CAPE COD REGIONAL GOVERNMENT
CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes of February 19, 2014

Call to Order:

Chairman BERGSTROM: Good afternoon. Welcome to the Wednesday, February 19th session of the Charter Review Committee of the Cape Cod Regional Government Assembly of Delegates.

Attendance:

We have a quorum with four members present out of seven. [Present: Ronald Bergstrom, Austin Knight, Suzanne McAuliffe, and Julia Taylor. Absent: Ann Canedy, Bill Doherty, and Linell Grundman.]

I'd like to call this meeting to order.

Meeting Minutes of 1-8-14 for Approval:

The first order of business will be approval of the minutes of our last meeting which was way back in January 8th. So you should have gotten a copy of that included.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Move approval.

Ms. TAYLOR: Second.

Speaker BERGSTROM: All right. I don't know if we have enough members to approve the minutes right now.

Mr. KNIGHT: Mr. Chairman, I've read the Minutes so I can still approve the minutes and move it forward, I believe.

Ms. O'CONNELL: He can do this. It's allowable.

Speaker BERGSTROM: He can do this. Okay. In that case, all those in favor of approving the minutes say "Aye." Opposed?

(Minutes approved.)

Other Business:

Speaker BERGSTROM: Okay. Further discussion on changes to the Charter. I'm obviously just going to open this up for business. We know that the Assembly did not approve of the recommendations of this committee. However --

Ms. O'CONNELL: The Legislative piece. They haven't dealt with the Executive piece.

Speaker BERGSTROM: The Legislative piece. They haven't dealt with the Executive piece yet. However, there's still work to be done because there are many provisions of the Charter that don't necessarily need approval by the Legislature to go to the ballot.

So I don't know if you guys had a chance to read it; unfortunately, Attorney Mike Curran, who would have to do a lot of the heavy lifting of going through the Charter and editing it is not going to be here today. He's simply under the weather.

So, unfortunately, I was hoping that he would give us some advice. But have any of you got any thoughts about what we can do to make this easier? Julia.

Ms. TAYLOR: Well going backwards though to -- going back to the fact that we didn't vote on a change in the Executive branch, I am less enthusiastic about pursuing that without the

change in the Legislative branch.

Speaker BERGSTROM: By that; what do you mean "by that"?

Ms. TAYLOR: Well, I wouldn't push it forward at this point.

Speaker BERGSTROM: You're talking about the Executive change, okay.

Ms. TAYLOR: Yes. There are reasons that I like the idea of a single Executive but I like it more if it were part of this overall change. I wouldn't really want to make a big fight for that change as not alone necessarily but without the other change. For me, personally, I wouldn't.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes. Suzanne.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: I agree. I think that the issue becomes you currently have the County Commissioners as the Executive branch and then if you're going to fight for an individual strong administration with executive powers, then you have two Executive branches.

And unless you're going to do away with the County Commissioner level, it's a duplication of jobs.

So I agree. I think that if the will of the Assembly was to leave things as they are in terms of the not wanting to make changes in terms of the legislative branch, then I think if you start to pick something else out, it might make it very confusing because I'm not sure what the County Commissioners would do if you had a strong Executive.

Ms. TAYLOR: Well, I think they would -- my opinion would be that they would disappear. If you had an elected Executive, he would replace/she would replace the existing Commissioners.

But given the situation now, I'm sure the Commissioners, according to the Strategic Plan have their own concept of what would be desirable. I would rather let that proceed.

Plus, they have already made some changes to the Executive set up by having the new appointed Administrator who is more -- doing more than in the past. They have turned over some duties to him. And I'd rather see that play out myself.

I'd be totally opposed to the previous idea of Leo's of having -- making a switch to five Commissioners. I would fight that but I wouldn't push -- at this point, I wouldn't push our original suggestion. I would rather fight the other and see what the Strategic Plan and how that develops.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: My concern is right now with how the government is currently constituted is with three County Commissioners and 15 Assembly, everything's very diluted.

So you have the idea that there are checks and balances and you have the concept that somehow the government is sufficient.

But the reality is that the County Commissioners fairly well run the County and the Assembly takes occasional votes on things like budgets but doesn't really have much to do in terms of the governance of the County.

So I agree in terms of adding more people to that. I think that I would be willing to look at some sort of structure that has fewer people so that you have a more effective government that still represents people but something that doesn't have so many people that nobody knows what's going on or nobody has the responsibility for things. I think that's a huge issue right now.

Ms. TAYLOR: That's a problem. At any rate, I'm happy to personally not put that other point on the table and instead proceed as you were just suggesting we do to see if there are other Charter changes that we're interested in.

And I know that there was the concept of a recall provision. I wouldn't be in favor of that when we have people elected for a two-year term. I see no need for that myself, but if others

wanted to discuss that, that's fine.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Has there ever been any thought to four-year terms? I know I've never had a two-year term before. It certainly seems like all you're doing is running and campaigning.

Three years gives you a little bit of continuity and a little bit of time to not be campaigning. If there were longer terms, I would consider a recall. But with a two-year term, it's unnecessary.

Mr. KNIGHT: Mr. Chairman, I have a couple points, if I may?

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes.

Mr. KNIGHT: First of all, have we fulfilled the initial desire or need for a single voice that they wanted to be able to go to the Legislators and to Washington possibly representing the Cape and that was one of the conversations.

And if the Commissioners can do that within themselves, that's fine but there was always that desire to have a stronger voice from the Cape.

And that still, I think, still has to happen somehow. However it does, it still has to happen.

The other thing - all the Selectmen, I believe, are three-year terms. So it makes sense to me that I know they kind of probably did it after the representatives, two-year terms, but a three-year term really is more of a stronger way of doing some things.

Ms. TAYLOR: But we don't have --

Speaker BERGSTROM: The difference is that we have to run at the biannual election, so there is no --

Mr. KNIGHT: But we're talking about changes.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes.

MR. KNIGHT: That was the conversation; are there changes that we want?

Speaker BERGSTROM: Well, the thing is that I thought -- I thought about that as why not have the Delegates run at the election -- on the town elections. But I mean that would require I think a Charter change that we might -- and I know that it's -- for some reason there's more to it than just saying, you know, doing it that way.

But I think it would be --

Mr. KNIGHT: I'm just saying with discussion; let's have discussion and maybe something that can be voted to the Assembly and get feelings of different things.

Ms. TAYLOR: Well, the problem is town elections are at various times, so they would not all get elected at a time then was a timely turnover on say January 1 when the Assembly would get together.

Under the present system where I feel there's such a basic flaw in the imbalance of when the vote of different Assembly members, I think it's crazy to have different times that they get elected. I just don't see that as an advantage. I don't see any advantage for the three-year term.

We don't have very many people running against anybody. That's kind of an issue. I don't see that enhanced by having them run during the town elections which get lower turnouts than the state and national two-year elections.

Mr. KNIGHT: Depends on the issue.

Ms. TAYLOR: True. So I just think that's an unnecessary change. A two-year term is quite common; the United States Congress, the State House Reps. I don't really see that there's a need for changing that and it would be a lot of effort.

Speaker BERGSTROM: All right. Let me just jump in here for a minute because I received some question from I think it was from the League of Women Voters as to how can the people change the Charter?

In other words, some people see a basic flaw in the fact that we are changing the Charter and that we're responsible for it.

Well, in the general provisions, Article 9 of the Charter, it says, "This Charter may be," right up top, it says, "This Charter may be replaced, revised or amended in accordance with the procedure made available under Chapter 801, 801 of the Acts of 1985," which precedes the Charter, "And it may also be amended in accordance with the following procedures" and then it goes on to explain the procedures that we've been working on.

But right up top there's a way for the people of the Cape to amend the Charter. The problem is it takes like four years and it's very involved. And it has to do with the election of Charter members, you know, and you stand for election and then you do the whole rigmarole.

Ms. TAYLOR: That's what we did back some years ago.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes. So I thought that this was a more immediate -- the people who were asking for changes were looking for more immediate resolutions. But that's still available to people who feel strongly enough about it, they could do that, you know.

Mr. KNIGHT: Mr. Chairman, do you or Mr. Curran have recommendations that can come back to us of things that you feel can be done relatively easily so we have something to go by rather than --

Speaker BERGSTROM: Just banging around? Well, obviously, no, I doubt because I was hoping he would, but at the last minute he can't make it.

But there are things in here, for instance, Suzanne talked about the powers of the Assembly as basically saying the Commissioners run the County and the Assembly occasionally takes on the budget and other things.

If you read under Section 2.8, the Powers of the Assembly, it's quite extensive. I mean we are supposed to approve the approval of contracts presented by the Board of Regional Commissioners, grant, renew, or extend a franchise, make appropriation or transfer appropriations, which we do, regulate the rate charge for any service provided to any other government entity.

Now I'll repeat that for those who are interested. "Regulate the rate charge for any service provided to any other government entity," which means if we're doing the service of some other organization, we can -- we, the Assembly, can regulate that.

Authorize the borrowing of money. I don't know -- I've been here for 8 years and no one's ever asked me that, you know, vote on a capital budget.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: That's because they say it's in the budget.

Speaker BERGSTROM: They say it's in the budget.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: You vote on the budget.

Ms. TAYLOR: You're voting it. We are voting it.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Well, in every other fiscal organization I've been involved with, the capital expenditures are separate from the operating budget.

So I think that some of those things have to be looked at, you know, their budget procedures. We're supposed to send the -- we're supposed to notify the towns -- do we notify the towns when we get the budget? According to the Charter, we send them a copy?

Clerk O'CONNELL: Yes, that will be happening right after the Assembly gets the budget today.

Mr. KNIGHT: Can we get emails?

Speaker BERGSTROM: And I'm just -- this is basically a postmortem to the vote that we took the other day of an idea of where the committee wants to go going forward. And, you know, Julia says that we, as a committee, probably would not recommend going forward on the Executive, the Strong Executive; is that what you're suggesting?

Ms. TAYLOR: Well, I'm suggesting it because from my point of view they went together. Yes, one could have voted them separately, but the concept went together.

The alternative to that concept, not counting Leo's idea of having more Commissioners, would be what the Special Commission had suggested which would be a smaller regionally elected group that would then appoint an administrator. And I think that's, in fact, what the Commissioners are recommending in their Strategic Plan.

But, you know, if they want to do that, fine. It won't pass the Assembly under the present membership, but they may have some other plan of proceeding.

I would certainly consider supporting such a thing, but I'm not counting on that passing.

So, to me, that's sort of done. We've done what we can do there. I'm not that keen on lots of other changes because I don't see a great need for them but --

Speaker BERGSTROM: Well, I mean, I'll give you just an example. For instance, for years, there was a provision in the Charter that said that the Administrator had to live on Cape Cod, all right, and he didn't. Okay. So there's one that obviously didn't have to be in the Charter because they weren't paying attention to it anyway.

And as the Commissioners said that they granted an exemption for that person --

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Do they have the authority to do that?

Speaker BERGSTROM: Of course not. But, or if they do, then they have -- what other provisions of the Charter do they have the authority to grant exemptions from. So that's, you know, --

Ms. TAYLOR: I believe we did take a vote on that at some point but it's a very long time ago.

Speaker BERGSTROM: To take a vote to change the Charter or?

Ms. TAYLOR: No, to allow the exemption.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: But I thought that was temporary. I thought it was just --

Speaker BERGSTROM: So there's a contradiction. If something's in the Charter, can we ignore it? I mean by a vote, a majority vote of the Assembly and the Commissioners?

So it has to be, you know, maybe something like that shouldn't be in there. If it's discretionary, then it shouldn't be in the Charter.

Ms. TAYLOR: Yes. I would be happy to have that not be in the Charter because I think there are a lot of reasons why you might want to hire people and they might not be physically on the Cape. I would not keep it in the Charter so you could write that down as one thing that we could discuss further.

I'd hate to even have it come up because it's always such an unattractive discussion in my experience, but

Ms. MCAULIFFE: I would like to have a discussion about term limits.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Okay.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: It doesn't have to be right now. I could be with the full committee but I think that needs to be discussed. I think there's some merit to term limits, and I know they're hard to come up with and -- not enforce but hard to determine how you're going to do it.

But I think there is merit because I'm a firm believer that you can stay too long in one

spot. And I also have seen the benefits of new blood and new people coming into this. So if the review committee could discuss that.

I also think that we should discuss some kind of formal discussion in the Charter about some of the issues about County employees and their working for or working with groups that they oversee. And I know this gets a little bit tricky because its state law that you cannot do that but it does go on.

So I'm just looking for something in the Charter that kind of, you know, memorializes the fact that perhaps that's the way the County would like to observe that or follow that regulation. Because I think that there's a lot of kind of gray, informal, this is the way it's always been done, kinds of things that maybe we need to just take a look at and perhaps clarify.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes, I think that's a good idea. About 10-15 years ago in Chatham, we changed the rules so that no employee could be a voting member of a committee like Conservation or something. Before that, the Shellfish Warden was on the Conservation Committee and so we dispensed with that. And although they all served in an advisory capacity, it's difficult to serve as an officer of another group that's tied to the County because it creates all sorts of appearances anyway of a conflict.

This is something we'd have to write up and put in there. You know there's a provision in there about you can't take a job with the County government, or within a position of County government within a year after you leave is another kind of thing that limits the kind of ability of employees to benefit from their service.

Term limits; I always thought about, you know, maybe we'd extend that to surgeons and nuclear scientists and stuff, but 10 years you kind of get jaded as a surgeon. I want somebody who's right out of medical school who has, you know, maybe some better ideas about my heart operation. So there's something to be said either way on that but.

And as far as the recall petition as well, the problem with the recall is what do you recall somebody for? You know, now they recall you if -- if you run for an election and you win by 51 to 49, all the sudden you take a difficult vote than some of you voters decide, what are they going to recall you?

So I would be for a recall for the commission of a felony or for malfeasance in office directly, you know, so if you cheat on your wife, you can't be recalled, but if you steal from the County then you can. So it would have to be very limited.

Ms. TAYLOR: Is it needed when you get elected every two years?

Speaker BERGSTROM: I know; is it needed? I don't really think it's needed every two years because it's just -- but then, again, the Commissioners are elected for four years so.

But I think there are -- I think there are provisions in Charters for a person to step down under certain circumstances usually having to do with the commission of a felony or the conviction for malfeasance in office being, you know, misappropriation of funds or abuse of an employee or sexual harassment or something like that where it's specified that that could be a grounds for recall. But just to say you're going to recall somebody because you don't like them, we'd all be -- how many controversial votes would you want to take, you know?

Ms. MCAULIFFE: We'd have to carefully consider the language on that because I know in Yarmouth there was -- I sat on a committee that was trying to put together a recall language for committee members if they were either not showing up or -- and when you start making a specific list about things, that really limits you because if something happens to be outside that list like taking a hammer to someone during a meeting is not on that list, then your hands are tied.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: But there is language in terms of --

Mr. KNIGHT: That's breaking of the law.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: -- general -- we went with cause or just cause; I can't remember the language. But I think that Mike Curran can advise us on this that if we're going to put in something for people who have really egregiously denied, you know, it sort of crossed a line, then we can have a means to actively -- because there's nothing more uncomfortable than sitting with someone who is sitting next to you as a convicted something and they decide they don't want to resign.

Mr. KNIGHT: Well the Legislature just did that up in Boston.

Ms. TAYLOR: Right.

MR. KNIGHT: So you have to look at --

Ms. MCAULIFFE: But they had that capacity see and I don't know if --

Mr. KNIGHT: Right. And maybe that's the language you have to look at, that's what I'm saying.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Yes, and he was a convicted, you know, --

Ms. TAYLOR: Right.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: -- and I would go because a lot of people are accused of things and it doesn't necessarily mean that they've done what they're accused of.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes, but, you know, I mean I don't want to get too far down the road on this. But let's say you have two people; right? They're both -- they're sitting in a bar and they're drinking. They both drink too much.

One's a contractor, a private contractor, the other one's a policeman; okay? The both get in their cars and they drive off and they run into telephone poles; okay? They both get arrested and thrown into jail. They go before the judge and the judge gives them a 90-day license suspension.

The next day, the policeman gets suspended from his job; all right? The contractor goes back to work. He just has somebody drive him.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Right.

Speaker BERGSTROM: So the question is should there be extra -- in our society, should there be extra judicial punishment to people? In other words, I always think the punishment should be made by the courts.

Now we're saying is well once the courts are done with you, if we have any hold over you, if we give you a job, we're going to give you another shot, you know, because we don't like what you did.

I know that's a very minority opinion, but I believe that punishment should be meted out in the courts, meted out equally, and that people who are in vulnerable positions, like politicians and so on shouldn't be asked -- shouldn't be, you know, it's like the Lynching Squad comes along and says, "Okay, we're going to get you too" you know.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: See, I don't have an issue with that. I mean years ago in the D-Y School Committee Teachers' Contract, moral turpitude was in there.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Good grief. We'd all be gone.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: There was a teacher who was fired for soliciting a student for a porn offer. Moral turpitude was the one thing that -- and it just happened to be that it was a very usual, weird thing, obviously.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Did it go to the courts?

Ms. MCAULIFFE: No, because it was clear.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Anyway, we're wandering off the subject.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Anyway, I'm just saying that you can have general language if that's something -- I guess I'm advising against a specific list because chances are that that specific list might not be -- might not hit everything that we can think of, I guess.

Mr. KNIGHT: My suggestion, Mr. Chairman, is to have Attorney Curran look at the list and probably come back to us with a better idea so we're not like just shooting here. We'd have move of a --

Speaker BERGSTROM: I know. I wish I was more prepared, although that's totally up to me, but I just wanted to get together and see where we're going to go from here if you guys are interested in doing this and doing the Charter? Whether you -- that Julia's suggestion we don't go forward with it.

I mean it's going to be -- we probably will have the Executive, the Strong Executive on -- before the Assembly, but the committee can recommend not going forward with it if that's their desire right now. Because otherwise what are we going to do with the Commissioners?

Ms. TAYLOR: Well, you know, --

Speaker BERGSTROM: Well, I don't know, Julia. We may -- we put both of them before the committee and we tabled them, I think is where we are.

Ms. TAYLOR: Right. So if someone wants to bring it off the table --

Speaker BERGSTROM: Okay.

Ms. TAYLOR: -- they could. I'm just suggesting that we not do that. And that's my suggestion, that's all.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Well, one thing is that -- which is something that I had in the back of my mind was that the Commissioner should try some end-run around the Assembly and pursue this, you know, their recommendations from the Special Commission in regards to what we say.

It's getting kind of late in the game now for the next election but it's possible. But then what's the role of the Assembly? Are we going to send up -- you know, despite my vote, I mean am I going to entertain a contrary motion and send that up to, you know? I don't want --

Ms. TAYLOR: No. I just think -- I think we have no reason to believe the Assembly is interested in a single elected Executive. The vote was lost for, you know, by less -- sort of like an Olympic vote, you know, seconds, part of a percentage point but it's done.

And I think that while, you know, I always like to win, I don't really see much point in any proposal going to the State House that doesn't have relatively wide support.

Speaker BERGSTROM: I agree with you there, even beyond us. Even beyond us.

Ms. TAYLOR: Even beyond us and clearly the people who led the Special Commission didn't like it, that proposal. They came out against it.

The Commissioners came out against it. They had a preference for a different proposal. The Assembly didn't vote for it so, to me, it's dead and there's no point in dealing with it any further.

Now I'm willing to come to another meeting or two of this committee to do other things, but I think that the main reason for this committee was to deal with this governance issue if that -- and so once that's -- I would put that to bed now.

And if we want to have a couple meetings to discuss some things that we've already mentioned and that Attorney Curran brings up, fine. Let's do that. But I don't see more than maybe two meetings on these issues myself.

Speaker BERGSTROM: No. I think -- what I envision is simply we 'll go forward. I'll ask Michael, which I already did but he, obviously, things have intervened, which is to look into the Charter and take out everything in the Charter that would be in the Manual of Governance.

Because the Charter is a very restrictive document; it shouldn't be discretionary. In other words, it shouldn't be saying, well, you know, we'll pay attention to this; we won't pay attention to that. If it's in there, it should be written in stone.

If too much is in there, then you lose the flexibility you need to deal with issues. For instance, if you say the budget has to be there on a certain date, you know, absolutely, and it has to be voted on. Sometimes things don't work out so you're better off having that in the Manual of Governance, so, you know, so on and so forth.

So that's what I'm looking at. And I'm also looking at the powers of the Assembly and the powers of the Commissioners s there's no conflict between the two.

Now we have an Administrator, which we had separated from the Treasurer so now we have to clear up that language because the language previously said, "We need a Treasurer and an Administrator." And that was interpreted to me, well, we can give both titles to one person but we already got that. So those are the kind of things that would have to be clear.

To do that at the same time because there's still noise out in the community about changing the way we're governed. I mean maybe alter it, but to be honest with you, the way we did it previously that you referred to, Julia, back in 1989, that takes a lot of organization. I don't know --

Ms. TAYLOR: It's available to people but it's not an avenue that I would pursue at this time.

Speaker BERGSTROM: No. So --

Ms. TAYLOR: I've done that. That was really genius. So, I would see that we could have another two meetings and then present some changes to recommend it and see whether they're of interest and then proceed. But I would not anticipate that they would keep things that would require going to the Legislature.

Speaker BERGSTROM: No. Well, we'll have those changes. I mean, once again, we'll look at that and we'll communicate by email, not two ways but just simply one way. Mike will run the changes to us so we have an advance notice before we have the meeting. Yeah.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: I would be interested in an opinion from Michael Curran about enforcing the Charter.

Speaker BERGSTROM: That's another issue.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: The enforcement of the Charter. And whose responsibility it is and what happens and how provisions in there which sometimes get ignored or pushed off. You know, does there have to be specific language in there about how it's enforced or who enforces it, or do we have the authority if it's in there and it's just something we choose to do.

So I would like to have an opinion from him about how the Charter language or Charter items can be enforced.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes. I brought that up a couple years ago when I anticipated there may be a dispute with the Commissioners over the enforcement of the Charter.

And the issue that when we brought in County Counsel and asked him, and, you know, really what it amounts to is we can go to court and get an injunction against them doing something would be kind of silly. But the other option is we would have to have separated -- we would have to have -- this body needs -- the Assembly needs separate counsel. Not necessarily on the -- for all the time but the availability of special counsel to advise us as we have Mike on

this Charter Review Committee, so that if we do get into a dispute with the Commissioners, then we can have the two counsels work it out. If they don't work it out, it will have to go to the courts. That's the only reaction.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Well then let's put that in the Charter because right now the only way we get special counsel is through the Commissioners.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Through the Commissioners. They have to approve all expenditures.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: So then I think we need to put in the Charter --

Speaker BERGSTROM: Although we have a legal budget though that --

Ms. MCAULIFFE: No, but I think it should go in the Charter then that the Assembly has the right to retain separate counsel because I think there's an innate conflict if the County Counsel is asked to kind of pick or weigh-in on County Commissioners versus Assembly.

Ms. TAYLOR: Well, interestingly enough, every town has Selectmen and it has a Town Counsel and there's never been a great hue and cry that the Town Meeting has to have its own counsel that's not the town counsel.

And I just don't think this has been -- this is necessary myself. But we can discuss it.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Well I mean --

Ms. TAYLOR: It's sort of a good argument in favor of a regional government that is one body that appoints an Administrator. That makes it -- the idea that we're going to have opposing counsel arguing over is kind of a good argument for the others.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yeah, but who enforces the Charter is the question because without some kind of way of holding the people within the government to the rules, they can do anything they want.

Ms. TAYLOR: But Ron -- well so can Congress and people sue. I mean there are -- we do have legal recourse where you can appeal things in court. That's the whole business.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes, but I can't afford it.

Ms. TAYLOR: Okay. But let's not be borrowing.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Well, all right. I don't want to drag this meeting on if we're not going to really accomplish anything but --

Mr. KNIGHT: We did the minutes.

Speaker BERGSTROM: We did the minutes, yes. No, I think we had to have this meeting because we haven't had a meeting since the vote. And we did, if you remember, the first couple of meetings, we took a broad look at the Charter and then I think it was Suzanne or somebody said, "Look before we go any further, we have to deal with the governance issue."

Now we've dealt with the governance issue in some way. So now the question is, okay, do we then want to go back and look at the Charter from a comprehensive standpoint? And, you know, --

Ms. TAYLOR: I'd be happy to look for two more meetings.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Okay.

Ms. TAYLOR: That's my limit personally.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Yes. I'm not interested in spending time just to suspend time. I agree.

Speaker BERGSTROM: All right.

Ms. TAYLOR: But I think Attorney Curran can come up with quite a few things that we can then discuss and then we --

Ms. MCAULIFFE: And we could also solicit from the Assembly, I think Leo had a list

or someone had a list of things that they wanted looked at, and perhaps we could call our list of their thoughts or wishes because they're the ones that have been working under the Charter.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes. All right. Well --

Ms. MCAULIFFE: So are we done? We need to set the next meeting.

Speaker BERGSTROM: I'm not ready to set the next meeting right now.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Okay.

Speaker BERGSTROM: We can -- I'll wait to talk to Attorney Curran and see his availability. He's under some medication now so he couldn't make it today. Apparently they changed his medication and he didn't feel competent to drive down here and do this.

Ms. TAYLOR: Yes.

Speaker BERGSTROM: So I will contact him with the results of this meeting and ask him to review the Charter and make any changes -- recommend any changes with the idea of slimming it down.

I mean I don't know if somebody -- I think it was Bill Doherty or somebody said, "Well, you know, the Harwich Town Charter is three pages, and the Barnstable County Charter is 20 pages" or something like that. I don't think the number of pages make a difference but.

And so then we'll -- once he is ready with that, ready to come before us and give us in advance the documentation, whatever documentation, then we'll have another meeting.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Yes, and I would specifically want to have advanced time to read and digest whatever he does. I don't want to come into a meeting without having a chance to read something.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes, plus we'll give the public a chance to weigh in. I don't know if the public's really interested in the details of our Charter but they should be because there's some stuff in there -- there's some work --

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Because part of the issue on the vote was the issue that they didn't -- they thought things weren't perfectly worded.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes, but they knew where we were going.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: I'm just -- yes, I just don't want to -- I just don't want to run into that that the reason given for not voting was because there were typos. So let's just make sure that we get our ducks in a row on this.

Ms. TAYLOR: Yes.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Move to Adjourn?

Ms. TAYLOR: Second.

Chairman BERGSTROM: Okay. All those in favor?

Whereupon, it was moved, seconded, and voted to adjourn the Charter Review Committee Meeting at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Janice O'Connell, Clerk
Assembly of Delegates