

**CITY OF WINTER GARDEN
CHARTER REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
March 27, 2006**

The organizational meeting of the Winter Garden Charter Review Advisory Committee Meeting was called to order by Facilitator Marilyn Crotty at 6:38 PM at Tanner Hall, 29 W. Garden Avenue, Winter Garden, Florida.

1. ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Derek Blakeslee
Ed Lynch
Don Miller
Barbara Muzeni
Richard Napotnik
Pamella Stewart

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Erma Dennard
Richard Hudson
Bert Valdes

Facilitator:

Marilyn Crotty

Also Present:

City Clerk Kathy Golden
Assistant City Clerk Angee Grimmage
City Manager Mike Bollhoefer (left at 6:50 p.m.)

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Facilitator Marilyn Crotty introduced herself and described her background and experience.

Ms. Crotty explained her role and process, which will include presenting the pros and cons as well as advice about what, has and hasn't worked well in other communities. As Facilitator, Ms. Crotty will assure that all members have an opportunity to participate and voice opinions. She will help the group to stay focused and be allowed the opportunity to fully examine all issues presented to a satisfactory end product.

Committee members then introduced themselves.

Mr. Bollhoefer explained that, although the committee wished to have an attorney present at meetings to be available for legal questions that may arise, the City Attorney recently resigned so he is not here today. Mr. Bollhoefer stated that he expects that the City's legal firm will have an attorney available to attend future meetings. Mr. Bollhoefer left the meeting at this time.

3. OVERVIEW OF PROCESS

Ms. Crotty first reminded members that they are an advisory capacity and as such will not be making the final decisions. The committee will be making decisions on their recommendations throughout the process, with the end report being presented to the City Commission for a final decision.

Ms. Crotty recommended that this group accomplish as much as they can by consensus after discussion and debate. She explained that in order for the items to be accepted by the Commission and Community it is important that the Committee agree by consensus on all aspects of the process. On the occasion when this is not possible, there are two options: leave the item out or call for a vote to put the issue forward as a majority opinion. In the end, there will be a vote on the entire package to be presented to the Commission.

Ms. Crotty discouraged electing a Committee Chair and stated that as the facilitator she will control the meeting as far as assuring everyone an equal opportunity to speak, encourage discussion and debate, limit excessive speaking, and disallow disruptive behavior or personal attacks. Members present agreed to this structure.

4. GOVERNMENT IN THE SUNSHINE LAWS

Ms. Crotty provided a handout describing “Government in the Sunshine” and went over some key points.

- All committees must have open meetings, noticed to the public.
- If any two committee members get together to discuss charter business or anything that could conceivably come before this body, it is considered a meeting and if it was not noticed to the public, it is against the law. Committee members may not meet and discuss topics related to committee business outside of noticed meetings.
- A “meeting” can be a phone call, electronic mail, or any other type of communication between committee members. Members are allowed to communicate one-on-one with Ms. Crotty or city staff.
- Meetings must be in a place accessible to the public and be American Disabilities Act compliant.
- Meeting minutes must be taken.
- When a vote is taken all committee members are required to vote; members cannot abstain unless there is a conflict of interest.
- Any document created by a committee member to “perpetuate, communicate, or formalize knowledge” is a public record, even if it is a draft document or personal notes.

5. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON MUNICIPAL CHARTERS

Ms. Crotty provided copies of a model charter for review, background information, and suggestions. She shared that the City Charter is the city’s Constitution. It should be

simple and not contain items that may be subject to frequent change. A change in the Charter requires a vote by the citizens.

6. ESTABLISHMENT OF GROUND RULES

- One person to speak at a time; don't interrupt.
- Allow everyone to respond to comments; don't let the discussion turn into a dialog between two members.

Discussion on attendance requirements and the committee decided at this time not to formalize any.

- Let the City Clerk know if you are not going to be at a meeting so if it turns out that there will not be a quorum, the meeting can be rescheduled.
- Be prepared for the upcoming meeting; do your homework. Ms. Crotty will prepare agendas and send to the Clerk for distribution prior to meeting.
- Stick to the agenda so that members can be prepared for discussion.
- Start on time and end on time.
- All ideas are valid. There's no such thing as a stupid question or comment. We are dealing with issues, not people.
- Tone of discussions should be conciliatory, not confrontational. Work to find common ground.
- Decisions to be made by consensus.
- Consider the long-range; what's best for the City of Winter Garden.

7. MEETING SCHEDULE

By consensus, the committee decided to allow 15 minutes at the beginning of every meeting be allocated for public input. Time allotted for each speaker will be determined by the number of people wanting to speak.

Consider identifying certain meetings with longer time allotted for public input. This will be decided at a later time.

The next meeting will be Monday, April 24 at 6:30 p.m. with the following meetings to be held on Tuesdays: May 9, May 23, June 13, June 27, July 11, July 25, August 8, August 22, 2006. Further meetings may be scheduled as necessary.

8. GENERAL DISCUSSION

None

9. ADJOURNMENT at 8:44 p.m.