

CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION
Wednesday, June 15, 2011 – 8:00 a.m.
6th Floor Conference Room
Council Office Building

Commission Members Present:

Molly Mahoney Matthews, Chair
Mark Feinroth, Vice-Chair
Jeannie Cho
Mariana Cordier
Diane Nash Dillon
Wendell Holloway

Guled Kassim

Thomas King
Pamela Mason
Jerry Pasternak
Albert Pearce

Staff:

Marc Hansen, Office of the County Attorney
Marie Jean-Paul, County Council
Amanda Mihill, County Council

Guests:

Sam Statland, Rock Creek Hills Citizens Assoc.
Winnie Holbrooke, Rock Creek Hills Citizens
Assoc.

Commission Chair Molly Matthews called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

I. Opening Remarks

Ms. Matthews opened the meeting by welcoming the Commission Members and staff and asked everyone to give a brief introduction.

II. Mission of the Charter Review Commission

Amanda Mihill described staff's role to the Commission, which is to facilitate decision-making, provide background information on issues that come up, and conduct research. Justina Ferber briefed the new Commission members on the history of previous Charter Review Commissions. Ms. Mihill noted that the Commission does not receive instructions from the Council; however, past Commissions have met with elected officials to obtain their ideas and recommendations. Ms. Mihill also noted that previous Commission have solicited public comments on potential charter review issues by holding public forums and issuing a press release requesting input on potential Charter changes.

Commission members discussed ways to generate ideas for the Commission to study. The Commission decided to solicit input from current Councilmembers and the current County Executive. Commission members also agreed to issue a press release seeking public comment.

Responding to questions from Commissioners, County Attorney Hansen briefly discussed the history of collective bargaining and the legal actions filed by the County employee unions alleging that the County Executive broke the collective bargaining law when he did not recommend funding the union's labor agreement in the Executive's recommended budget submitted under Charter § 303. Mr. Hansen stated that because there are Charter provisions that require collective bargaining for police, career firefighters, and other County employees, and those Charter provision may be seen as in conflict with the Executive's responsibilities under Charter §§ 303, 306, and 208 this issue could come before the Commission. Mr. Hansen further noted his understanding that a County resident may be collecting signatures for a petition to put collective bargaining issues on the ballot.

Commission members also briefly discussed an issue presented by Sam Statland. Mr. Statland alleged that the Montgomery County Board of Education does not always follow the State Open Meetings Act. Mr. Statland urged the Commission to look into whether a provision could be added to the County Charter to encourage the Board to more strictly comply with the Act.

III. Administrative Items

Commission members agreed to meet on the second Wednesday of every month between 8:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.

Commission members discussed the agenda for the July meeting and agreed to ask Marc Hansen to provide a presentation on what is charter material and to receive presentations from available elected officials.

Council staff discussed the County's parking arrangements and badges and attendance policies at Commission meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 8:42 a.m.