

**Charter Review Commission Meeting  
Regular Session  
September 6, 2023**

The Charter Review Commission for Dorchester County convened in Open Session in Room 110 of the County Office Building at 6:10 p.m. on the 5th day of September 2023. A roll call of the members was conducted. Present in Room 110 were: William Layton, Chair; Allen Nelson, Vice Chair; Glenn Bramble; Linda Henry; George “Phillip” Reed; Susan Dukes; and, Robert Murphy. Also present in Room 110 was Donna F. Lane, Chief of Staff.

**REGULAR SESSION**

**LEGAL ADVICE – CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION**

In response to questions from the August 30, 2023 meeting, Ms. Lane provided the following legal opinions of Charles MacLeod, Attorney,

- 1) The wording of ballot questions and/or the number of subjects covered by a ballot question, depends on the issue (what Charter section(s) impacted. Under State law, local government Charter amendments are to embrace one subject only. It is advisable to limit the scope of each ballot question to a single subject (specific Charter section). The Charter Review Commission (CRC) may make recommendations for Charter amendments in concept and may recommend ballot language. Ultimately, the County Council will consider CRC recommendations and then direct the County Attorney, or other designee, to draft the proposed ballot questions for submittal to the State Board of Elections.
- 2) The CRC is subject to the Open Meetings Act (OMA). If they intend to discuss a subject that triggers or justifies a Closed Session pursuant to the OMA, that is permitted and the appropriate meeting minutes must be prepared; however, as an advisory board making Charter amendment recommendations, is not expected to wade into topics and discussions in Closed Sessions. It is in fact advisable that any recommended Charter amendments be accompanied by the CRC’s rationale and intent for such amendment, which should be the product of public discussion and deliberation.

Based on a query, Ms. Dukes and Mr. Reed, who were on the 2022 Charter Review Commission, explained that they talked about personnel issues in open session without referencing names or identifying personality traits. Mr. Reed said requests were sent to the County Department Heads, the Acting County Manager and the County Council seeking their anonymous comments regarding the County Charter.

**OTHER**

The Board agreed to review each section of the current County Charter in order.

**BRIEF DISCUSSION OF ARTICLES**

The Board briefly discussed Articles 1 to Article 4, flagging the following sections for further review:

- Article 2 – 203, 204, 205c, 206, 212, & 213
- Article 3 – 303, 304, 308, & 309
- Article 4 – 404, 405, 406, & 409

Mr. Bramble left the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

The Board acknowledged that the remaining Articles will be reviewed and sections will be flagged for further review at the next meeting.

**OTHER**

Mr. Nelson provided the Board with the Dorchester County Charter Amendment Petition that was sponsored and pursued by the Dorchester Citizens for Better Government last year for its consideration.

**ADJOURNMENT**


With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned.


ATTEST:


  
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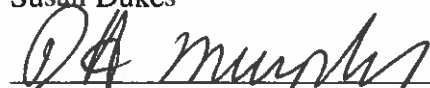
CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION

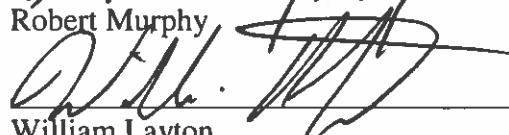
  
Glenn Bramble


  
Linda Henry

  
George "Phillip" Reed

  
Susan Dukes

  
Robert Murphy

  
William Layton

  
Allen Nelson

Approved the 20th day of September 2023.