marc Hansen, County Attorney  
Marie Jean-Paul, County Council Staff  
Amanda Mihill, County Council Staff

**Guests:**

Councilmember Valerie Ervin  
Sonya Healy, Office of Councilmember Ervin

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Commission Chair Molly Mahoney Matthews called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m.

**I. Administrative Items**

The Commission approved the minutes of the March 14 meeting. Motion made by Mark Feinroth and seconded by Thomas King. The minutes were approved unanimously among those present.

The Commission discussed the draft letter from Ms. Matthews to the Council that would serve as the Commission's 2012 Report. A motion to send the letter to the Council was made by Diane Nash Dillon and approved by Wendell Holloway.

**II. Open Discussion of Issues**

Commission members discussed the following issues.

Issue 1: Provisions for a Council President that elected to a 4-year term

Commission members discussed two issues related to the election of the Council President: (1) should the Council President be elected by voters, which would require a Charter change; and (2) should the term of the Council President be longer than 1-year, which would not require a Charter change. Commission members agreed to discuss this issue further at the May meeting.

Issue 2: Special hiring authority for people with disabilities

Some Commission members remained concerned about potential costs of a schedule A type authority. Commission members also wanted to understand how such an authority might impact the tax base. The Commission agreed to form a subcommittee to study this issue further

and make a recommendation to the full Commission. Members of the Subcommittee are Diane Nash Dillon, Mark Feinroth, Thomas King, and Albert Pierce.

Issue 3: Provisions for the removal of a Councilmember for a serious violation of the ethics law

Commission members briefly discussed this issue and agreed to form a subcommittee to study the issue further and make a recommendation to the full Commission. Members of the Subcommittee are Jeannie Cho and Guled Kassim.

**III. Meeting with Councilmember Valerie Ervin.**

Commission members met with Councilmember Ervin who advocated that the Council President should be elected by voters to a 4-year term. Councilmember Ervin stated her belief that having a “revolving door of leadership” dilutes the Council’s power, especially when dealing with state issues. Additionally, Councilmember Ervin stated that such a short Presidency term results in long-term issues because a Council President does not typically have prior experience dealing with the issues of the Presidency.

Councilmember Ervin stated that she would prefer that the President be elected by popular vote rather than internally in the Council because the current process is contentious. Responding to Commission questions, Councilmember Ervin stated her view that the Council President does not have to be an at-large member, but noted that the job of the Council President is all-encompassing and it is difficult to keep up with district affairs while performing the duties of the Presidency. She suggested that it may be appropriate to increase the number of Councilmembers to 11 to accommodate this Charter change. Responding to Commission questions about whether it would be problematic if the County in effect had 2 spokespersons (the County Executive and the Council President), Councilmember Ervin noted that people would get used to the change and that the Council has a president now. Councilmember Ervin stated that even a 2-year term would be an improvement over the current 1-year term.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 a.m.