

**CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION  
ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING  
January 18, 2011**

A meeting of the Charter Review commission was held on Tuesday, January 18, 2011 at the Columbus Convention and Trade Center, Columbus Georgia. Mr. John Shinkle, Chairman, presiding.

**PRESENT:** Mr. Rick Alexander, Judge John Allen, Mr. W. J. Barrs, Mr. Mario Davis, Mr. Michael Eddings, Ms. Gladys Ford, Mr. Madden Hatcher, Jr., Mr. David Helmick, Mr. Julius Hunter, Mr. Bob Hydrick, Mr. D. L. Moore, Ms. Mary Sue Polleys, Ms. Brinkley Pound, Mr. Ben Richardson, Mr. John J. Rodgers, Mr. Alton Russell, Mr. Tracy Sayers, Mr. John Shinkle, Ms. Melanie Slaton, Ms. Gloria Strode, Ms. Audrey Tillman, Mr. Jorge Vega, Mr. Sam Wellborn, Mr. Brad Williams and Mr. John Woodward.

**ABSENT:** No one was absent.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mayor Teresa Tomlinson, City Manger Isaiah Hugley, City Attorney Clifton Fay, Assistant City Attorney Jaimie DeLoach, Clerk of Council Tiny B. Washington, Shondell Duncan, Ms. Tameka Colbert, Secretary and members of the media were present as well.

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This meeting was called to order at 11:45 a.m.

**WELCOME:** Mr. John Shinkle came forward to welcome all members and visitors to the Charter Review Commission Meeting. Chairman Shinkle recognized Assistant City Attorney Jamie DeLoach who would be present at each meeting, along with Ms. Tameka Colbert, Secretary for the Charter Review Commission.

**INVOCATION:** Offered by Pastor Jimmy Elder, First Baptist Church.

**ROLL CALL:** At this time, Clerk of Council Tiny Washington called roll and everyone was present.

**OATHS OF OFFICE:**

Mayor Teresa Tomlinson, Columbus Consolidated Government administered the following oaths of office to Mr. Rick Alexander, Judge John Allen, Mr. W. J. Barrs, Mr. Mario Davis, Mr. Michael Eddings, Ms. Gladys Ford, Mr. Madden Hatcher, Jr., Mr. David Helmick, Mr. Julius Hunter, Mr. Bob Hydrick, Mr. D. L. Moore, Ms. Mary Sue Polleys, Ms. Brinkley Pound, Mr. Ben Richardson, Mr. John J. Rodgers, Mr. Alton Russell, Mr. Tracy Sayers, Mr. John Shinkle, Ms. Melanie Slaton, Ms. Gloria Strode, Ms. Audrey Tillman, Mr. Jorge Vega, Mr. Sam Wellborn, Mr. Brad Williams and Mr. John Woodward.

**OFFICIAL OATH OF THE CHARTER COMMISSION MEMBERS:**

(Collectively) Do each of you solemnly swear or affirm that you are a resident of Columbus, Georgia, and that you will faithfully and impartially demean yourself as a member of the Charter Review Commission during your continuance in office; that you will discharge your duties to the best of your ability and that you will do so agreeably with the laws of the United States of America, the State of Georgia, and the Charter of the Columbus Consolidated Government.

**SO HELP ME GOD.**

**Sworn to and subscribed  
before me this 18<sup>th</sup> day of  
January 2011.**

**Teresa Tomlinson, Mayor  
Columbus Consolidated Government**

**MAYOR'S CHARGE TO THE CHARTER COMMISSION:**

Mayor Teresa Tomlinson issued her Charge and instructions to the members of the Charter Review Commission. *(See attachment A for the complete Charge)*

After Mayor Tomlinson had issued her Charge, City Attorney Clifton Fay came forward and advised each Commission member that he would willingly assist any member who has questions or concerns. He advised the Commission members not to address the Tax freeze. He said it is in the law as a constitutional amendment and is not a part of the Charter.

**EMAILS:**

Chairman Shinkle cautioned the Commission that any emails in relation to the Commission would be public information.

**MEETING SCHEDULE:**

Chairman Shinkle proposed that all meetings be held on the first Monday of each month from 3:00-5:00 p.m. with the exception of July 4<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Rick Alexander then made a motion that all meetings be held on the first Monday of each month from 3:00-5:00 p.m. with the exception of July 4<sup>th</sup>. Seconded by Mr. Sam Wellborn and carried unanimously by those 25 members of the Commission who were present for this meeting.

Chairman Shinkle took the time to thank Clerk of Council Tiny Washington for expanding the actual size of the Charter. He then advised each member to read the Charter in its entirety. He said the last Charter Review Commission had each article reviewed by the Commission in mass. He said their recommendation at that time was to leave the Charter as is. He said he would like to divide the articles into subcommittees,

which would allow additional discussion. He said he would like for the subcommittees to meet between the monthly meetings to consider all of the potential changes that may come to pass. He encouraged the members to read the Charter and ask themselves which article they would like to specifically be involved with. He said there would probably be 4 to 5 subcommittees if the Commission approves the concept. He advised that the meeting dates for the subcommittees would have to be published as well as being open for public attendance. He said this issue would be voted on at the February 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Mr. David Helmick asked if the subcommittees would be divided based on the actual articles of the Charter or the broader areas of the Charter.

In response to Mr. Helmick's question, Chairman Shinkle said there might be some issues that relate to each other but his suggestion would be that the subcommittees be divided by the articles.

Mr. David Helmick asked if it were possible for the Commission to attain a website that would list the meeting times and dates along with the findings of the subcommittees. He said this would ensure that the public is educated and aware of what the Commission is doing.

Several Commission members raised concerns of their personal emails being exposed to the public under the open records act.

City Attorney Clifton Fay reiterated that any correspondences regarding the Charter Review Commission would be subject to the Open Records Act.

In turn Chairman Shinkle asked Clerk of Council Washington would it be possible to have a website developed for the Charter Review Commission.

Clerk of Council Washington advised that she did not think it would be a problem and said she would check with the IT Department.

Mr. Ben Richardson asked if there had been any discussion on the Commission meeting being publicized on television.

Chairman Shinkle said although Mayor Pro Tem Turner Pugh did suggest that the meetings be publicized, the regular meeting are not scheduled to be televised, however, Mayor Tomlinson has asked that all public hearings be televised.

Mr. David Helmick asked if there is an existing budget or line item for the use of the Commission or in the event that an outside consultant is needed.

Chairman Shinkle said at this time the Commission does not have a budget. He said the City Attorney has assured him that if an outside consultant is needed, the money would be provided.

Mr. W. J. Barrs inquired about the procedure for accepting questions from the public.

Chairman Shinkle said he believes that in the past the Chairman has taken all questions. He said with the pleasure of this body, we will continue that same process.

Mr. Woodward suggested that citizens have access to the website to document their issues and concerns.

Chairman Shinkle said that is a great idea and we will work towards getting that accomplished.

**VICE-CHAIRMAN:**

Chairman Shinkle encouraged the members of the Commission to consider a nominee for Vice-Chair, which would be discussed at the next meeting.

With there being no further business to discuss, this meeting adjourned at 12:54p.m.

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Tameka Colbert, Secretary