

**BARNSTABLE COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF DELEGATES  
CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE  
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES  
October 16, 2019**

**Call to Order**

The Charter Review Committee (CRC) meeting convened at the Eastwing Conference Center, 3195 Main Street Rt. 6A, Barnstable, Massachusetts and was called to order at 4:45 p.m. by Committee Chair E. Suzanne McAuliffe.

**Attendance**

Present: Mary Chaffee, J. Terence Gallagher (remote participation due to distance), Elizabeth Harder, Christopher Kanaga, James Killion, Suzanne McAuliffe, Deborah McCutcheon, Susan Moran, Thomas O'Hara, John Ohman, Brian O'Malley, Randi Potash, Patrick Princi (left @ 6:00 p.m.), Linda Zuern.

Absent: Lilli-Ann Green.

Charter Counsel Robert Troy in attendance.

Other public officials and members of the general public in attendance.

**Approval of 10/2/19 CRC Meeting Minutes**

Motion made by Susan Moran to approve the draft minutes. It was seconded. Unanimous.

**Approval of 9/18/19 Recall Subcommittee Minutes**

Motion made by Mary Chaffee to approve the draft minutes. It was seconded.

Unanimous by Subcommittee Members (M. Chaffee, E. Harder, S. Moran, D. McCutcheon).

**Summary: Public Comment Regarding Potential Proposal to Restructure Executive Branch of County Government**

Chair McAuliffe invited the public to comment on potential proposal to restructure the executive branch of county government resulting in the elimination of county commissioners and the appointment of a strong county administrator and deputy administrator. The Legislative Branch would become the policy making branch of county government.

The Chair provided the committee and others in attendance a brief overview of the proposal and how this proposal would move forward.

In summary, written comments submitted to the committee (via email and postal mail prior to the meeting) as follows:

- Ronald Beaty: disapproves of the elimination of county commissioners and no change to the current structure of county government.
- Phillip Blowers: in support of the elimination of county commissioners.
- Joseph Glynn: suggests consideration of various restructuring options and more public involvement; supports keeping the current 3 at large commissioner seats but adding 3 additional commissioner seats representing the upper, mid and lower cape; suggested both executive and legislative branches either be elected as partisan or non-partisan officials.
- Sherrie Hitchcock: in support of the elimination of elected county commissioners and the appointment of a strong manager.
- Felicia Penn: disapproves of the elimination of county commissioners.

- Eileen Sonnenberg: in support of the elimination of elected county commissioners and the appointment of a strong manager.
- Judith Thomas: in support of the elimination of county commissioners replaced with a strong professional executive.
- Cape Cod League of Women Voters (Suzanne Brock): supports consideration of structural changes for both the executive and legislative branches to include the elimination of county commissioners, supports a strong professional administrator, and supports a reduction in the number of assembly delegates.

In summary, public comments at committee meeting:

- Ronald Bergstrom: suggests county retain current structure and disapproves of the elimination of county commissioners.
- Suzanne Brock (Cape Cod League of Women Voters): supports consideration of structural changes for both the executive and legislative branches to include the elimination of county commissioners, supports a strong professional administrator, and supports a reduction in the number of assembly delegates.
- Joseph Glynn: suggests consideration of various restructuring options and more public involvement; supports keeping the current 3 at large commissioner seats but adding 3 additional commissioner seats representing the upper, mid and lower cape; suggested both executive and legislative branches either be elected as partisan or non-partisan officials.
- Felicia Penn: supports current charter and existing structure.

Chair McAuliffe reminded committee members that 2014 Charter Review recommendations lost on a close vote and was rejected by the Assembly because smaller towns wanted to retain their own voice. The change being proposed now would streamline operations and create efficiencies. Any proposal going forward would need a strong unified opinion and vote in order to advance forward to the next level.

Other committee members expressed their opinions and questioned why change was needed if county operations are functioning well now. It was pointed out that a bi-cameral structure provides for important checks and balances and the frame work is already in place. Other members suggested models for consideration that included going from 3 to 5 commissioners, doing more outreach to solicit public opinion regarding structural changes and to educate the public on county operations.

Consensus of committee members was to schedule a vote on the current proposal under consideration and additional topics of interest at a subsequent meeting. A Recall Provision is still under consideration by the Recall Subcommittee.

### **New Business**

No new business was brought forward.

### **Next meeting**

Next meeting Wednesday, November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019 @ 4:30 p.m.

Suggested agenda items: a vote on proposal to eliminate county commissioners, consideration of increasing Board of County Commissioners from 3 to 5 members, weighted vote, partisan versus

non-partisan representation, length of terms for both commissioners and delegates, and consideration of recommendations of the May 2014 Charter Review Committee Report.

**Adjournment**

**Motion made by Susan Moran to adjourn the meeting at 6:25 p.m. Unanimous.**

**Submitted by:**

**Janice O’Connell, Clerk  
Assembly of Delegates**

**List of materials used at the meeting:**

- **10/16/19 CRC meeting notice and agenda**
- **10/2/19 draft CRC meeting minutes**
- **9/18/19 draft Recall Subcommittee meeting minutes**
- **Written comments submitted by: R. Beaty, R. Bergstrom, P. Blowers, J. Glynn, E. Sonnenberg, J. Thomas, Cape Cod League of Women Voters (Suzanne Brock)**