

**Charter Review Commission**

**Minutes**

**Virtual Meeting via Webex**

**March 24, 2020**

Charter Review Commission Members Participating in Webex Meeting Present: Judith Center, James Howard, Elgin Klugh, Fred Leong, Margaret Ann Nolan, Carolan Stansky, Yolanda Sonnier (Chairperson), Carolan Stansky, and James Walsh

Staff Present: Lynne Rosen, Legislative Analyst and Gary Kuc, County Solicitor

Ms. Sonnier opened the meeting at 8:41a.m.

Ms. Sonnier requested the members to review the minutes of the March 3, 2020 public hearing and the March 11, 2020 Commission meeting.

Ms. Sonnier discussed that there are nine people on the call so there is a quorum of the Commission present.

Ms. Popp made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2020 public hearing with an edit to remove Mr. Kohn from the attendees and a comment that the written public testimony should be attached to the minutes. Ms. Nolan seconded the motion. The minutes passed unanimously with Ms. Nolan abstaining.

Ms. Popp made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2020 Commission meeting. Ms. Nolan seconded the motion. The minutes passed unanimously with Mr. Klugh abstaining.

Ms. Sonnier discussed her presentation of the Preliminary Report and Recommendations of the 2019–2020 Charter Review Commission to the County Council at the Monthly Meeting on March 16, 2020. Ms. Stansky, Mr. Kohn, and Mr. Skalny also attended the Monthly Meeting. The Councilmembers had questions about the expansion of the Council from five members to seven members and the source of that recommendation. Ms. Sonnier discussed that the majority of people who testified at the Commission public hearings spoke about the number of members of the Council. The Councilmembers also had questions about the zoning proposal. The Councilmembers also discussed with Mr. Kuc the placement of Charter questions on the ballot. Ms. Sonnier discussed with the Councilmembers that the Commission would continue to meet and may have advisory recommendations in the future. She also discussed that if the Council members have any questions in the future, the Commission members would be happy to answer them.

The members discussed the questions that were raised by the Councilmembers during the Monthly Meeting.

The members discussed the issue of ranked voting.

Mr. Kuc discussed that ranked voting would require State enabling authority.

The members discussed the Preliminary Report of the Commission and when it would become the Final Report. The members discussed adding any advisory recommendations to the Report and any other editing.

Ms. Sonnier discussed that the members should send suggestions for any changes to the Report ahead of the next Commission meeting.

The members discussed Advisory Recommendation 3. Funding of Multi-Year Capital Improvement Plan Budget submitted by Mr. Leong.

Mr. Leong reviewed the recommendation that “Howard County government should formally include in all multi-year capital improvement plan budgets the projected revenue for all years covered by those budgets.” and the rationale for the recommendation.

The members discussed the recommendation and the following language in Section 603(b) of the Charter: “The proposed capital budget and capital program shall be so arranged as to set forth clearly the plan of proposed capital projects to be undertaken in in the ensuing fiscal year and in each of the next five fiscal years, and also the proposed means of financing the same. The capital budget shall include a statement of the revenues anticipated during the ensuing fiscal year from all borrowing and from other sources for capital projects.”.

Mr. Kuc discussed that the phases of a capital project in the budget do not get done in one year. A capital project has phases, for example site acquisition, design, and actual construction. There are expenditures in out years.

The members discussed what happens in the out years of a capital project if there is a discrepancy between what is in the budget and the amount of revenue for the project in those out years.

The members discussed the application of Section 603(b) of the Charter to this issue.

Ms. Sonnier requested the members send to staff any matters they wish to have included in the final Report of the Commission by April 3, 2020. The Commission will review any advisory and technical recommendations and vote on each one at the next Webex meeting of the Commission on April 14, 2020. The last Webex meeting of the Commission will be on April 28, 2020, unless another meeting is needed in the future. A final report will be submitted to the Council.

Ms. Sonnier adjourned the meeting at 9:36 a.m.