



# CITY OF COCONUT CREEK CHARTER REVIEW BOARD MEETING MINUTES

JEFFREY BARKER, CHAIRPERSON  
HEIDI THORMAN, VICE CHAIRPERSON  
ANN FANTELL  
CONNIE FINLEY  
STEVEN HALL

Government Center  
4800 West Copans Road  
Coconut Creek, FL 33063

Date: January 14, 2020  
Time: 6 p.m.  
Location: Public Meeting Room

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## 1. CALL TO ORDER

The first meeting of the 2020 Charter Review Board (CRB) was called to order by City Clerk Leslie Wallace May at 6:01 p.m. City Clerk May noted that board member Steven Hall would be attending the meeting via speakerphone and proceeded with calling Mr. Hall.

## 2. ROLL CALL

Ann Fantell - District B  
Heidi Thorman – District A  
Jeffrey Barker – District C  
Steven Hall (via speakerphone) – District E

**EXCUSED:** City Clerk May announced that board member Connie Finley (District D) had contacted her and was unable to attend the meeting.

**ALSO PRESENT:** City Attorney Terrill Pyburn; Deputy City Attorney Kathryn Mehaffey; and City Clerk Leslie Wallace May.

## 3. INTRODUCTION OF BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF AND OATHS OF OFFICE

Each of the board members introduced themselves followed by the staff members who were present. Attorney Pyburn invited the board members to call her office with any questions at 954-973-6797. She noted that the board members can always speak to staff, but they were not always able to talk with each other.

Clerk May recognized Mayor Sandra Welch and resident Perri Cohen who were present in the audience.

The Oath of Office was administered to the board members who were present; Jeffrey Barker, Ann Fantell, and Heidi Thorman.

*Item 5 was heard prior to Item 4*

**4. ORIENTATION: REVIEW OF GOVERNMENT-IN THE-SUNSHINE AND PUBLIC RECORDS LAWS**

Deputy City Attorney Mehaffey explained that she would briefly cover the Sunshine and Public Records Laws, Ethics, and Parliamentary Procedure. She noted that the full packet was emailed with the agenda, and it also included additional material on statutes and case law that explains in more detail what she is covering today. She summarized what a meeting is and that 7-days advance notice is required to set a meeting. She emphasized that communication among the board members about anything that might come before them for a vote must take place only at a public meeting. She explained that emails, texts and notes are covered by the public records law and would need to be maintained by the board member. She suggested forwarding any emails relating to Board business be forwarded to the City Clerk for maintaining as a record. She emphasized that the board members should never use "reply all" when responding to a group email from staff. She asked that the board members refrain from whispering to each other during meetings as it can be construed as a violation of the Sunshine Law. She closed with the importance of Board Basics and emphasized the incredibly important function of the CRB. She asked that the board members take the time to be prepared for the meetings; call the City Attorney's Office with any questions on the information provided; and asked the board members to attend the meetings to ensure that there is a quorum. She noted that if a board member could not attend a meeting that he or she call the City Clerk, within 48 hours before the meeting. She explained that board member Hall was able to attend today's meeting via telephone; however, a board member's attendance by phone cannot be counted towards the quorum required for the meeting and that a member cannot vote by phone. She explained how the referendum questions would be written for the ballot and included in the Ordinance that goes before the City Commission for vote.

Mr. Hall asked if the City Commission could add or take away from the CRB's recommended changes. Deputy City Attorney Mehaffey explained that they could add to the CRB's recommendation. There was discussion on whether or not the City Commission could add separate items to the Ordinance that the CRB did not present to them.

**5. REVIEW OF TASKS AND DUTIES OF CHARTER REVIEW BOARD**

City Attorney Pyburn explained the importance of the CRB's review of the City's Charter, which she compared as the City's Constitution. She noted that the Charter is reviewed every five years as dictated by the current City's Charter. She compared a municipality to a corporation where the City Commission is the Board of Directors and the residents are the stock holders. She explained that the public corporation is built to provide self-government as well as a variety of services such as garbage pick-up, police, fire, etcetera. She noted that the Charter is similar to the articles of incorporation of the City as it sets forth the boundaries, form of government, size of the commission and certain governmental processes. She noted that in Florida, a city is recognized with certain rights and privileges, of which the most important is Home Rule meaning cities can enact their own ordinances and laws as long as they are not in conflict with federal or state laws. She emphasized that government is most effective at the level of the people.

She explained that the City of Coconut Creek has a council-manager form of government, which allows for a strong and non-political executive office as the administrative center piece of a municipal government. She noted that this is the most popular form of government in Florida and in the United States and that it parallels with the organization of a corporation in that the voters elect the commission, which includes, the Mayor, as a board of directors who in turn appoints the City Manager as the Chief Administrative Officer. The City Manager supervises and coordinates the departments, prepares the budget for the Commission's consideration, and makes reports and recommendations to the Commission. All department heads report to the City Manager. The City Manager is fully responsible for the administration of the city. The Mayor is the ceremonial head of the city, presides over commission meetings, and makes appointments to boards. The Mayor is an important political figure, but technically, the Mayor has very little if any role in day-to-day municipal administration. The Mayor is elected from among the commissioners themselves. She explained that the board member's responsibility is to review the Charter page by page and section by section and suggest any recommendations for changes. She noted that the board members have 120 days from appointment to complete that task, and from there, the changes will be drafted into an ordinance to go before the City Commission for vote. Ultimately the changes will go before the voters for vote at the next general election. She noted that each of the members have a flash drive that contains the City's current Charter along with other materials to guide the board members through the Charter Review process. She noted that the City Manager, Karen Brooks, could be invited to the next CRB meeting, and after that, the City Commissioners will be invited to separately attend the meetings.

**6. ESTABLISHMENT OF MEETING SCHEDULE**

Following discussion, there was agreement to hold the next meeting on Monday, January 27, 2020 at 3:30 p.m. and ending at 5 p.m. to allow for set-up time for another meeting that begins at 5:30 p.m. It was also decided that an invitation to the meeting would be sent to City Manager Karen Brooks.

**7. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

A motion was made by Ms. Fantell, seconded by Ms. Thorman, appointing Mr. Barker as Chair. Consensus was made to approve the appointment.

A motion was made by Mr. Barker, seconded by Ms. Fantell, appointing Ms. Thorman, as Vice Chair. Consensus was made to approve the appointment.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

Transcribed by: Leslie Wallace May

1/27/2020  
Date



Leslie Wallace May  
Leslie Wallace May, MMC, City Clerk