

**BARROW COUNTY CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE  
ADMINISTRATIVE ANNEX  
JUNE 9, 2011  
7:00 P.M.**

**MEETING SUMMARY**

**Members Present:**

Ray Newman, Chairman  
Bob Akin  
Chris Bailey  
Pat Graham  
Scott Hang  
John King  
David Mann  
Ken Young

**Others Present:**

Frank Clark  
Boyd McLocklin  
Michelle Sims  
Dwain Anderson  
Frank Nocera  
Larry Ballard  
Beth Barten  
Susan Ryan

**Media Present:**

Doug Moser, **Barrow News**  
Susan Norman, **Barrow Journal**  
Merritt Melancon, **Athens Banner Herald**  
Deanna Allen, **Barrow Patch**

**Facilitators:**

Jim Dove, NEGRC  
Mott Beck, NEGRC  
Dave Wills, ACCG

Chairman Newman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance. He asked members if there were any changes to the May 31<sup>st</sup> meeting summary as presented. There being none, the summary was approved by consensus. The Chairman asked Mr. Dove to give attendees an overview of previous meetings. He indicated that previous meetings had focused on the Chairman's veto powers and the possibility of having a Manager/Administrator form of government. There are also sections of the Charter that should possibly be reviewed and amended.

Chairman Newman began the meeting by asking for comments from guests in attendance. The following comments were made by attendees and Committee members:

- A primary concern is balance of power. Needing five members to override a veto is too many.....four would be better. This would help promote more teamwork.

- Manager form of government is preferred, but this will not solve all problems. Having a trained Manager will provide for a more balanced form of government.
- As changes are recommended, duties of the Chairman must be considered. The amount of money to implement such a change, and its source, must be considered. Charter changes will likely revolve around the Chairman, and multiple items should be reviewed.
- BOC has obligation to project a team effort. Employment of a Manager frees the BOC to be “cheerleaders” for the County.
- Opposed to having a Manager....some reasons are costs, situations in counties nearby, and larger government isn't the answer. Individual expects to be represented by the Chairman and a District Commissioner. The Chairman must have veto power.
- There are concerns associated with costs related to County Manager form of government.
- Any recommended changes should take effect after the next general election unless BOC chooses otherwise (This recommendation was approved by consensus.)
- Chairman should be “head of state” for the County.
- Professional staff is needed to manage day-to-day operations. Special sets are needed. The Chairman should perform in a legislative role, serve on various boards, associations, etc., and promote economic development. A change in compensation would be appropriate.
- Prefer Manager with full responsibility for day-to-day operations. This will provide for a more stable workforce.
- Need Manager to “run business”.
- Manager is not accountable to the citizens. Nearby counties have been obligated to pay large severance package. Prefers keeping Chairman with veto powers; however, would consider a change to four votes to override a veto. County would still need a full time Chairman if Manager was hired.
- Make Chairman less than full time. Prefer Administrator form of government.
- Which form of government has greatest chance of promoting professionalism? There is a greater chance, long term, with a Manager or Administrator. Also, Chairman's veto powers create turmoil.
- Need someone to manage on a professional level that has certain skills, education, and experience. That person should be hired, not elected. Prefers to have a Manager and scale back Chairman's duties.

Chairman Newman then asked for specific motions regarding recommendations. They are as follows:

- ***Any recommendation of this Committee acted upon by the Barrow County Board of Commissioners should take effect after the next General Election unless the Board of Commissioners chooses otherwise. Adopted by Consensus.***
- ***A professional County Manager or Administrator form of government is preferred, with the Manager or Administrator having the ability to hire and fire Department Heads. The costs associated with such form of government should be reviewed and the matter presented to voters in a referendum. (Original motion by John King, second by Bob Akin.) The Chair should have full voting powers; however, veto powers should be eliminated. (Motion to amend by Ken Young, second by John King,) Unanimous votes.***
- ***The number of members constituting a quorum should be changed to four, including the Chairman or Chairman Pro-Tem in the absence of the Chairman. Motion by Ken Young, second by John King, unanimous vote.***
- ***Any matter requiring official action by the Board of Commissioners should require four affirmative votes for passage. Motion by Pat Graham, second by David Mann, unanimous vote.***
- ***Section 11(b) of the Charter should be amended to read as follows:***

***“The board shall elect a Clerk whose duty shall be to keep a full and accurate record of all the actions and doings of the board of said county, which records shall be opened for the inspection of the public at all times during office hours and when the board is not in session. The Clerk shall perform such other duties and keep such records as required by law or may be required of him or her by the board, and for the Clerk’s services, the Clerk shall receive an amount of compensation to be determined by the board, payable in accordance with current policy, and with the further provision that the Clerk shall not be a member of the board and shall be on a full-time basis.”***

***Motion by Ken Young, second by Scott Hang, unanimous vote.***

- ***Section 9 of the Charter (regarding payments) should be reviewed and rewritten to be in harmony with the present form of government. Motion by David Mann, second by Ken Young, unanimous vote.***

These recommendations will be presented to the Board of Commissioners at its meeting on June 14, 2011.

The Committee expressed appreciation to the facilitators, and to each other, for efforts undertaken during the past several weeks. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.