

**Cecil County Charter Board  
Worksession Meeting Minutes**

**May 4, 2009**

**PRESENT:** Joyce Bowlsbey, Henry Burden, Ross Cameron, Edwin Cole, Robert Gell, Harland Graef, Daniel Schneckenburger, Chris Ann Szep, Executive Office Administrator Vicky Rinkerman, and Consultant Victor Tervalá, Esquire via telephone, and members of the public.

**ABSENT:** Nicholas Ricciuti.

**OPEN SESSION called to order at 6:00 p.m.**

**SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION**

**Approval of Minutes** – On motion by Mr. Schneckenburger, seconded by Mr. Graef, the minutes of the April 20, 2009 meeting were unanimously approved as submitted.

**Discussion with Senator Walter Baker** – Senator Baker was in office during the last charter consideration in 1996, and he did not support the change of government. Since his retirement, Cecil County has grown in population and is facing many residential and commercial growth challenges. Due to the circumstances, he is now in favor of charter government for Cecil County and intends to support the effort of the Board.

**Old Business**

**Review of Draft Charter version 3 dated April 20, 2009 – Section 303 Legislative Procedure (c) –**

**ACTION:** The Board reviewed and approved the revisions to this section.

**Section 304 Enactment of Legislation (b)** – This section was revised to reflect the language used in state law; however, the Board concurred that the wording was still confusing. More suggestions will be provided for the revision.

**Section 304 (d)** – Discussion ensued regarding the section referring to publishing a summary of the bill in “a newspaper of general circulation in the County”, and providing a clause that states, “If the Council determines that no such newspaper exists in the County, the Council shall use whatever media it deems most suited to satisfy the requirements of this subsection”.

**ACTION:** The Board concurred that the wording anticipates the eventual demise of the newspaper industry based on recent economic events.

**Section 305 Emergency Legislation** – **ACTION:** The Board concurred with the revisions to (a), (b), and (c) of this section.

**Section 307 Referendum (a), (b), (c), (d)** – **ACTION:** The Board concurred with the revisions to this section.

**New Business – Referring to Dorchester County Charter**

**Section 307 Referendum (e)** – Discussion ensued regarding “valid petition under this section” and “not more than 90 days” provision.

**ACTION:** The Board concurred to leave both references in this section.

**(f)** – **ACTION:** The Board concurred with the language in this section.

**Section 308 Publication of Laws** – The Board concurred to add the “electronic” phrasing and discussed the wording in the 1996 Cecil County Charter pertaining to maintaining a copy of laws at the local library headquarters.

ACTION: The Board concurred that this should not be added to the section.

**Section 309 Compilation of Laws (a)** – State law of publication.

(b) – ACTION: The Board concurred to remove this section.

**Referring to the 1996 Cecil County Charter**

**County Executive Veto** – All charters to date have this provision. Council members are elected by district and the executive is elected at large.

ACTION: The Board concurred to permit the county executive veto power.

**Section 214 Veto (a)** – Discussion ensued regarding the time permitted to deliver legislation to the county executive and the time permitted to take veto action on the legislation.

ACTION: The Board concurred to change “9 business days...” to “10 business days...”.

(b) – ACTION: The Board concurred with the language in this section.

(c) – Discussion ensued regarding establishing a time limit for returning vetoed legislation and number of votes required for Council to override veto.

ACTION: The Board concurred to change the number of votes required to overturn a veto by the county executive to four council members.

(d) – ACTION: The Board concurred with the language in this section.

COUNSEL: Mr. Tervalo stated that county executive line item veto power could be added for the budget process.

**Section 301 Composition** – Discussion ensued regarding the definition of officers and agents.

COUNSEL: Mr. Tervalo stated that an officer is usually a person who makes independent decisions for the county and an agent is a person who is independent and represents the county, i.e. county attorney.

ACTION: The Board concurred to follow up with the county administrator to determine the current government structure.

**Section 302 County Executive Powers and Duties** – ACTION: The Board concurred with the opening paragraph.

(a) – Discussion ensued regarding defining the first draft of the budget and revising this section with additional language to clarify the budget form.

(b) – The section mandates a “State of the County Report” from the county executive within six months after the close of the fiscal year.

(c) - **Discussion** ensued regarding providing information to the Council. The Council provides oversight for the county executive and administrative function of the county.

ACTION: The Board concurred to add “by Resolution” to the paragraph.

(d) and (e) – ACTION: The Board concurred with the language in both sections.

(f) – Discussion ensued regarding requiring a resolution by the Council for confirmation of the department head appointments.

ACTION: The Board concurred to review this section and requirement at a later time.

(g) – ACTION: The Board concurred with the language in this section.

**Adjournment**

ACTION: Motion made by Mr. Graef, seconded by Ms. Bowsbey, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

**Next Meeting Date** – The Board will meet on Monday, May 18, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. in the Rising Sun Room in the County Administration Building.

Approved:

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Joyce Bowsbey, Chair

Attest:

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Vicky Rinkerman  
Executive Office Administrator