

Albany County Charter Revision Commission
Meeting Five: March 28, 2013

Members Present

Willow Baer

Bob Batson

Antonio Cortes

Jacob Crawford

Patrick Dalzell

Michael Elmendorf

Henry Greenberg, Chairman

Ami J. Schnauber

William Smith, Vice-Chair

Paul Weafer

Henry Greenberg called the meeting to order. Willow Smith made a motion to approve minutes, seconded by Jacob Crawford. All approved.

County Director of Operations Bradley Fischer, Assistant County Attorney Patrick Collins, and Commissioners from the county Sherriff's Office, Department of Probation, Coroners, Office of the Public Defender were in attendance.

Given technical issues with the Committee email system, Henry Greenberg proposed using personal email accounts to exchange information and copying County Attorney Patrick Collins in every email. Additionally, they discussed having a point person receive all email inquiries from the public, Willow Baer volunteered for this role.

The Committee discussed strategies to formalize outreach to the community. Henry Greenburg proposed writing a letter to various constituents to inform them of the work that the Committee does in order to encourage participation from the public. The Committee agreed to develop a list of groups and individuals to reach out to. Willow volunteered to oversee community outreach efforts.

The Committee proceeded to interview each Public Safety Commissioners regarding their opinions on the county charter. Commissioners from each department expressed overall satisfaction with the county charter and suggested minor amendments. Sherriff Apple recommends that all 5 offices in the department get recognized in order for the public to understand the work of the Sherriff's Office. Sheriff Apple also recommends amending the charter to allow for flexibility in hiring EMT professional living outside of Albany County.

The Public Defender, Jim Milstein, recommended changes in order allow for a more efficient way of providing indigent services. Representatives from the Coroner's office and the Probation Department did not express desire to change the charter. All Public Safety Commissioners left by 8:30pm.

Mr. Patrick Collins distributed a summary of his analysis on whether Chair of the Legislature is to appoint Chair. His conclusion was that protocol on this matter was not clear and recommended that the Committee interpret it however they choose. Tony made a motion to elect Henry as Chair, Jacob Seconded. All in favor. All.

Henry Greenberg proposed that a member of the Committee summarize recommended changes to the charter for each department interviewed to date. Henry Greenberg, Paul Weafer, Bob Batsen, Antonio volunteered to do summary of Public Defenders Office, County Sheriff, Coroners, and Probation Department, respectively.

Jacob Crawford created a work plan that the Committee will use to organize meetings with County Government officials over the coming months.

Paul Weafer moved to adjourn meeting. All in favor. Meeting concluded.

Next meeting is 4/08/13 at 6:00pm