



Minutes of
January 16, 2018

Members in attendance: Alice Hunt, Christian Spinosa, Cassandra Denmark, Drew Crawford, Bob English, Charles McPherson, Robert Stanz, Mike Hickman, Ramon Edwards Vicioso, Greg Masters, Clay Watkins, and Patty Schmidt.

Members Absent: Lisa Jensen and Bart Allen

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comments:

None

Approval of Minutes Charter Review Commission (CRC) Meeting on December 19, 2017

- Motion to approve the minutes of December 19, 2017 – Christian Spinosa
- Second – Patty Schmidt
- **Minutes approved unanimously**

Financial Report

Alice Hunt, Chairperson

No discussion – documentation for review purpose only

Email/Website/Communications

Alice Hunt, Chairperson

Clay Watkins asked about the emails being received. At this point in time there have only been 2 emails received from residents of Polk County.

CRC Recommendations

Alice Hunt, Chairperson

None

Old Business

Alice Hunt, Chairperson

None

Final Action Items(s)

Alice Hunt, Chairperson

Alice Hunt explained Drew Crawford has put together some notes from the questions asked at last month's meeting.

Charter Commission Minutes 1/16/18



Open discussion:

Mike Hickman asked the term of office is defined as what? Drew Crawford stated 4 year term of office in accordance to the Charter. Mike Hickman asked for an explanation regarding John Hall because he was in service to Polk County in another capacity. There was a discussion regarding Mr. Hall having held the position of Building Director which was a county employee. Mike Hickman wanted to make sure Mr. Hall's employment doesn't account for a term of service. Ramon Edwards Vicioso stated we could have it state "elected official". Christian Spinosa stated going back to the original charter this information is in the Board of County Commissioners section – article 2; if you read through the whole article it is clearing talking about the Board of County Commissioners, it's not the constitutional officers, and it's not the employees. Patty Schmidt stated if you said something like elected official this could be a problem; it could refer to a charter officer or someone else who is elected. Alice Hunt stated if there is an appointment half term it could muddy the waters. Bob English asked about when there is a vacancy do to a death or relocation of a commissioner – does the governor appoint someone to fill the vacancy? Drew Crawford stated yes. Bob English asked about if it happen in the second year or third year it would count towards time served. Drew Crawford stated it would. He explained the difference between an absolute restriction on service and a relative restriction on service; most everything in Florida is relative restriction.

Continued Open discussion.

- Motion to approve term limits as presented – Christian Spinosa
- Second – Patty Schmidt

Mike Hickman asked how is this going to be presented to the public. Greg Masters asked are you just going to change the number – how is the ballot going to be written. Drew Crawford explained what the normal practice is; there is a final action on the concept tonight. At the next meeting he will bring back ballot language to review, the ballot language will contain all of the suggestions into one – simply said: term limits. It can be phased however you like it could be extension of term limits, revision of term limits. He stated he tries to keep things as simple as possible. Greg Masters stated a phase such as; we will limit the county commissioner to (3) term limits; Robert Stanz stated that would be the best way to word it and I tend to agree.

Continued discussion

Alice Hunt stated Drew Crawford will come back to the next meeting with the ballot language; and we can review it individually and together.

- **Term limits approved unanimously**

New Business – Item a. Discuss the number of years between each Charter Review Commission meets
Clay Watkins



Discussion of the number of years between each Charter Review Commission meets – He stated The Charter Review Commission is supposed to meet every 8 years. While on this committee he hadn't notice a lot of public coming to the meetings or there hasn't been a lot for this commission to do. We can extend it out and save the county a little money. The other side is the County Commissioners can call this commission anytime they want too. He would suggest 12 years.

- Motion for discussion purposes move it to a minimum of 12 years between Charter Review Commissions – Greg Masters
- Second – Ramon Edwards Vicioso

Open Discussion:

Greg Masters felt it could be longer. Mike Hickman cautioned if there is a dysfunctional commission they aren't going to call it. Alice Hunt asked Greg Masters to think about what came out of the commission held 16 years ago. He shared information from the charter review and the efficiency commissions. He cautioned there has been a lot of money spent a lot of good people's time spent and very little done. Mike Hickman asked if there is even a need for a charter review. Greg Masters stated we will submit what we were doing to the commission and they are supposed to put it on the ballot. He stated he has served before and so has Alice Hunt on several of these review commissions there are not a lot of things to fix. We have a good charter; we have the ballot initiative to change the charter if there is something really needs to be change. Mike Hickman asked why we should do it at all. Greg Masters stated if we are stating doing away with the Efficiency Commission and the Charter Review it feels weird. If we are doing away with the Efficiency Commission we should at least keep the Charter Review but extend the time of the review. Alice Hunt stated you don't want to be put into a sense of complete comfort and complacency because we have excellent constitutional office and excellent commission so we just do away with everything because things are running so smoothly. Change it to the 12 or 16 years and then make a decision. Cassandra Denmark and Christian Spinosa agree 12 years is good. Drew Crawford stated ten years seems to be the average. He also stated Winter Haven Citizen Review was the first time in 40 years.

Alice Hunt asked to have the cost savings which this would bring to Polk County Tax payers.

Robert Stanz asked if this commission was leaning towards 12 years; he said he was leaning towards 10; but the more he listened to our council and our charter he would be inclined to push it out 20 years. Greg Masters gave an overview regarding the items to be changed on this charter, because of the ballot initiative and the history. Alice Hunt explained a ballot initiative is voted on by the public and we are placing this on the ballot to be voted on by the public. Robert Stanz thought it might be good to have the charter review every decade (10 years).

Alice Hunt stated if Commission Watkins agrees he can amend his motion to extend it with research done on the timeline. In the next few weeks we will research details; finances attached and come back when we can actually take a vote. Mike Hickman stated how that affects 10 years or 12 years. This can be compared to other charters. Clay Watkins stated he agreed with what Christian Spinosa said with the County Commissioners having a 12 year term; why not 12 years on the Charter Review Commission as well. Bob English stated in the future there could be a ballot initiative sometime in



the future on making the County Commission nonpartisan just like we do the Constitutional Officers. When the commission is in session it is really nonpartisan; Democrat or Republican doesn't enter into the picture.

The vote is primarily for the attorney to go and bring back information; this is just a vote on interest. Drew Crawford explained there should be one vote where it counts because of the requirement you have imposed by your rules; you have to have a certain number of yea votes in order for something to make it to the ballot. The procedure we came up with allows us to have one vote where it counts; this is more the vote of interest as advancing to the next item.

Alice Hunt called for a vote for all of those in favor of the motion as stated by Commissioner Watkins signify by saying yea. There were none opposed. The actual motion for discussion of the time between meetings of the Charter Review Commission was made by Greg Masters and Second by Ramon Edwards Vicioso.

New Business – Item b. & Item c. CRC Tentative Timeline & Town Hall Marketing Meetings

Alice Hunt

Alice Hunt explained the timeline is very important – she reviewed the document. She wants everyone to add them to the calendar. Drew Crawford explained the Charter requires this commission to hold 3 public hearings at various places around the county, if you will be advancing anything to the ballot. We have 2 items having made their way to the ballot with a potential of a 3rd. We have to hold these meetings. Alice Hunt asked everyone to put these dates on their calendars. Greg Masters asked to have an invitation sent to the members for each Public Hearing so it will be on all of the calendars. Debi Curry will send out invitations for the Town Hall Meetings, including time, location – address etc. **NOTE: Charter Review Commission meeting on May 15, 2018** is canceled in lieu of holding the Town Hall meetings in May.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:49 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Curry, Administrative Supervisor
Charter Review Commission