

**Charter Review Commission  
Pinellas County  
March 21, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

The Pinellas County Charter Review Commission (CRC), as created by Chapter 80-950, Laws of Florida, met in regular session at 6:01 PM on this date in the Palm Room at the Pinellas County Communications Building, 333 Chestnut Street, Clearwater, Florida.

**Present**

Brian Aungst, Jr., Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) Appointee (Commissioner Chris Latvala), Chair  
Linsey Grove, Public At-Large Citizen Appointee, Vice-Chair (appeared virtually)  
Richard Butler, BCC Appointee (Commissioner Kathleen Peters)  
Nick DiCeglie, Pinellas County State Legislative Delegation Appointee  
Dave Eggers, County Commissioner, BCC Appointee  
Todd Jennings, Public At-Large Citizen Appointee  
Terri Lipsey Scott, BCC Appointee (Commissioner René Flowers)  
Ashley Overend, BCC Appointee (Commissioner Brian Scott) (late arrival)  
Rob Posavec, BCC Appointee (Commissioner Dave Eggers)  
Tom Steck, BCC Appointee (Commissioner Charlie Justice) (appeared virtually)  
Mark Strickland, BCC Appointee (Commissioner Janet Long)  
Mike Twitty, Property Appraiser, Constitutional Officers Appointee

**Not Present**

Anne-Marie Brooks, Municipal Elected Official Appointee

**Others Present**

Wade Vose, Esquire, Vose Law Firm, CRC Legal Counsel  
Doug Thomas, Strategic Government Resources, Inc.  
Katie Poviones, Senior Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk  
Other interested individuals

*All documents provided to the Clerk's Office have been filed and made a part of the record.*

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Aungst called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

**ROLL CALL**

At the Chair's request, those in attendance introduced themselves.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No one appeared in response to the Chair's call for public comment.

## **REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 22, 2024 MEETING MINUTES**

Mr. Butler made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Ms. Lipsey Scott and carried unanimously.

In response to a comment by Mr. Thomas, Chair Aungst confirmed that approval of the February 26 CRC meeting minutes will be added to the next meeting's agenda.

*Ms. Overend arrived at 6:04 PM.*

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### Term Limits for County Commissioners

Mr. Thomas, with input from Chair Aungst, indicated that legislative efforts to implement term limits for County Commissioners at the State level were not successful; whereupon, Attorney Vose referred to a document included in the agenda packet and related that it lists the term limits provisions of the legislative bodies for the 20 Florida charter counties; and that the limits vary from two to three four-year terms.

Following brief clarifying comments by Attorney Vose, Chair Aungst indicated that the purpose of today's discussion is to provide feedback to Mr. Thomas and Attorney Vose regarding potential term limits for County Commissioners, which will enable them to draft proposed ballot language. Thereupon, Chair Aungst reviewed term limits provisions for the City of Clearwater and Hillsborough County, and lengthy discussion ensued regarding the following topics:

- A cooling off period before running for office after reaching a term limit
- Method to address partial terms
- Establishing retrospective versus prospective term limits
- Limiting terms to two or three
- General support from citizens for term limits at various levels of government
- Previous attempts to enact term limits in Pinellas County
- Importance of drafting clear ballot language that will not confuse voters
- Impacts of term limits on voters' rights
- Potential effective dates
- Limiting years of service instead of terms

Thereupon, Attorney Vose related that, based on the discussion, he could prepare three or four term limits options and include charter and ballot summary language for each. In response to a query by Mr. Butler, Attorney Vose, with input by Chair Aungst, clarified that referring to years of service rather than terms served is clearer and is consistent with the Florida Constitution.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### Revised Draft Ballot and Charter Language – Charter Amendment Revising Thresholds for Appointment and Removal of County Attorney

Referring to a memorandum included in the agenda packet, Attorney Vose reviewed proposed ballot language related to the hire and removal of the County Attorney. He related that the general direction of a previous discussion indicated that requiring a majority vote by both the County Commissioners and the Constitutional Officers seemed too complicated; and that the proposed language mirrors the current language for the appointment and removal of the County Administrator, with a mathematical adjustment to account for the County Attorney Oversight Committee's role in the process; whereupon, Mr. Steck related that requiring a majority vote by each the Constitutional Officers and the County Commissioners seems more appropriate.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### Updates from Facilitator and General Counsel

Mr. Thomas indicated that there are two remaining topics which were previously identified by the Board which have not yet been discussed, including the County Administrator or County executive being an elected official and language related to classified employees.

Mr. Thomas related that the discussion topic related to other counties' emerging issues and potential changes to their charters are being monitored and tend to be unique in nature; whereupon, he provided an overview of next steps in the charter review process.

Attorney Vose provided historical information regarding charter language associated with the hiring and termination of unclassified employees, relating that the BCC previously adopted a resolution delegating its authority to the County Administrator; and that there were two unsuccessful attempts to modify the language by a previous CRC. Thereupon, he noted that the portion of the charter pertaining to the County Administrator would undergo substantial reform if the topic of an elected County executive moves forward, which would likely allow for the unclassified employee provision to be removed.

Chair Aungst related that the creation of a charter officer who would serve as the BCC's designee to prepare and present the budget was previously raised as a potential item of interest, and in response to his query, the members did not indicate interest in pursuing the topic.

Attorney Vose related that he prepared draft charter amendment language regarding the citizen initiative petition process, based on the Board's discussion with the Supervisor of Elections at the last CRC meeting; that he shared the draft with the County Attorney's and the Supervisor of Elections' Offices; and that he will provide an update to the CRC when he receives feedback.

### **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

In response to a query by Commissioner Eggers, Attorney Vose provided information regarding the timeline for the CRC to complete its report and hold public hearings; whereupon, discussion ensued regarding potential scheduling conflicts and availability, and the members confirmed the April 4 meeting date.

Thereupon, Mr. Thomas indicated that he would send an email to the members when meeting dates have been confirmed.

### **CRC COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

None.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Aungst adjourned the meeting at 7:32 PM.