

CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION
Wednesday, September 10, 2008
6th Floor Conference Room
Council Office Building

Commission Members Present:

Nancy Soreng, Chair
Alice Gresham Bullock, Vice-Chair
Karen Czapanskiy
Wilbur Friedman
Mollie Habermeier
Robert Shoenberg
Anne Marie Vassallo
Charles Wolff

Staff:

Robert Drummer, Legislative Attorney
Marie Jean-Paul, County Council Staff
Marc Hansen, County Attorney's Office

Commission Members Absent:

Michael Cogan
Judith Vandegriff

Commission Chair Nancy Soreng began the meeting at 8:10 a.m. Ms. Soreng welcomed Robert Drummer, Legislative Attorney to the meeting, in the absence of Amanda Mihill who is on maternity leave.

I. Subcommittee Reports

Inspector General

Commission member Habermeier reviewed a draft of her memo entitled "Possible Charter Amendments Regarding the Inspector General." The memo reflects the proposals the Commission discussed regarding the placement of the Office of the Inspector General in the Executive Branch. Commissioners discussed Ms. Habermeier's memo and a copy will be made a part of the minutes.

The Commission decided to focus on wrapping up its recommendations regarding the Inspector General and the Special Taxing Districts in the fall of 2008. After the public hearing on October 6, and sometime before the end of 2008, a determination which will be made on new topics, if any, to research for the 2010 report.

The subcommittee that is assigned to the Inspector General issue will interview staff of the Office of Legislative Oversight, preferably the Director, to gain insight on whether there has been any conflict of interest or duplication of effort in relation to that office and the office of the IG. They will also speak to the Inspector General to discern whether the current funding process for the Office has had any impact on its independence.

Special Taxing areas

A concern was raised about the frequency with which Park and Planning staff are recommending special taxing districts to fund development projects. The subcommittee that is assigned to the special taxing districts issue will look into this and report back to the Commission at the October 15 meeting.

II. Public Forum

The Commission agreed that a second notice of the October public forum should be circulated. It was requested that this notice include a deadline for sign up. Also, the last sentence of the second paragraph should be removed and replaced with a single sentence third paragraph that says, "Comments on other Charter related issues are welcome."

The Commission had previously decided to hold a public forum on Monday, October 6, 2008 from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 pm. in the Council Office Building 7th Floor Hearing Room. The Commissioners agreed that even if no one is signed up to testify, the hearing will still be conducted in case individuals arrive to listen, or decide at the last minute to present testimony.

Staff was asked to send Amanda's letter to municipal leaders concerning the special taxing districts issue.

III. Administrative items

Ms. Soreng asked for a motion to approve the minutes of May 14, 2008. Mr. Cogan and Ms. Vandegriff abstained from voting. The minutes were approved with the following amendments: Alice Geshman Bullock's name should be added to the list of CRC members voting for approval of the minutes.

One Commission member stated that the vacant seat was never filled when Diane Felton resigned and asked if there is a new candidate.

The Commissioners requested that a calendar of proposed meeting dates be sent to them.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 a.m.