



**CITY OF OKEECHOBEE  
CITIZENS CHARTER REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
JANUARY 7, 2021  
OFFICIAL MINUTES**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Member Ritter called the regular meeting of the Citizens Charter Review Advisory Committee (CCRAC) for the City of Okeechobee to order on Thursday, January 7, 2021, at 6:00 P.M. in the City Council Chambers, located at 55 Southeast 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, Room 200, Okeechobee, Florida. The invocation was given by Member Chandler, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II. ATTENDANCE**

The following CCRAC Members were present: Suzanne Bowen, Noel Chandler, Jamie Gamiotea, Jeremy LaRue, Cary Pigman, Gary Ritter, Myranda Whirls and Hoot Worley. Member Sandy Perry was absent.

**A. Election of Chair**

Member Ritter opened the floor for nominations for Chairperson. Member Worley nominated Gary Ritter. The nomination was seconded by Member Whirls together with a motion to close the nominations. **Motion Carried Unanimously.** Chairperson Ritter opened the floor for nominations for a Vice Chairperson, which is addressed per Resolution No. 2020-10. Member Worley nominated Noel Chandler, which he respectively declined. Member Bowen then nominated Myranda Whirls. The nomination was seconded by Member Pigman together with a motion to close the nominations. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**B.** Given all members were not present at the initial meeting, each one introduced themselves, shared some information about their background and why they wanted to serve on this Committee.

**III. MINUTES**

**A.** Motion by Member Pigman, seconded by Member Chandler to dispense with the reading and approve the December 15, 2020, Regular Meeting minutes. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**

**A.** City Attorney Fumero briefly reviewed Resolution No. 2020-10 again for the benefit of the committee members that were not in attendance at the initial meeting. This provides the outline of the Chair and Vice Chair duties, attendance requirement, the purpose of the committee, and a timeline of at least one year. Attorney Fumero explained once the Committee is ready with their recommendation, it will be presented to the City Council. The City Council can then choose to amend/modify the recommendations. The result will be formatted into one or multiple ordinances and placed on the ballot for the voters to decide on adoption. Chairperson Ritter inquired as to who the Committee Secretary would be. Administrator Montes De Oca clarified support staff in which Patty Burnette will be taking the minutes for the Committee. Administrator Montes De Oca and Executive Assistant Robin Brock will be the points of contact for the Committee.

#### IV. NEW BUSINESS ITEMS CONTINUED

- B. Attorney Fumero reviewed the current City of Okeechobee Charter that was provided to each member by the City Clerk's Office. He explained the three basic forms of government: Council-Manager (Weak Mayor), Mayor-Council (Strong Mayor) and Commission. Strong mayor being mayor-council form, which is directly elected by the citizens to that office; weak mayor being council-manager form, which is elected from within the city council, and commission form, which voters elect to a small governing board. Usually in a strong mayor system, an elected mayor would have direct administrative authority over the government and its departments. Under a weak mayor system, an appointed city manager would have that administrative authority. He pointed out the committee would need to decide whether to review and make recommendations for changes to the current Charter or start from scratch and create an entire new one.
- C. Sample copies of charters from the Cities of Crescent, Hollywood, Palm Coast and Sunny Isles Beach provided to the committee members by Attorney Fumero were discussed.
- D. Administrator Montes De Oca mentioned the new Charter needs to be clear, consider not specifically listing department names, and to receive public input.
- E. The City will be creating a page on the website specifically where citizens can learn everything that is going on about the review and provide feedback. Each committee member will be provided a city email address to be used for conducting and receiving correspondences related to this committee. Attorney Fumero mentioned again about the "Sunshine Laws" and not to "reply all" back to emails that they may receive.
- F. Chairperson Ritter announced it had been determined at the initial meeting that future meetings would be held at 6:00 P.M. with the next one being on January 28<sup>th</sup>. Given some members that were absent at the first meeting having conflicts with that date, new meeting dates of February 11<sup>th</sup>, March 4<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> were decided upon to start at 6:30 P.M. The Committee requested for the next meeting, a template of the current charter from the City Attorney to include a table of contents and a Bill of Rights section. Attorney Fumero commented he would be drafting a model city charter, based on his research of modern city charters in Florida, to be used as a starting point for committee discussions and development of charter amendments.

#### V. ADJOURN MEETING

There being no further items for discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:26 P.M.

Submitted by:

Patty M. Burnette

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Approved on: 2-11-2021

Please take notice and be advised that when a person decides to appeal any decision made by the Citizens Charter Review Advisory Committee with respect to any matter considered at this meeting, he/she may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceeding is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. City Clerk media are for the sole purpose of backup for official records of the Clerk.