

## Board of County Commissioners Workshop Item

Date of Meeting: May 26, 2009  
Date Submitted: May 20, 2009  
To: Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board  
From: Parwez Alam, County Administrator  
Vincent S. Long, Deputy County Administrator  
Subject: Workshop on Citizen Charter Review Committee Policy Issues

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### **Statement of Issue:**

The Leon County Charter requires the Board to establish the first Charter Review Committee (CRC) in November 2009. This workshop item presents policy issues that were identified by the Board during its initial workshop on the establishment of a Citizen Charter Review Committee held on March 26, 2009 for the purpose of identifying those issues that the Board wishes to request the CRC to address in its review of potential charter amendments. In addition, it provides information on the recommendations of the City of Tallahassee Charter Review Committee.

### **Background:**

On November 5, 2002, the residents of Leon County adopted a Home Rule Charter with the belief that governmental decisions affecting local interests should be made locally, rather than by the State, and that County government should be reflective of the people and serve them in achieving a more responsive and efficient form of government (Attachment #1).

The Leon County Charter provides three opportunities in which amendments may be proposed. One of these opportunities is through a Citizen Charter Review Committee. The Charter provides that the Board shall establish a Citizen Charter Review Committee (CRC) at least 12 months prior to the general election occurring every eight years which requires the Committee to be convened by November 2009.

On March 26, 2009, the Board conducted a workshop on the establishment of a Citizen Charter Review Committee. At that time the Board discussed the need for the CRC to consider options to strengthen the County Charter to better position the County to most effectively deal with current and anticipated challenges and opportunities facing our community. In order to further discuss specific guidance that the Board may wish to provide to the CRC on policy issues, the Board directed staff to schedule a workshop for Tuesday, May 26, 2009. In addition, the Board directed staff to provide information on the recommendations of the City of Tallahassee Citizen Review Committee.

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**Analysis:**

*Policy Issues*

During the March 26, 2009 workshop, staff presented a number of policy issues that individual Commissioners and the Board have collectively identified in the past as possible policy issues to address during the first charter review. Additional issues were raised by Commissioners during the discussion at the workshop. Issues which were discussed include the following:

- Citizen utility board
- County/city consolidation and/or functional consolidation.
- Countywide stormwater standards/environmental ordinances
- Codification of the revised Tourist Development Council Structure
- Non-partisan elections
- Campaign finance reform
- Lower charter petition threshold
- Elected countywide executive or county manager
- Protection of water supply
- Annexation policy
- Charter officers/constitutional officers
- Commission structure/districting schemes

It is important to note that during the March 26, 2009 regular Board meeting, Sheriff Larry Campbell provided a presentation on the cost of law enforcement in Leon County and the City of Tallahassee. Following the presentation, the Board discussed whether law enforcement consolidation should be an issue addressed by the CRC.

The purpose of the policy issues identified above is to provide the CRC direction and indicate policy areas which the Board considers important and wishes to receive the committee's recommendations, potentially as proposed charter amendments. The policy issues presented above is neither exhaustive nor compulsory.

*Kurt Spitzer and Associates*

As part of the CRC process the Board requested the utilization of County staff and a consultant to provide staff support to the CRC. On April 21, 2009 the Board authorized the County Administrator to execute an agreement with Kurt Spitzer and Associates (KSA) for consulting services to the CRC. KSA was hired by the Board to provide professional staffing to the Citizen Charter Study Committee during County's initial charter adoption process in 2001. KSA will play an important role in the development of the policy issues that will be considered by the CRC.

*City of Tallahassee Charter Review Committee*

As required in its Charter, the City Commission established and appointed its Charter Review Committee (City CRC) in January 2009. The City CRC was tasked with specifically reviewing the roles, duties, and functions of the Mayor and City Commissioners. It was composed of 10 city

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residents which were appointed by the Mayor and City Commission; two appointments per member (Attachment #2). The City CRC was required to complete its review process within 90 days of its appointment and prepare a formal written report for the City Commission's consideration.

On April 22, 2009, the City CRC presented its final report to the City Commission (Attachment #3). The City CRC report addressed four areas of the City Charter. The duties of the Mayor, the method of electing the City Commission, the City Commission's responsibility for managing employees, and the establishment of future City CRCs. The City CRC recommended that the method of electing the City Commission and the management of City employees remain unchanged. Currently, the Mayor and City Commissioners are elected at large and the responsibilities of managing employees are the responsibility of the appointed city officials (city manager, city attorney, treasurer-clerk, and auditor).

The City CRC did recommend changes to the duties of the Mayor and future CRCs. The City CRC recommended that the role of the Mayor be expanded to carry out intergovernmental duties, diplomatic events to enhance the City of Tallahassee, and play a primary role in directing and coordinating the City's economic development strategy. In regards to economic development, the City CRC's recommendation focused on providing the Mayor the ability to fast track economic development opportunities that are presented to the City. However, the City CRC recommended that the City continue to operate under a leadership mayor rather than a strong mayor form of government. The Committee also recommended that the Commission convene a City CRC in January 2013 for a period of 90 days.

The City CRC final report also included a number of non-charter recommendations for the City Commission's consideration through ordinance, policy, or interlocal agreement. The Committee recommended that an aviation authority be established to oversee the Tallahassee Regional Airport (TLH). In its report to the City Commission, the City CRC states that the City and the region would be better served by an airport authority that would provide greater focus on the airport activities and more aggressively pursue economic development and competitive opportunities.

In order to address regional transportation, the City CRC recommended that the City Commission commit to increase support for the Capital Regional Transportation Agency (CRTPA). The recommendation does not provide an approach in which the City should increase its support to CRTPA.

In regards to utilities services, the City CRC recommended that the City pursue joint ventures with existing electric providers with an objective to achieve an electric utility rate equal or less than the state average. The City CRC acknowledged that it had received testimony from several citizens concerning the City's electric rate and lack of fuel diversity; however, the Committee did not recommend the establishment of a utility authority.

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Throughout its process, the City CRC addressed the issue of functional consolidation. As part of its report the Committee recommended that the City establish a formal schedule to consolidate the Growth Management departments of the County and City, no later than October 1, 2010. The report did not recommend the consolidation of County and City growth management ordinances. The Committee also recommended that the County and City consolidate its Parks and Recreation Departments, Animal Control Departments, and stormwater functions.

The final report of the City CRC also presented a number of policy statements that encourage the reduction of differences in County and City ordinances, improvement of the effectiveness and efficiency of the City's regulatory program and permitting process, and the examination of the benefits of the consolidation of local government law enforcement services and functions.

Following the City CRC's presentation of its final report, the City Commission briefly discussed the recommendation of the committee. However, at this time the City Commission has not scheduled a public hearing, as required, to consider placing any recommended charter amendments on the 2010 ballot.

#### Outline for May 26, 2009 Workshop

In order to facilitate the Board's expressed desire to address the issues presented herein and to provide direction to the CRC, the following outline has been developed as a guide for the workshop. This outline serves only as a framework of the workshop and does not limit the Board's option to address additional issues related to the Citizen Charter Review Committee.

- Introduction
- Overview of Action Taken at March 26, 2009 Workshop
- City's Charter Review Process
- Review and Finalize Policy Issues for CRC Consideration
- Other Board Discussion and Direction

#### Options:

1. Accept staff report on the Tallahassee Charter Review Committee
2. Direct the Leon County Citizen Charter Review Committee to Address the Policy Issues Identified in this Workshop.
3. Board Direction.

#### Recommendation:

Options #1 and #2.

#### Attachments:

1. Leon County Home Rule Charter
2. City of Tallahassee Charter Review Committee Membership
3. City of Tallahassee Charter Review Committee's Final Report