

WESTCHESTER COUNTY CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION
CHARTER AND CODE FOCUS GROUP MINUTES
February 16, 2012

Members in Attendance: Guy Parisi, Florence McCue

County Staff in Attendance: Stacey Dolgin-Kmetz, Chris Crane, Melanie Montalto

Special Counsel in Attendance: Lester Steinman

MINUTES

Focus Group Chairman Parisi called the meeting to order at Noon

Synopsis of the former Charter Revision Commission's recommendations was begun. However many questions concerning the meaning of the proposals were raised. Chris provided us with a full copy of the Commission's Report.

Chris also provided a list of the provisions in the current charter that he suggests are in possible need of revision.

It was agreed that in order to facilitate Vice-Chair McCue's ongoing request for a more comprehensive breakdown of the components of the county budget and the proposed costs for each, that she should out the request into writing and ask CRC Chairman Wishnie to forward it to the correct department.

The role of the county attorney was discussed especially the issue of representation when the County Executive and the board of legislators do not agree. Who does the county attorney represent in that instance? Les Steinman suggested that we obtain input from former county attorneys as to what they see as needs for change in the Charter and Code. Stacey, Guy and Les were able to identify particular individuals to invite. The invitees would be asked what issues were confronted by them during their tenure when working with the Charter and Code. They would also be asked whether the Board of Legislators should have their own attorney. The county attorney now advises the County Executive and the Board of Legislators. The question was whether there should be a separate counsel appointed to only advise the Board of Legislators. Guy told us that he used to be counsel to the Board and that during his service the county attorney drafted legislation and was the parliamentarian.

The process of appointment and confirmation is another area that needs revision.

The Budget Director's relationship to the Board of Legislators is another area in the Charter that needs more clarity.

The Playland section: who should be in charge? The Board could reestablish the Commission.

Evaluate how the county board is treated in the charter. Review the separation and **balance of powers**.

Chairman Parisi stated that the next meeting of the Focus Group will be on March 22, 2012 at Noon in the library on the 8th floor of the county office building.

Focus Group meeting adjourned at 1:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Florence McCue