

**Citizen Charter Review Committee
Special Meeting
May 28, 2026
11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Leon County Main Library
Programming Room**

The Leon County 2025-2026 Citizen Charter Review Committee (CCRC) met on May 28, 2026, at 11:30 a.m. in the Leon County Main Library with Committee Members Mary Ann Lindley, Chauncy Haynes, Joey Davis, Linda Bond Edwards, Liz Ellis, Max Herrle, Darryl Jones, Howard Kessler, Henry Lewis, III, Slaton Murray, Ryan Ray, Shamarial Roberson, Temple Robinson, Bruce Strouble, Jr., Jarrett Terry, Katrina Tuggerson and Barry Wilcox in attendance. Also present were County Administrator Vincent Long, Deputy County Attorney Emily Norton, Assistant to the County Administrator for Legislative and Strategic Initiatives Nicki Hatch, Management Analyst Cameron Williams, and Clerks to the Board, Beryl Wood and Daniel J. Antonaccio.

Absent Members: Anita Favors, Heidi Otway, Sean Pittman, and William Smith.

Call to Order and Opening Mary Ann Lindley, Chair

Chair Lindley called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m. and asked County Administrator Long to provide a brief overview of the meeting.

County Administrator Long recapped the Committee's previous consideration of a proposed Charter Amendment addressing historic harmful public policy decisions, which failed to advance on a 9 – 9 vote. He explained that the Board of County Commissioners subsequently requested additional analysis related to Senate Bill 1134 and recent federal actions and directed staff to develop a legally compliant, geographically based framework for addressing the effects of historic public policy decisions.

County Administrator Long noted that the agenda materials summarized the County's existing geographically focused programs, investments, and initiatives supporting vulnerable communities. While the Board did not advance a Board-initiated Charter Amendment, it referred the matter back to the Committee for further consideration and possible recommendation.

Chair Lindley stated that the consideration of advancing a proposed Charter amendment addressing historic harmful public policy decisions would be the only issue for consideration by the Committee during the special meeting.

Consent:

Henry Lewis, III, moved, seconded by Ryan Ray, to approve the consent agenda as presented.

The motion carried 16 – 0 with Committee Members Anita Favors, Darryl Jones, Heidi Otway, Sean Pittman and William Smith not present.

Approval of February 19, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Receipt & File of Written Public Comments

- *Darryl Jones arrived at this juncture of the meeting.*

Public Comment:

- Stanley Sims, 1320 Avondale Way, stated that the Board was not rejecting the concept but seeking to avoid potential legal and financial risks. He emphasized that the issue should focus on the impacts of past public policies and strengthening community unity rather than race, labels, or division.
- Serenity Williams, 4011 Elder Lane, spoke in support of the proposed amendment, stating that recurring assessment, transparency, and public review are appropriate Charter functions and that the proposal would not mandate spending, create quotas, or establish preferential treatment.
- Darchelle Pickett, a District 2 resident, spoke in support of the proposed amendment, stating that public policy decisions can have lasting community impacts. She cited Smoky Hollow as an example and described the proposal as a geographically based framework for assessing community conditions.
- Bryan Stringer, 8479 Southern Park Drive, spoke in support of the proposed amendment, stating that the proposal would establish a long-term framework for transparency, accountability, recurring community impact assessments, and public reporting without creating spending mandates, quotas, or race-based preferences.

General Business:

Agenda Item #1: Consideration of Advancing a Proposed Charter Amendment Addressing Historic Harmful Public Policy Decisions

Nicki Hatch introduced the item, which requested the Committee's consideration of whether to advance a proposed Charter Amendment addressing historic harmful public policy decisions. As directed by the Board of County Commissioners at its May 12, 2026 meeting, the proposed amendment would use a geographically based framework rather than protected-class criteria and would be developed consistent with applicable state and federal law without jeopardizing state or federal funding. Staff presented the following options: (1) accept the report and take no further action; or (2) advance a proposed Charter Amendment for consideration at the Committee's first public hearing on June 30, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Bruce Strouble, Jr., presented a revised charter amendment proposal developed in response to concerns raised by staff and legal counsel. He distributed handouts with his revised proposal and explained that the proposal removed references to protected classes and funding requirements, instead establishing a geographically based framework for recurring assessments of the impacts of historic public policies and governmental practices. He stated that the proposal was intended to promote accountability, transparency, and public reporting rather than create mandates or race-based programs.

Slaton Murray moved, seconded by Howard Kessler, to open the item for discussion.

The motion carried 17 – 0 with Committee Members Anita Favors, Heidi Otway, Sean Pittman and William Smith not present.

Slaton Murray asked who would oversee the framework and whether a new board, committee, or governmental function would be required. He also asked whether implementation would create financial obligations for the County.

Bruce Strouble, Jr., responded that the proposal intentionally leaves implementation details to County staff and the Board of County Commissioners. He explained that the framework would require a formal assessment every four years, with findings presented to the Board for public review and consideration. The Board would then determine how to respond to the findings and whether the information should be incorporated into County decision-making. He emphasized

that the proposal itself does not create automatic expenditures and leaves any financial commitments to the discretion of the Board.

County Administrator Long advised that if the Committee wished to advance a Charter Amendment, it would need to specify the language it intended to recommend before taking final action.

Bruce Strouble, Jr., moved, seconded by Howard Kessler, for Option #2: Advance a proposed Charter Amendment addressing historic harmful public policy decisions for consideration at the Committee's first of three public hearings on June 30, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Joey Davis questioned why the proposed language applied countywide rather than to specific geographic areas and asked how the proposed assessment and reporting process would differ from existing County evaluations and reporting practices.

Bruce Strouble, Jr., explained that the proposed language was intentionally broad to allow the framework to address community concerns throughout Leon County, including issues that may emerge in the future.

County Administrator Long stated that while the County conducts numerous program-specific evaluations and reporting activities, it does not currently have a single, comprehensive process for assessing historic harms as illustrated in the proposal.

Barry Wilcox requested a practical example of how the proposed framework would work.

Chair Lindley invited Commissioner Bill Proctor to respond to Mr. Wilcox's question.

Commissioner Bill Proctor cited examples of annexation, infrastructure, and service disparities in certain communities, stating that such issues illustrate the types of historic public policy decisions that could be reviewed under the proposed amendment.

Vice Chairman Haynes stated that he would oppose the amendment, arguing that the County already addresses historical inequities through existing programs and investments. He expressed concern that adding the issue to the Charter could expand it beyond its intended role. He then questioned whether similar charter provisions exist elsewhere and expressed concern that the proposal could be perceived as a DEI initiative. He also questioned the need for recurring assessments focused on historical harms.

County Administrator Long responded that such provisions are generally uncommon.

Slaton Murray noted that ongoing Blueprint investments are helping address infrastructure and equity concerns in underserved communities and praised the County's existing efforts.

Henry Lewis, III, proposed a friendly amendment revising the ballot title to "Affirmation of County's Commitment to Historically Underserved Areas and Vulnerable Populations in Our Community" and removing the phrase "later determined to be unlawful or unconstitutional" from the amendment language. He stated that the changes would provide greater clarity and broaden the amendment's scope.

Bruce Strouble, Jr., accepted the friendly amendment.

Joey Davis proposed a friendly amendment to remove the word "historic" from the charter language, arguing that the amendment should address both past and future policy impacts and remain relevant over time.

Bruce Strouble, Jr., accepted the friendly amendment.

Shamarial Roberson stated that removing the word “historic” would make the amendment more relevant to current and future issues. She also sought assurance from legal counsel that the revised language would not conflict with state or federal law before supporting the proposal.

Deputy County Attorney Norton stated that she could review the proposed language for potential conflicts with applicable law but could not predict the legality of future actions or policies that might result from the amendment.

Linda Bond Edwards stated that the phrase “adverse community conditions” would provide flexibility and allow residents to raise concerns about the impacts of County policies or actions. She argued that the amendment could benefit any resident affected by such conditions.

Deputy County Attorney Norton cautioned that the term “adverse community conditions” may be too broad and undefined, potentially creating ambiguity about what issues would qualify for review under the amendment.

County Administrator Long advised that removing limited language could make the amendment difficult to implement by creating uncertainty about which policies, actions, or conditions should trigger an assessment.

Deputy County Attorney Norton added that any approved charter language would need to be sufficiently clear because the charter does not contain a general definitions section.

Bruce Strouble, Jr., cautioned that removing the word “historic” could make the proposal overly broad and weaken its original purpose. He requested that Joey Davis withdraw his friendly amendment.

Chair Lindley supported retaining the word “historic,” stating that it better reflects the amendment’s intent and provides greater clarity for voters.

Joey Davis withdrew his friendly amendment.

Vice Chairman Haynes offered a substitute motion, stating his preference for using the Charter Preamble to affirm the County’s existing commitment to historically underserved areas and vulnerable populations without establishing a new Charter-based assessment process.

Vice Chairman Chauncy Haynes made a substitute motion to adopt the ballot title and ballot language presented by staff in the agenda item, which would amend the Charter Preamble to affirm the County’s commitment to addressing the needs of historically underserved geographical areas and vulnerable populations of the community while preserving the County’s existing framework for local self-governance, community values, and citizen empowerment.

The motion failed for lack of a second.

Shamarial Roberson asked whether Leon County has a defined meaning for “historic public policies” or any formally identified unlawful historic policies.

Deputy County Attorney Norton responded that the County does not have a specific definition or formal classification for historic public policies.

Bruce Strouble, Jr., requested to proceed with the vote.

Vice Chairman Haynes questioned how Committee members could evaluate the proposal without a clear definition of “historic public policies”.

Committee members sought clarification on the motion.

Ms. Hatch explained that the motion consisted of three components: the proposed ballot title, ballot language, and charter amendment language as revised by the Committee. It was also confirmed that the proposed charter amendment language would be revised to reflect the changes made by the Committee to the ballot title and ballot language.

Bruce Strouble, Jr., moved, seconded by Howard Kessler, for Option #2, as amended: Advance a proposed Charter Amendment addressing historic harmful public policy decisions for consideration at the Committee's first of three public hearings on June 30, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. based on the Ballot Title and Language as amended and approved by the Committee as follows:

- *Proposed Ballot Title (As Revised and Approved by Committee): "Affirmation Of County's Commitment To Historically Underserved And Vulnerable Populations"*
- *Proposed Ballot Language (As Revised and Approved by Committee): "Shall the Home Rule Charter of Leon County, Florida be amended to provide for a recurring Community Impact Assessment process, public reporting, and Board of County Commissioners' review and response regarding adverse community conditions related to historic public policies or governmental practices?"*

The motion carried 14 – 3 with Vice Chairman Chauncy Haynes, Slaton Murray and Shamariel Roberson in opposition. Committee Members Anita Favors, Heidi Otway, Sean Pittman and William Smith were not present.

Ms. Hatch announced public hearings on June 30, July 16, and July 30, advising that the Committee's attendance was required and that votes would be taken at each hearing. She noted that additional revisions to the language could be considered and that, if approved, the proposal would advance to the Board of County Commissioners in August of 2026.

Committee members acknowledged the complexity of the issue, noting that questions involving historical inequities and governmental authority present significant legal and policy considerations.

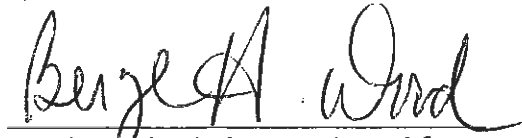
Commissioner Proctor thanked the Committee for its work and described the discussion as one of the most thoughtful public policy conversations he had witnessed during his tenure.

Committee members expressed appreciation for the respectful and professional dialogue throughout the process despite differing viewpoints. Thanks were extended to the Chair, legal counsel, the County Administrator, and supporting staff for their assistance throughout the review process.

Adjournment:

Chair Lindley adjourned the meeting at 2:11 p.m.

ATTEST:



Beryl Wood, Clerk to the Board for
Gwen Marshall Knight, Clerk of Court



Mary Ann Lindley, Chair
Leon County Citizen Charter Review Committee