

7/29/09

Cumberland County Charter Commission Public Meeting

Members present: Claude Morgan (co-chair), John Eder, Kathleen Babeu, David Lunt, Richard Feeney, Steve Gorden, Neil Jamieson

Members absent: Meredith Burgess, Lisa Villa (co-chair),

Others present: Elizabeth Trice (staff), Peter Crichton (County Manager)

Minutes:

Quorum established.

Motion to approve minutes from May 27, June 10, July 8, unanimous.

Announcements:

Sending drafting work to David Lunt and Steve Gorden.

Time to start doing public speaking.

Wording has to be complete by August 2010, need to have meaningful discussions with public starting this fall. Morgan is speaking at Chamber of Commerce and Waterfront Alliance soon.

Motion to accept Standing Resolution of Support (unanimous):

WHEREAS, We, the residents of Cumberland County, have the right to expect and demand excellence in regional government; and

WHEREAS, members of the Cumberland County Charter Commission are a lawful body, elected by the residents of Cumberland County to identify excellence in government through a thorough review of best practices, and through discussion and public-outreach, which includes but is not limited to public hearings and workshops designed to identify and express the desires of those same residents; and

WHEREAS, residents and non-residents alike are best served by the highest standards of transparency and responsive representation in local government; and

WHEREAS, MRS Title 30-A, Chapter 11 Sec. 1301 allows a Charter Commission, elected by the residents of Cumberland County, to determine the shape and form of government that best serves the need of its constituency; and

WHEREAS, the Cumberland County Charter Commission anticipates presenting a referendum for a Charter to voters to determine that shape and form of government in 2010, exactly 250 years after the creation of Cumberland County;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the _____ supports the efforts and the mission as set forth below.

Mission: The Mission of the Cumberland County Charter Commission is to create and present a Charter to the citizenry that defines, initiates, and maximizes Cumberland County self-governance.

Goals: To create a Charter that may:

- Define the framework, roles, structures and processes of County government

- Enable citizens to request and receive broad, efficient, cost-effective and self-sustaining services
- Be dynamic, flexible, responsive, transparent and changeable
- Best serve the unique needs of the 28 constituent municipalities
- Maximize the statutory opportunities of the County
- Be presented for enactment through a public process on November 2, 2010.

Strategy:

- Create a participative public process that actively seeks open and active public discussion about ways to improve and modernize County government

Comments:

- The CCCC is an independent body elected by the voters
- We believe the process of creating Cumberland County's first region-specific charter is a unique opportunity to shape the region in which we live

Outreach: Morgan will subscribe to Constant Contact, Elizabeth will get master list from Bill Whitten.

Members will contact individual towns in their districts to get on agendas. Morgan will distribute letterhead. Babeu and Eder will work together on sample letter.

Adjourned: 6:25pm.
Workshop begins :

Fundraising: Morgan met with Chris Hall from Chamber of Commerce, is thinking that a "Friends of . . ." /PAC model would be appropriate. Crichton will confer with county attorney on any restrictions that would be faced by Charter Commission conducting advocacy campaign.

Discussion of whether a PAC is necessary. Reference to state statute:

4. Funding. A county shall provide its charter commission, free of charge, with suitable office space and with reasonable access to facilities for holding public hearings, may contribute clerical and other assistance to the commission, and shall permit it to consult with and obtain advice and information from county officers, officials and employees during ordinary working hours. Within 20 days after the election of a charter commission, the county commissioners shall credit \$500 to the charter commission account. A county may from time to time transfer additional funds to the charter commission account from surplus or from other accounts in the county budget.

A. In addition to funds made available by a county, the charter commission account may receive funds from any other source, public or private, except that no contribution of more than \$5 may be accepted from any source other than the county or a municipality in the county unless the name and address of the person or agency making the contribution and the amount of the contribution are disclosed in writing filed with the clerk. [1987, c. 737, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); 1987, c. 737, Pt. C, §106 (NEW); 1989, c. 6, (AMD); 1989, c. 9, §2 (AMD); 1989, c. 104, Pt. C, §§8, 10 (AMD).]

B. Prior to its termination, the charter commission shall file with the clerk a complete account of all its receipts and expenditures for public inspection. Any balance remaining in its account shall be credited to the county's surplus account.¹

¹ Title 30-A: MUNICIPALITIES AND COUNTIES HEADING: PL 1987, C. 737, PT. A, §2 (NEW)
Part 1: COUNTIES HEADING: PL 1987, C. 737, PT. A, §2 (NEW)

Jamieson will investigate formation of PAC. Morgan will set up PAC administratively, and bring formal acceptance vote at next meeting.
Kathleen will start facebook page.

Civic Center: Morgan passes around a decisive opinion from legal counsel regarding the authority the county commissioners have over the civic center. The county commissioners' authority is clearly restricted to the appointment of civic center trustees.

Next meeting: August 26th, and following 4th Wednesdays. Workshop August 12, then no regular workshops for a while.