

The 2021 Wicomico County Charter Review Committee met on March 25, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. in the Flanders Room of the Civic Center, Salisbury, Maryland.

Members Present: Mike Dunn, Chair; Robert Benson, Vice Chair; Dallas Baker, Julie Bellamy, Doug Gosnell, Katherine Jones, Sharon Morris, David Plotts, Michelle Chesnik, Anthony Sarbanes, Wayne Strausburg, Mat Tilghman, Philip Tilghman, Blair Todd, and Sonya Whited.

Staff Present: Laura Hurley, Recording Secretary, and Paul Wilber, County Attorney.

Mr. Dunn talked about how they are all a team working toward the same goal, and that goal is to provide the framework for good governance.

On motion by Mr. Philip Tilghman and seconded by Ms. Sharon Morris, the Minutes from the meeting of March 10, 2021 were unanimously approved.

Setting Agendas Moving Forward

Mr. Dunn said one thought is, if a topic comes up that they do not have an answer to, they will add that topic to the next Agenda, but the floor is open for suggestions on how they set their Agendas.

Mr. Philip Tilghman suggested Mr. Dunn, Mr. Benson, and Mr. Wilber set the Agenda for each meeting and send it out in advance, and then it could be approved by vote at the beginning of a meeting.

There being no further discussion on the topic, Mr. Dunn said they will bring the Agenda forward to vote on, and if anybody needs to add something, they can make a motion to do so.

Robert's Rules of Order

Mr. Dunn said, in a general sense, they felt adopting Robert's Rules of Order as the way in which they attempt to stick to discussions and resolve things would be in order. He then opened the floor to discussion on the subject.

There being no discussion, on motion by Mr. Mat Tilghman and seconded by Ms. Chesnick, Robert's Rules of Order was unanimously adopted.

Discussion on Public Comments

Mr. Dunn suggested that having Public Comments at a specific time within the meeting at every meeting would be appropriate, and there is a microphone available for the Public Comments.

Ms. Bellamy asked when the Committee will discuss Public Comments submitted on the website, to which Mr. Dunn responded, at the meeting as opposed to back and forth on an email exchange, which is not in the spirit of open meetings.

Mr. Baker said he assumes they will be going through the Charter chapter by chapter, so he suggests discussing comments on a particular chapter during their discussion of that chapter so the public will know to have their comments ready for whichever chapter they will be discussing. He clarified, if comments come in on a chapter they have already reviewed, they can always go back to talk about it.

Mr. Dunn said, as they receive comments on the portal, they will file them into the appropriate Charter Section to discuss when they come to that chapter of the Charter review.

There was then some discussion on a three-minute time limit for each Public Comment, and having Public Comments happen at the end of the meetings.

Ms. Chesnick suggested having people who want to make comments sign in so they know how many people are here and how many plan to make comments.

Mr. Philip Tilghman said they want to encourage people to make Public Comments, so he suggests they encourage people to use the portal rather than drive out here. He clarified, they should still have Public Comments at the meetings, but he thinks the written comments would be a much better medium.

Ms. Chesnick said she does not agree with discouraging people from attending the meetings who want to make Public Comments, as not everyone has internet access, to which Mr. Philip Tilghman responded, he did not mean he was discouraging that.

There was some discussion about how the portal works and it was confirmed that all comments go to all Committee members.

There was further discussion about Public Comments happening towards the end of the meetings, with sufficient time dedicated for everyone who wants to make a comment.

Mrs. Hurley suggested scheduling Public Comments at the beginning of the meeting. Mr. Dunn said he is open to alternating when Public Comments happen, but traditionally they are at the end of the meeting.

Mr. Baker said he thinks at the end is more appropriate as the public may have comments on what the Committee is talking about that evening.

Mr. Mat Tilghman also suggested having comments at the end of the meeting.

Ms. Morris said having the Public Comments at the end of the meeting will help them set the Agenda if it is an issue that needs to be put on the Agenda for the next meeting.

Mr. Dunn said they will schedule Public Comments for the end of the meetings, but as they move forward, if there is a different way they want to approach it, they will approach it.

There was then further discussion and instructions on how the public can use the online portal to make Public Comments.

Discussion on Alternates

Mr. Dunn said there were eight alternates chosen, but there was no guidance on how they would choose an alternate if needed.

Mr. Benson said the eight people selected as alternates have not been ranked, and they have not received any guidance from the Council. He then suggested letting the alternates know up front what order they would be selected in as a courtesy to the alternates, and drawing names randomly because he does not know any other fair way to do it.

Ms. Bellamy suggested matching the skillset of the alternate with the skillset of the Committee member who may have to leave the Committee, such as if an attorney has to leave the Committee, maybe have an attorney step up.

Ms. Chesnick said she does not think they were picked by skillsets, they were picked as citizens who were willing to help and had the time to put in to do it.

Dr. Jones suggested asking the alternates if there is an option they would like to present.

Mr. Dunn then opened the floor for alternates to make suggestions.

Mr. Chris Eccleston came to the microphone and said he agrees with drawing names.

Mr. John Rankin came to the microphone and said he agrees with drawing names.

Mr. Mark Tyler came to the microphone and said he is in support of drawing names. He clarified, he respects the idea of looking at skillset, but he thinks drawing names is the simplest way to manage this.

On motion by Mr. Philip Tilghman and seconded by Mr. Gosnell, it was unanimously agreed that the names of the alternates would be randomly drawn and ranked.

Mrs. Hurley suggested doing the drawing at the next meeting as she does not have the list of alternates with her.

Discussion on Meeting Location/Zoom Meetings/Attendance

Attendance Policy: There was some discussion on an attendance policy and excused absences versus unexcused. Ms. Bellamy suggested a 75 percent attendance threshold for someone to no longer be considered a member of the Committee, and then an alternate would take their place.

Dr. Jones suggested a threshold of missing three meetings in a row or 75 percent of the meetings.

Mr. Philip Tilghman agreed with the three consecutive meetings, but said he doubts very seriously they are going to have to expel anybody as a Body. He clarified, they should have a policy, but he thinks someone would withdraw if they needed knowing there are qualified alternates.

Mr. Baker suggested not using the 75 percent threshold because the number of times they meet may change, which would then change the percentage. He suggested using three meetings in a row or a total of seven meetings missed instead.

Dr. Jones said she thinks three meetings in a row or five total would be appropriate.

Mr. Sarbanes said he does not agree with that. He said he prefers the idea of keeping the group together rather than throwing people off the Committee. He said an alternate being brought in may not know what happened at the prior meetings. He suggested sticking with three in a row or 75 percent. Mr. Benson said the problem with 75 percent is, as Mr. Baker stated, they do not know how many times they will meet. Mr. Baker clarified, when there is no end date, 75 percent is a moving target, so it will all depend on how many total meetings they have.

Mr. Mat Tilghman said he likes the idea of three consecutive or a total of seven.

On motion by Dr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Gosnell, and by majority vote, the attendance policy was adopted that if someone misses three consecutive meetings and/or a total of five meetings, they will no longer be on the Committee.

Location: Mr. Dunn said, as far as location, this room in the Civic Center is only available at 6:00 p.m. Mrs. Hurley clarified, this room is available for the first meeting in April at 5:00 p.m., but after that they will have to meet at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Todd suggested renting out the media center at Wicomico High School.

Mrs. Hurley said she reached out to the public schools, and they were more than willing to help, but they could not guarantee they would have the same school each time. She said she also reached out to Dove Pointe, but they are not renting it out right now, and Salisbury University and Wor-Wic are not allowing external guests on campus right now, but they will revisit that after April 15.

Zoom Meetings: Mr. Dunn said hybrid meetings are less than ideal and he is not sure how they can have a person on Zoom fully participating in an interactive way in the meeting; however, if the pandemic worsens, they have the possibility of all going on Zoom.

Ms. Chesnik said she does a conference call once a month, not Zoom, and she thinks that would be a much more practical method if the pandemic were to advance.

Mr. Dunn said for now they will plan to meet in person, but have the flexibility if things worsen in terms of the pandemic that they will collectively meet as a group either by Zoom or teleconference.

Mrs. Hurley said they do not have the ability to do a hybrid meeting in this room using Zoom, but they could do all Zoom and have PAC 14 broadcast that.

Mr. Benson asked if this room has the ability to have someone participate by telephone. A Civic Center staff member confirmed that they could bring in a telephone and have the participant on speakerphone.

Mr. Benson said the question is whether they are going to allow someone to participate via telephone. He said he does not think they should encourage anyone to only participate by telephone, and he hopes someone would only do it if there was a special need, such as being sick, as opposed to it being convenient.

Dr. Jones suggested only allowing a member to call in for two meetings.

Mr. Dunn said he thinks they should not have the option to call in. He said, barring any changes in the pandemic, the intent of this Committee is to be in attendance in person, and he thinks it would be difficult to have someone on the phone during the meeting.

Mr. Strausburg said people need to be screened when coming to the meeting, and he does not think they want to encourage people who are ill to physically come to a meeting.

Mr. Todd added that someone can be fully healthy but need to quarantine at home due to an exposure.

Mr. Mat Tilghman brought up the issue of having vacations already being paid for and not knowing where that will fall on the Committee's schedule. He said he would be more than happy to call in and participate in the meeting, but he hates to think he cannot go away if it happens to fall during a scheduled meeting.

Mr. Dunn clarified, it is certainly not the intent to make anyone not go away on vacation. He then suggested that the member calling in would be there more so to listen rather than speak.

Mr. Benson clarified, he is not opposed to having someone call in, he just does not want to encourage it. He said calling in should be an option as long as they have the ability to do so. He suggested, if it appears someone is abusing the ability to call in, maybe a phone call to that person from Mr. Dunn or himself would be in order, and if it gets out of hand, he thinks the Committee would have to do something about it. He clarified, he does not think anybody is going to abuse it, but he does not want someone to not go on their vacation, or if he has to quarantine due to COVID, he would like to be able to participate.

There being no further discussion on the topic, Mr. Dunn said there is an expectation to try to show up, but when someone cannot show up, they will try to make accommodations. He said, if not showing up becomes a consistent issue, the Vice Chair is going to call that person.

Timeline for Work of the Charter Review Committee

Mr. Dunn said, in looking at the work of other Charter Review Committees, they were getting their work done in seven to nine months. He said there has been some discussion about this Committee meeting for 12 to 14 months, but he would like to try to be a little more aggressive. He clarified, this does not need to be cast in stone, but he would like them to shoot for wrapping up their work in January 2022.

Mr. Sarbanes asked if there is a really good Charter they could look at, to which Mr. Wilber responded, he has never had someone tell him a certain Charter is the gold standard, and he thinks this Committee should look at multiple Charters for alternative provisions.

Mr. Strausburg said he thinks it is important the Committee provides Council with an adequate amount of time to make their decisions, so they may want to work backwards looking at the drop dead date.

After further discussion, it was determined that the Committee would need to wrap up by May 2022.

Process for the Work of the Charter Review Committee

Mr. Dunn said he looked at Frederick County and liked their process. He said he thinks the process that will work best for them is to just work their way through the Charter one section at a time. He said they will look at suggested changes, vote on them, and move on.

After some discussion, it was decided that they will attempt to follow what Frederick County did as it seemed like a positive outcome.

Explanation of Recommended Changes

Mr. Dunn said this goes back to the list put together for them of proposed Charter amendments. He explained, over the years as the County Council was deliberating various topics and they could not come to a conclusion on what the Charter said about that topic, they added the topic to this list. He clarified, this list is for guidance purposes only, but he thinks they should look at them. Mrs. Hurley added, some of the suggestions came from the Council Attorney at that time as well.

Process for Changing Any Aspect of the Charter

Mr. Dunn said this is for one-word changes as well as big changes, and he will defer to Mr. Wilber to discuss this.

Mr. Wilber explained, the first step is for the Committee to make recommendations whether they be big or small presented in written fashion to the County Council. He said they have talked about a timeline of

January, which is good because Council will probably have a lot to debate, but they may also have their own ideas. He clarified, ultimately, the Council will decide what Charter amendments will be drawn up and voted on by the Council, and those that pass by a majority vote at the County Council will then go to a ballot. He said there will be ballot questions drawn up, and then they will be voted on by the public at the November 2022 election, and those that get a majority vote will become part of the Charter. He clarified, whether it is small or large, the Council has to decide if they want it to be a Charter amendment, and if they decide that and vote on it, then it will be forwarded on to the voters.

Mr. Dunn clarified, whether it is a word change or a big change, it does not start unless the Committee starts it, to which Mr. Wilber responded, sometimes one word change can make a big difference.

Ms. Morris said there are definitions and rules in the back of the Charter, which is where those words would go with whatever definition the group thinks they want it to mean.

Ms. Bellamy asked why there are editor's notes instead of it just being handled in Section 12, to which Mr. Wilber responded, he cannot say for sure, but it may be that there were changes after the Charter was adopted and the editor made some notes. Mrs. Hurley said her recollection is that, once the Charter is submitted to the publisher, if they pick up on anything, they will make that editor's note.

Mr. Baker said it has been his experience that there are a limited number of questions that actually show up on the ballot. He then asked, if they come up with a list of 20 revisions they would like to see made, does the Council then take those and use them every two years for different revisions to the Charter? He further asked how it is decided which suggested changes will go on the ballot, to which Mr. Wilber responded, it is going to be up to Council to decide if they want to make the Charter amendments that will become ballot questions, but it could be done in both ways. He clarified, they could do it every two years in separate elections, but he would think the Council would want to do it as one total package, but he would defer to the Council on that.

Mr. Dunn said there is only so much time one can spend in a voting booth if there are 20 questions, so that is something they will have to consider.

Discussion on Inviting Guests to Meetings

Mr. Dunn asked if the group is okay with the thought of bringing in experts, guests, or members of the County Council to provide further information.

Ms. Chesnik said she thinks it would be very useful. Mr. Baker agreed, and said especially for the list of questions that was provided.

As there was no opposition to inviting guests in the future, Mr. Dunn said they will plan on bringing guests in to discuss particular topics or provide further understanding.

Ms. Bellamy asked if they will skip Sections if they are planning to have someone come in to talk to them at the next meeting about that Section, to which Mr. Dunn responded, that seems reasonable to him.

Ms. Chesnik asked if they are going to follow the Charter in its order, or are they going to jump around because she thinks jumping around is going to make chaos, to which Mr. Dunn responded, they are going to try to go from beginning to end. He explained, he thinks Ms. Bellamy is saying that if they get to a Section and are not quite sure, they can put it on hold and invite some experts to address it and bring it up at the next meeting.

Mr. Benson said he read through the list of suggestions and compared it to the Charter, and he could not quite grasp what the reason were for some of the requested changes. He said in those instances, if they know they are going to discuss a certain item, they should try to find out who put it forward and ask if they can attend the meeting.

Discussion on Current Form of Government

Mr. Dunn said the current form of government began in 2006. He said, before they go down the list, a lot of the questions came out of a point of conflict as to whether it was a function of the County Executive or a function of the County Council. He said number 28 on the list they were provided is to change the County back to a County Commissioners form of government, so he thinks they should land on the answer to that sooner rather than later because much of their work will likely depend on what the group thinks on that question. He clarified, this does not mean they are going to land on a decision tonight, but he thinks this is the first question that should be discussed.

Mr. Benson said, of the 32 items, if this Committee is going to recommend not having a County Executive, 15 of the 32 items go away, so it seems to him that the first issue they should address is whether they even want to address the issue to make a recommendation to change from the County Executive form of Government. He said, in order to make that decision, personally, he needs to be educated about that. He said they may all have some opinion on it, but it seems to him they should have some experts come in to talk about the advantages and disadvantages of the two forms of government.

Mr. Sarbanes said the voters decided to go to an Executive form of Government, and he thinks putting that decision on this group is putting them on thin ice. He said they have the Charter to look at under the existing form of government, and what they are going to do to make it better.

Mr. Baker said there are items on the list that clearly deal with conflicts between Council and Executive, and clarifying language in the Charter. He said, if they recommend not to have a County Executive anymore, but the public votes to still have an Executive, then they have a list of questions they know are causing conflicts within the Charter that have not been addressed, and he thinks their job is to address these questions. He said, regardless of the recommendation whether or not to have an Executive, he thinks they still have to address the issues that have been brought up because they represent issues that have been experienced by their political leaders, and they need to address them regardless.

Mr. Sarbanes said, when the County Executive form was proposed, he was the President on the County Council, and two of them wrote letters saying they did not think they ought to go that way, and he was one of them. He said, in the end, the people in this County voted overwhelmingly to go to a County Executive form of Government, so he thinks if the people want to vote it out they should vote it out. He said recently there have been issues between the Council and Executive, which they have not been able to work through, and that is unfortunate, so maybe making changes to the Charter will put some teeth in it to help both sides.

Ms. Chesnik said she would like to know the history of why they decided to go with this form of government, and what options they have, such as an elected County Executive or a hired and paid County Executive approved of by Council, and she would like to know the disadvantages of just doing away with it. She said she remembers contentions all the way back to Rick Pollitt, so it seems that ever since they have had County Executives and a Council, there has always been some sort of disagreement or friction. She said she also would like to know what the Executive Branch actually costs the County.

Ms. Whited said she just needs facts. She asked if the Charter Review Committee includes revisiting and trying to understand if they should have an Executive or not, or are they reviewing this document? She said that is what she is trying to wrap her head around because, if they take that path, they need the experts and it needs to be fact based, and the history should probably come from objective people. She said they are talking about reviewing the document in place, and not taking into account the personality conflicts because that is dependent on the people who are elected. She said they have to look at this objectively, not what happened with Rick Pollitt, or what is happening now. She said she wants to know if this is what they really need to be looking at, and if it is, that is fine, she is just asking.

Ms. Morris said she thinks the form of government they are in is not a decision that this group is to make because the voters did that. She said, also, in the Charter there is a termination section, and the Council has some authority over that. She said posing the question to this group takes the onus off of somebody who does not want to make the motion to start that conversation, in her opinion. She said, if Council put that on this list, they are looking for somebody else to start that conversation, and she does not think this group is representative enough of 105,000 people to make that decision.

Mr. Mat Tilghman said he does not know that the Committee would be recommending one way or the other, and he does not think this is a decision they should necessarily make, nor is it a decision, frankly, that the Council can make. He said it has clearly been stated that it is the voters' choice, so the question is whether it should go back to the voters. He said he feels as they go through this, if they do not have some feeling that this group is leaning one way or the other, he thinks it is going to impede their ability to make some of those decisions properly. He said that is the only reason he thinks it needs to be on the table of where this group thinks they should be going because he thinks it is going to have a big effect.

Mr. Sarbanes said, when he was on the Council there was a County Administrator, and the County Council was both the Legislative and Executive Body. He said the Council would direct the Administrator what to do, who carried it out. He said then the County population voted to put in an Executive, which made the County Council the Legislative Body and the Executive the Executive part.

Mr. Philip Tilghman said both Councilmanic and County Executive systems can work. He said his friend who taught government said he believes in separation of powers, and that is their constitutional way of doing business, and he was pretty much in favor of the County Executive. He said either one will work, but this is the County Executive form, so they should go through this and make it work as it is being done in other Counties. He clarified, it can work, so they should make it work.

Mr. Gosnell said he was asked to be on the Charter Review Committee, not whether they want to get rid of the County Executive or not. He said he is here to make this work, and he thinks if they can make this work, the County Executive and the Council will get along a lot better.

Mr. Baker said he thinks there are places they can correct the existing Charter; however, if they assume they are switching to a different form of government, which the population may not elect to do, it is a massive rewrite. He clarified, if the voters decide to do that on their own, this Charter is going to have to be rewritten regardless of what changes the Committee makes now anyway.

Mr. Benson said he is entirely comfortable with this Committee making the decision to not touch this issue, but if they are not going to make that decision, they need to have people come in and explain it.

There being no further discussion on the subject, on motion by Mr. Sarbanes and seconded by Ms. Whited, it was unanimously decided to address reviewing the Charter as it pertains to an Executive and Council form of Government.

Public Comments:

Mr. John Palmer came to the microphone and said he left a lengthy comment on the County's website portal in regards to the topic the Committee just voted on. He said he is always willing to discuss his points. Mr. Dunn said he did not see Mr. Palmer's comment. No one else on the Committee saw Mr. Palmer's comment either. Mr. Dunn suggested Mrs. Hurley address that from an IT perspective.

Mr. Palmer asked, if the public has a question about what is going on, do they send it in through the portal to be answered at the next meeting, to which Mr. Dunn responded, when the Committee gets to the Section of the Charter that the question or comment pertains to, they will address it at that time. He clarified, of course everybody has the opportunity to read the submitted comments in advance, so the comment is already noted as the Committee deliberates.

Mr. Robert Taylor came to the microphone and said they may have seen his comment regarding the County Executive form of Government, and there is also an op-ed in today's Salisbury Independent. He said he thinks what the Committee has done tonight puts them pretty much on the cusp of dereliction of their duty. He then read from the Charter what it says about the Charter Review Committee. He said he wants to address the theory that the Committee cannot do this because it has been approved by the voters. He said everything in the Charter has been approved by the voters, so the logical extension of that thesis would be that they cannot change anything in the Charter because it has all been approved by the voters, so there is really no logical basis for it. He said, in addition, they have done this without any real significant public input. He said this was on their agenda that he thinks probably went on the County website three days ago, and there was nothing in the media of course, so there has really not been any chance for public comment on this before they made their decision, and that, to him, is dereliction of duty. He said he will let that go, as he has his remarks about it that are in the comment he sent to the Committee, so he will not repeat those except for one point; across the country very few Counties relatively speaking have the County Executive system, and a majority in Maryland do not. He said Sussex County does not, Worcester County does not, and they can look around and see lots of Counties that are operating perfectly fine without this system.

Mr. Taylor said, procedurally, on their public comment discussion, he agrees to have public comments at the end of the meeting, but there is also the ability through the portal to submit comments in advance, so if they publish their agenda sooner, there is more chance to do that. He said this agenda only went up only 72 hours ago, which is really not a whole lot of time. He said most people do not go through the County website two or three times a day, though sometimes he does twice a day, but not normally three times. He clarified, that is just another suggestion.

Mr. Taylor said some people cannot use the online portal, so he suggests addressing that by having them phone Mrs. Hurley's office with their comments, and she could post their comments for them.

Mr. Taylor said he actually has a copy of the original County Charter, which was passed in 1966 by referendum, and it is interesting because many of the provisions are the same now as they were then.

Mr. Taylor said he has one other procedural suggestion; instead of just going through the Charter sequentially, he thinks they should take a look at it in regards to the list of County Council suggestions and try to pick items that really need significant research or work. He said one he would suggest to them is the County Executive matter, but there are others. He said there are a lot of other Charters to look at. He then talked further about various Charters in the State of Maryland. He said, if they look at those things, they may get ideas that perhaps should be in their Charter.

Mr. Joe Holloway came to the microphone and said he is disappointed they brushed aside the discussion about the County Executive so quickly. He said he heard Ms. Chesnik ask for more information and more history, what it costs, and why the County voters voted for it, but they never heard any of those answers. He said he would like to ask them to revisit that at the next meeting, and he can provide quite a bit of that information if they would like.

Mr. John Cannon came to the microphone and thanked the Committee for volunteering for this monumental task, and he congratulated them on being appointed. He said the work they do is very critical as far as how they are going to efficiently govern themselves as a County over the next few years.

Mr. Cannon said, on the list that Council put forth, he would certainly recommend to Council that they should have that Work Session for the Committee and come up with a document that will elaborate on each of those recommendations to give them a broader perspective of why it was put on the list. He said some people say it was a power grab, but it really was not a power grab, it was a matter of just being able to review issues they thought were very questionable in the Charter and created very much angst between the Executive and Legislative Bodies that they felt should be corrected.

Mr. Cannon applauded the Committee for their first decision made tonight, and said they are managing themselves very professionally. He said he does not think they did a disservice to their position tonight in taking the vote they did. He said they made a motion, they made a second, they had a lot of discussion, and they chose to move forward with the issues at hand because, regardless of what happens, the voters could reject any type of decision this Committee may make as far as whether they want an Executive. He said the first priority is to correct the Charter as it exists, and this is a work in progress. He said, if they have the 60 percent of Wicomico residents who voted for an Executive form of Government come into these meetings and express their concerns that they would like to see it reversed, the Committee will have a job to do, but, as it is today, he congratulates them on the decision they made first and foremost to correct the Charter as it exists. He said, should the issue of Executive form of Government come up again, it can always be revisited.

Mr. Cannon said the Council is willing to help the Committee in any way they can, and he is sure he can speak for the Executive when he says he certainly is welcome to help them. He said, if they want to meet with the Council, he would suggest the Executive Branch be represented as well.

Ms. Chesnik said, after hearing what she heard tonight from the public and the vote they took, she thinks they need to be resolute that they work through this from Section 1 on through, but she thinks they have to be open to public comment. She said, if people come in and say they want to visit the Executive issue, they have to visit it, and they just cannot leave it dead or closed. She said, as was pointed out, all of this is voted on by the public, by the citizens of Wicomico County, so she really does not think they can say this is a dead issue and they are done with it.

Mr. Baker asked, if the Committee does not make a recommendation in regards to the Executive form of Government, but the public approaches Council since Council ultimately decides what goes on the ballot, can Council put it on the ballot without the Committee's recommendation, to which Mr. Dunn responded, absolutely. Mr. Baker said he just wanted to make sure it did not have to come from the Committee.

Mr. Dunn said, as a reminder, the Committee is putting forth a set of recommendations which may or may not be approved by Council moving forward. There was no further discussion.



Mike Dunn, Chairman



Laura Hurley, Recording Secretary