

2007-2008 CHARTER ISSUE SUMMARY

Clarifying the Appointment and Confirmation Process for the Charter Review Commission

Issue subject: Should we clarify the appointment and confirmation process for the Charter Review Commission?

Issue raised by: Councilmembers are concerned about the integrity of the Charter Review Commission's appointment/confirmation process, particularly because the current Commission did not go through a formal confirmation process.

Description of issue:

Section 340.40 states, "the appointments by the county executive shall be subject to confirmation by a majority of the county council." However, Charter Section 800 states, "the county executive shall appoint a citizen commission of not less than fifteen members", and makes no mention of a confirmation process. A formal Council confirmation process was not conducted for the 2007-2008 Charter Review Commission appointments. The PAO's interpretation is that Charter Review Commission appointments are subject to confirmation by the Council.

In order to avoid confusion in the future, language in Sections 340.40 and 800 will be reconciled to clarify that the Executive appoints, and the Council confirms, the members of the Charter Review Commission.

Subcommittee Recommendations:

The Governmental Structure subcommittee voted unanimously to request that the PAO submit language clarifying the appointment and confirmation process for the Charter Review Commission.

Suggested Charter Revision:

Section 800 Charter Review and Amendments.

At least every ten years after the adoption of this charter, the county executive shall appoint a citizen commission of not less than fifteen members whose mandate shall be to review the charter and present, or cause to be presented, to the county council a written report recommending those amendments, if any, which should be made to the charter. Appointees shall be subject to confirmation by a majority of the county council. This citizen commission shall be composed of at least one representative from each of the county council districts.

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