

100520MeetingNaples

Cumberland County Charter Commission

Members present: Claude Morgan, Lisa Villa, Kathleen Babeu, Steve Gorden, David Lunt.  
Staffed by Elizabeth Trice

Motion to accept all minutes to date passes unanimously.

Motion to accept 7 districts passes unanimously.

Motion to use new language for 3.1.2, 8.2.1 and 8.7.1 passes unanimously (Language posted below)

Discussion on term limits. Group agrees to retain language of 3 year terms, with a maximum of 3 consecutive terms.

Babeu has recruited volunteers to hand out FAQs at June election. (FAQ draft attached.)

The County Commissioners will choose how to stagger terms after passage of the charter.

Discussion of reviewing charter with an eye for making it easy to read.

\*MORGAN will contact County attorneys to see if they have someone who does this.

Gorden suggests that the editor, if one is found, could join the group at a meeting.

Group is currently on schedule and happy with progress.

Adjourned at 8pm.

8.7.1 Effect on County Regulations "newly expanded"

3.1.2 Construction of Districts and Decennial Reapportionment: Within forty five (45) days of receipt of each decennial US Census data, the County Commissioners shall request that the State Apportionment Commission prepare a description of each of the determined number of geographical districts to ensure the division of the County into contiguous and nearly equally populated areas. Each apportionment shall start as a new construct within the County's boundaries and with each District following existing municipal boundaries insofar as is possible. The creation or elimination of Districts shall not disqualify a standing Commissioner from serving out a term.

8.2 Construction of Districts: Within 15 days of the passage of the charter, the County Commissioners shall request that the State Apportionment Commission prepare a description of each of the determined number of geographical districts per the decennial census data requirement in Section 3.1.2 and within 120 days.

FAQs Draft

1. What is a Charter?

A Charter is a document that defines how we organize local government. It spells out the specific duties and the limits of authority that we grant our local officials. It's a flowchart of

responsibilities: who administers what and when, who will answer to whom, and how we guarantee that accountability.

## 2. Who is the Charter Commission?

We're a panel of six elected-and three appointed-public officials who closely study how county government functions, seeks more efficient methods of providing important services, and delivers a charter that residents will vote to adopt-or reject-in November 2010. Charter Commissions are routinely established to reform and streamline local governments.

## 3. What does the Charter Commission hope to accomplish?

The nine-member commission hopes to deliver a Charter that will expand the range of services county government offers while reducing the cost of those services to the taxpayer. County government fills an important role that bridges the gap between municipal and state governments. The Commission's ultimate goal is to reduce redundancy in local government and deliver more services for less money.

## 4. What areas of county government will be impacted?

The proposed Charter eliminates two elected offices in an effort to streamline government and reduce costs to the taxpayer. Those offices no longer serve the purpose for which they were created more than one century ago. The so-called "home-rule" Charter allows county government to widen the scope of the services it provides, tap into federal funding, and enables it to help municipalities with the cost and delivery of important local services. The proposed Charter also offers greater representation to the residents of Cumberland County.

## 5. Is this an amendment of a previous Charter or the formation of a fresh, brand new Charter?

Cumberland County, the state's largest and most economically diverse region, operates without a Charter. The State legislature currently determines how services are rendered in Cumberland County. Two counties-Aroostic and Knox-recently adopted "home rule" Charters, which allow them to administer government and deliver services specific to the needs of their regions and constituencies.

## 6. How will a charter help county government run differently?

If voters in Cumberland County approve the charter in November 2010, they will liberate local officials and allow them to deliver more services to more people at a fraction of the cost municipalities currently pay for those same services. Voters will enjoy greater transparency and accountability in government. Charter Commissioners believe residents will directly benefit from new and innovative programs and services, such as the successful Community Development Block Grants (which make previously unavailable federal funds accessible to smaller communities) and the new countywide 9-1-1 service (which brings affordable, top-notch emergency response to participating communities).