

**BY-LAWS OF THE COLUMBIA COUNTY
CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION**

AS AMENDED JANUARY 26, 2012

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CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION**

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Rule 1. **Public Meetings:** All meetings of the Commission, including all meetings of its committees and study committees, shall be open to the public. Notice of the date, time and place of said meeting shall be made available to the public in advance of the meetings by written notice to one or more newspapers of general circulation in the County, by posting the date, time and place upon the Charter Commission's internet site and by posting a notice on the public bulletin board maintained for such purposes at the Columbia County Courthouse Annex, at least 48 hours before the meeting.

Rule 2. **Citizen Participation at Meetings:** The Commission will entertain public comment germane to all agenda items. Citizens of Columbia County who attend the meetings of the Charter Review Commission shall be given the opportunity to comment before the Commission discusses items on the agenda to be voted on. In cases of meetings in which an invited speaker is in attendance, the presenter will speak first, public comment will then be taken, and then the Commission will discuss and vote if necessary. The Commission may impose reasonable limitations of time allocated to any citizen or on the total time to be allotted to public participation during the meeting.

Each agenda shall include a point during the meeting at which "Remarks of Interested Citizens" may be made. Under the agenda item of "Remarks of Interested Citizens", interested citizens shall be afforded an opportunity to comment on matters germane to the agenda or matters to come before the Commission.

Rule 3. **Places of Meetings:** The regular meetings of the Commission shall be at a place designated by the Commission. The Commission may also resolve to hold meetings at other locations. The meetings of the Commission, committees or study committees should be at a meeting place large enough to accommodate not only the Commission, committee or study committee, as the case may be, but also interested citizens. The meeting place chosen shall be open and accessible, free of any admission charge or restriction, to the Commission and public. Meetings conducted by study committees or committees should be held at a location selected by the chairman of such study committee or committee.

Rule 4. **Call and Notice of Meetings:** Date, time, and place of each regular meeting of the Commission shall be announced at the preceding regular or special meeting of the Commission, and posted on public bulletin boards in accordance with Columbia County policy. The agenda of each regular or special meeting shall include the fixing of the date of the next regular meeting. Special meetings may be called by the Chair of the Commission, or by any eight (8) members of the Commission requesting such special meeting in writing filed with the County Manager. The County Manager shall be responsible for mailing a written notice of the date, time and place of meetings of the Commission to members of the Commission at their addresses listed on an appropriate form kept by the County Manager. It shall be the responsibility of any member of the Commission to notify the County Manager of any change of address. The Chair of each study committee or committee

shall be responsible through the County Manger, for giving sufficient written or telephone notice of study committee or committee meetings to members.

A written notice of special meetings of the entire Commission shall be given in the same manner as written notices of regular meetings, except that the written notice of a special meeting shall include the purpose for the call of such special meeting.

Rule 5. **Agenda for Regular Meetings:** The agenda for regular meetings of the Commission shall be generally as follows, subject to amendment or revision by the Commission Chair or a majority of the members present:

- I. Call to Order
- II. Invocation
- III. Pledge
- IV. Roll Call
- V. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting
- VI. Introduction of Invited Guest (if any) and Their Presentations
- VII. Remarks of Interested Citizens
- VIII. Report of Chairperson
- IX. Reports of Committees (if any)
- X. Unfinished Business
- XI. New Business
- XII. Adjournment with Day Fixed for Next Meeting

Rule 6. **Recording of Minutes:** Meetings of the Commission shall be recorded on recording machines. The County Manager shall be responsible for insuring that the recording apparatus is available at each meeting of the Commission. The tapes of all such meetings shall be preserved as required by law. Failure to tape record a meeting shall not affect the validity of any proceeding. The Commission shall make disposition of the work of the Commission. The Clerk of the Court shall further be responsible for the safeguarding of the tapes of such meetings. In addition to the tape recording of the meetings, a representative of the Clerk of Court shall take down minutes of the proceedings of the Commission. The chair of each committee or a person designated by the chair shall take minutes at all proceedings of the committee and shall transcribe and deliver such minutes to the Clerk of Court. All records of the Commission, including the tape recordings of minutes, shall be made available to the public during office hours of the Clerk of Court or as established by the Commission. Minutes of committee proceedings shall be filed at least once per month. The Chair may request that a verbatim record of any proceeding before the Commission be made. Such a request is in addition to the requirements of Rule 6.

Rule 7. **Quorum:** A majority of the members of the Commission, or of any committee shall constitute a quorum for transaction of business, and a majority of those present shall be sufficient to agree to any motion except as otherwise set forth in these bylaws.

Rule 8. **Attendance:** Regular attendance and attention to the business of the Commission is expected. The seat of any member who fails to attend three consecutive regular meetings, without

previous notification, shall be presumed vacant, and the Chair shall report that fact to the County Commission who appointed the member, for confirmation that a vacancy exists.

Rule 9. **Proxy Voting:** No member of the Commission or any of its study committees or committees shall have the power to vote by proxy. Only those members physically present shall be entitled to vote.

Rule 10. **Deliberations:**

A. **Issues Agenda:** Members of the Charter Review Commission and the public may identify issues to be placed upon the list of issues which the review commission may subsequently deliberate. A deadline shall be established for accepting issues.

The Commission shall approve, by majority vote, an initial agenda of issues to be considered, and a schedule of meetings at which the several approved issues shall be discussed. Prior to completion of the discussion meetings, additional issues shall be added and scheduled upon the request of four or more members.

After completion of the scheduled discussion meetings, additional issues may be scheduled with the concurrence of a majority of the Commission.

Any issue may be stricken from further consideration at discussion meetings with the concurrence of two-thirds of the member present, but not less than eight (8) members.

B. **Decision Agenda:** The Commission shall approve, by majority of the whole commission, a schedule and agenda of meetings at which approved issues and approved sample text shall be considered for inclusion in proposed Charter Amendment(s).

After an issue has been discussed, the Commission may instruct the appropriate staff to prepare sample text for its review at a scheduled meeting.

A proposal and text may be approved for tentative inclusion as proposed charter amendment(s), or the tentative proposed Charter amendment(s) may be amended, with the concurrence of two-thirds of the members present, but not less than eight (8) members.

C. **Final Adoption and Transmittal:** After all public hearings, the Commission shall amend if necessary, approve and transmit the proposed Charter Amendments, if any, for Columbia County, and a proposed ballot title and summary of the substance and chief purpose of the measure, with the concurrence of two-thirds of the members present, but not less than eight (8) members.

Rule 11. **Voting Generally:** Each member present shall vote, unless a conflict of interest exists, in which case said conflict shall be publicly stated prior to the vote and filed in writing with the County Manager, as approved by law.

Rule 12. **Official Rules of Order:** Except as otherwise provided in these rules of procedure, Robert's Rules of Order Revised (75th Anniversary Edition) shall apply in matters of procedural conflict for the Commission, committees, and study committee. However, Robert's Rules of Order is superseded by Florida Statute 286.012 with respect to the chairman voting.

Rule 13. **Duties of the Chair:** The Chair shall:

- a. Preside at all regular and special meetings of the Commission;
- b. Represent the Commission at all functions and activities so requiring (but without authority to state any position of the Commission not previously approved);
- c. Serve as ex-officio (non-voting) member of all committees;
- d. Be charged with the responsibility of making all committee assignments and appointment of all chairs of committees;
- e. Call special meetings where necessary;
- f. Coordinate publicity;
- g. Approve all disbursement requests, certifying that the disbursement has been duly approved by the entire commission.

Rule 14. **Duties of the Vice-Chair:** The Vice-Chair shall perform the duties of the chairman in the absence or inability to serve of the latter.

Rule 15. **Duties of the County Manager:** The County Manager shall:

- a. Prepare, dispatch, file and otherwise process all correspondence for the Commission as a whole;
- b. Provide for the reproduction or copying of such records as may be requested by the public in a reasonable period of time and at a rate consistent with Columbia County policy;
- c. Maintain accurate records showing the nature, purpose and amount of all expenditures made on behalf of the commission;
- d. Coordinate with the Office of the Clerk of Court in connection with the proof and filing of all disbursement requests and other administrative requirements;
- e. Perform other duties as prescribed by the Chairman.

Rule 16. **Duties of the Clerk of Court:** The Clerk of Court shall:

- a. Be custodian of all records of the commission;
- b. Keep an address and attendance roster;
- c. The Clerk of Court shall make all minutes available to the public and open for inspection at all reasonable times. The attendance roster shall likewise be open for inspection by a member and by the public at any reasonable time;
- d. Provide for the reproduction or copying of such records as may be requested by the public in a reasonable period of time and at a rate consistent with Columbia County policy;
- e. Perform other duties as prescribed by the Chairman.

Rule 17. **Committees:** The Commission may authorize the appointment of Committees as it sees fit to plan and administer ministerial functions of the Commission, or to investigate and report to the full Commission on studies of special departments or functions of the existing or proposed government, or for any other lawful purpose; provided that no Committee shall have any final authority vested by law in the full Commission.

Rule 18. **Policy on Publicity:** Every effort shall be made to insure that the proceedings of the Commission are made available to the news media. No attempt shall be made to inhibit the normal processes of the news media. Public statements by the Commission or by study committees shall be coordinated through the Chair and the Executive Assistant. Members of the Commission may make public or private statements of their personal feelings, attitudes or beliefs at any time. In making such statements, however, members of the Commission shall on every occasion make an affirmative statement that their views are not represented as the views of the Commission as a whole. The Chair of the Commission shall be responsible for announcing the adopted positions of the Commission.

Rule 19. **Amendment:** These rules and policies shall be the by-laws of the Commission and may be amended by an advance notice and an affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Commission present and voting. To satisfy the advance notice the amendment itself, or "notice of such amendment", shall be submitted at the previous regular meeting. The advance notice and vote cannot take place during the same regular meeting.