BARNSTABLE COUNTY
ASSEMBLY OF DELEGATES @
Orleans Town Hall
GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT SIGN UP SHEET

Charter Review Committee for
Date: 10/9/13 Comments on Proposed County Governance Options

Name (Please Print): _____ Town: _____

1.	JARI RAPAPORT	EASTHAM L.W.U.
~~2.~~	~~Florence Seldin~~	~~Chatham~~
3.	Mary Lou Potter	Eastham
4.	Cheryl Andrews for Alix Ritchie	Provincetown
5.	Judy Thomas	Chatham
6.	DAVID SCHROPFER	EASTHAM
7.	George Bryant	Provincetown
8.	Breon Dunigan	TRURO
9.	David Dunford	Orleans
10.	Deborah McCutcheon	Truro
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submitted by Jari Rapaport on 10/2/13, 10/9/13 Public Comment Session

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE CAPE COD AREA

Presentation to the Charter Review Committee

October, 2013

We're pleased with the work of the charter review committee in outlining both the positives and the problems with alternate suggestions for County structure. Ever since the recommendations of the Special Commission on Governance in 2012, strong positions have been taken by various groups. Your approach gives everyone a chance to think through all the alternate proposals from a fresh start, looking at goals and how to get there.

The challenges facing our regional government are many. They include wastewater, off shore pollution, transportation, land use approaches to sustain and preserve our limited resources, and population changes which affect our economy and require responsive action to build a vibrant layered population which includes children and young people.

These issues require a regional approach, and our county home rule charter was designed to provide the basic structure to make this possible. Our towns give us our strong, meaningful identity, a sense of belonging grounded in our history, and serve us well for local governance. However, the framework to enable all parts of the Cape to tackle necessary action jointly is not now sufficient. Our current structure is diffuse, we need a structure in which government can anticipate and/or discern problems as they arise, seek solutions, and bring us together for decision-making on a timely basis.

To do this we need to develop a structure which will provide clear leadership, responsibility and accountability. Our current government has spread these attributes thinly across too many layers. We believe an increase in the clarity of leadership, responsibility and accountability will lead to a corresponding increase in the effectiveness of government. It would also increase county visibility and citizen understanding of county functions and issues.

At this point we favor a strong executive to give visibility and leadership to the county role in meeting these regional issues. This would supplant the current administrator who responds to policy decisions of the three elected commissioners. We also believe the current structure should be replaced by a single elected Board/Council which represents a broad cross section of Barnstable County. This would give real meaning to the legal standard that gives equal standing to each person's vote, 'One person, One vote". This new body could carry out both policy and budget oversight, combining the functions of the Board of Commissioners and the Assembly of Delegates. The duties of such a merged body require each member to have a broader and more in depth understanding of the issues facing the county.

We believe regional representatives would help foster greater public understanding of regional perspectives and solutions. Such representatives would be in regular contact with their various constituencies They would be able to both hear their individual concerns and to respond to those concerns with interpretations and solutions that help the constituencies see the benefits of regional approaches while not detracting from any town's uniqueness in terms of its identity.

10/9/13 Submitted by Judy Thomas

Barnstable County Charter Review Committee Hearing
October 9, 2013
Orleans, MA

I am Judy Thomas of Chatham and this afternoon I'm speaking as an individual for myself.

Let me first explain why I speak as an individual rather than a member of the LWVCCA. When the League studied county structure it was almost entirely on the basis of the recommendations of the Special Commission. Therefore we did not consider the possibility of an eleven region legislative body and in fact, in studying the recommendations of the Special Commission, we could not come to consensus on the size of the legislative body. We could only come to consensus on a smaller than the current 15 town represented body and that we favored one person, one vote rather than proportional voting.

Since then, as part of the County Committee of the League, I have been part of that Committee's further study and discussion but a LWV committee does not decide a position for the entire League. I think it is important for everyone to understand this aspect of League protocol.

Therefore, since I will go beyond what the League's position is, I speak for myself. I will not be addressing the subject of a separate administrator as all the plans include that position and indeed an interim has been hired.

In my opinion, the highest priority, when it comes to goals for the structure of our regional government, should be, first, a structure that greatly enhances the possibility for regional thinking, second, a structure that provides for one person, one vote, and thirdly, a structure that increases the visibility of the regional government and strengthens accountability while clarifying responsibilities.

Therefore, I strongly encourage your endorsement of Option 3, the option which I believe has the most potential for achieving those goals. Option 3 has the greatest potential for strengthening the regional government for the Cape Cod of today. This Cape Cod is not the Cape Cod of 1988 when the first home-rule charter was adopted. To name just two things, the Cape has grown in population and then, much more recently as shown in the 2010 census, started a slight decline and shifted to the west. Further we know much more about the fragility of our environment and the critical need to protect it.

The 11 district map of Option 3 provides for sub-regions within the larger region which offers tremendous potential for increased inter-town cooperation. The much less densely sub-region of the Outer Cape towns share many of the same concerns. The lower Cape area shares several characteristics and we are already seeing increased cooperation between Chatham and Harwich. The Bay regions comprise areas with similar concerns. The densely populated town of Barnstable, currently wielding almost a quarter of the voting power in the Assembly of Delegates in one person, becomes divided among sub-regions, but with parts of other towns that have strong similarities regarding some of the issues they face.

Because of the creation of 11 districts with similar numbers of residents, Option 3 provides for one person, one vote -- the ideal standard in a democracy. Option 3 greatly reduces the diffusion of authority by eliminating the current Board of Commissioners and merging their

that the status quo can't reasonably be considered good enough. I commend the Assembly for appointing the Charter Review Committee, the Committee for their serious work in moving forward. The structure of county government can be improved and needs to be improved. I'm optimistic in believing the Committee will conclude also that the status quo is not good enough for the next decades.

Regarding Option 2 -- increasing the present board of Commissioners to five members elected regionally and maintaining the current structure for the Assembly of Delegates. This option does broaden a regional approach among the Commissioners but that pro is greatly out-weighed in my opinion by the increased diffusion of authority and responsibility. Worst yet, it goes on to leave the Assembly of Delegates with the present system of proportional voting --no 'one person, one vote' -- and a basis of representation that fails to increase "regional thinking and processing."

I urge one final thing – that as you weigh the testimony you hear and consider the pros and cons to the various option that you and others have raised, that you assign a value to these pros and cons. Which are the more significant? Which are the less so? Which of the "cons" might be overcome?

Thank you for this opportunity for the public to share to share its views with you before you move forward. I again say thank you for undertaking this important task and good luck in the remainder of your task..

I have asked the Provincetown Assembly of Delegates member, Dr. Cheryl Andrews, to read this statement into the record at the public hearing scheduled to be held on Oct. 9.

I worked for passage of the County Charter and the Cape Cod Commission legislation and represented Provincetown on the Commission for many years. As such, I care deeply about the governance that the citizens and towns of Cape Cod agreed to put in place.

The towns, by equal vote on the Commission and by weighted vote in the Assembly, are key to this structure, which is federal in nature as is our U.S. government.

There is an effort afoot these days to undo this federal structure and combine legislative and administrative powers in the hands of some three or five or even 11 county commissioners. There would be no balance of powers, no brake on abuse, particularly as it relates to tax expenditures -- and it risks the structure of the Cape Cod Commission.
When Barnstable County voted in its government structure and at the same time created the Cape Cod Commission, the two entities were interrelated in a way that specifically gave the residents of the various Cape towns a vote on the regulations which would govern the Commission -- to wit, the Regional Policy Plan, which is the basis for Commission regulations, must be adopted by the Assembly of Delegates. The current proposals to eliminate the Assembly, whether unwittingly or intentionally, pose a great danger to Commission regulations.

Without an Assembly to vote on the Regional Policy Plan, Commission regulations will have no legal basis. The only solution to this is to open up the Cape Cod Commission enabling legislation, which would be like playing with matches in a tinderbox and could lead to untoward and regrettable results.

If the proponents of this change put forth an argument that some variation of a board of county commissioners could substitute for the Assembly: it would still risk the Commissions's legislation as noted above (which may or may not be a goal of the proponents), and further, it destroys the concept of towns having a say in the planning and regulations, which they should.

It is yet one more way to disenfranchise the Lower, and especially the Outer, Cape towns. We see in many places in our nation right now the bad results of rule by a tyranny of the majority--a clear concern of the authors of our Constitution--and it is shameful that here on Cape Cod, where the Mayflower Compact was signed, we now see an effort to do exactly that.
I urge the citizens of Cape Cod to defeat this attempt.

Alix Ritchie
8 Commercial St
Provincetown, MA

10/9/13
submitted by
Cheryl Andrews on behalf
of the author

emailed to Committee Members

Janice O'Connell

From: Ronald Beaty <ronbeaty@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 06, 2013 9:09 AM
To: Assembly of Delegates; Janice O'Connell; Ronald Bergstrom; Suzanne McAuliffe; Bill Doherty; aknight@provincetown-ma.gov; Linell Grundman; Ann Canedy; Julia Taylor
Cc: Richard Anderson; James Killion; Marcia King; John Ohman; afscalese@aol.com; cwk@c4.net; Leo Cakounes; Teresa Martin; Deborah McCutcheon; Ned Hitchcock; Lynch, Tom; mark.ells@town.barnstable.ma.us; emaroney@barnstablepatriot.com; news@barnstablepatriot.com; svaughn@barnstablepatriot.com; csmith@wickedlocal.com; jbasile@wickedlocal.com; capecodtimes .; pcassidy@capecodonline.com; ed@95wxtk.com; Sheila Lyons
Subject: The Weighted Voting System; and the Non-Relation of the 2000 Ballot Question with the Cape Cod Commission

Attention: Barnstable County Charter Review Committee
Cape Cod Regional Government
Barnstable District Courthouse
Main Street
Barnstable, MA 02630

Dear Charter Review Committee Members:

RE: The Weighted Voting System; and the Non-Relation of the 2000 Ballot Question with the Cape Cod Commission

This message is being forwarded for two reasons: first to provide clarification upon a recent statement made to me by an elected county government official regarding the 2000 County-wide Ballot Question and its supposed relation to the Cape Cod Commission. Secondly, I feel compelled to briefly mention another legitimate reason why the weighted voting system employed by the Assembly of Delegates deserves to remain intact.

2010 Report of the Barnstable County Commissioners

On page 32, of the above-noted report, the following statements are made:

In the November 7, 2000 election, voters overwhelming passed a ballot question that asked ***"Shall the revisions to the Barnstable County Charter proposed by the Assembly of Delegates establishing a Cape Cod Regional Government be adopted?"*** *With its passage:*

- Barnstable County Government became the Cape Cod Regional Government, known as Barnstable County.

- No changes were made to the existing revenue stream for Barnstable County and no new taxes created.

- Existing services and the ability to deliver regional services to towns will be maintained.

The County Budget process is now detailed in the Charter under Article 5 - Fiscal Procedures.
The vote of each municipality is proportionate to the percentage of its population is to the total population of the County based on the most recent federal census, or decennial census estimate. The County Tax is based on the towns' equalized valuation as determined by the State Legislature and Department of Revenue.

Based upon the data and information provided by the County Commissioners' own published documents, there was nothing at all contained within the 2000 County-wide ballot question which specifically mentioned the

Cape Cod Commission! With that in mind, the suggestion made by certain county-level elected officials (whom I have the utmost respect for by the way) that the voters somehow reaffirmed any sort of public confidence in the Cape Cod Commission at that juncture in time in any way, shape or form is simply mistaken and incorrect.

Relative to the issue of the weighted voting system utilized by the County Assembly, one reason which has thus far escaped the attention of everyone, including the Special Commission on County Governance, the County Charter Review Committee, the League of Women Voters,
as well as some of our County Commissioners is that towns like Barnstable, Falmouth and Yarmouth not only possess the largest populations, but they also each send the biggest share of tax revenue to the Barnstable County Government as well. If a municipality pays much more for the support and maintenance of our regional government and if it also possesses many more residents within its geographical boundaries, then it is only common sense that it should also have a larger vote and say in matters addressed by the Barnstable County Assembly of Delegates.

Those who would disagree with this logic apparently just do not get it, and probably possess "a high degree of inattentiveness" along with a substantial dearth of common sense...

Thank you.

Ron Beaty

emailed to CRC Members on 10/4/13

Janice O'Connell

From: Jim Pierce <hawkeyejw@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, October 04, 2013 10:50 AM
To: Janice O'Connell
Subject: Re: Barnstable County Assembly of Delegates CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING including PUBLIC COMMENT on 10/9/`13 at ORLEANS TOWN HALL at 4:30 p.m.

Ms. O'Connell,

Please pass the following comments along to the review committee.

If in Option 2 one substitutes "a strong-appointed County Admininstrator" for "an appointer County Administrator" and the job is described appropriately in the charter, then three of the four line items under "cons" disappear. The fourth, "increase cost to administer a small budget," seems to have the aroma of a red herring.

I would also suggest adding a "con" to Option 3. - Potentially under-values town boundries and identity.
- All the Outer Cape Towns get lumped together
- None of the 11 districts appears to "respect" town identity

The under-current here appears to be an attitude that town government is obsolete. If the intent is to further weaken town government, then stop beating around the bush and say so.

Jim Pierce
Chairman, Sandwich BoS

Sent: Fri, Oct 4, 2013 7:07 am
Subject: Barnstable County Assembly of Delegates CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING including PUBLIC COMMENT on 10/9/`13 at ORLEANS TOWN HALL at 4:30 p.m.

Please see the attached notice and reference materials regarding this very important meeting.....
Copies of these materials will be available at the meeting.

Janice O'Connell, Clerk
Assembly of Delegates
Cape Cod Regional Government

This email has been scanned by the Symantec Email Security.cloud service.
For more information please visit http://www.symanteccloud.com