



2024 ORANGE COUNTY CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION (CRC)

Governmental Structure Committee

County Administrator **Final Report and Recommendation to the Charter Review Commission**

May 6, 2024

Committee Members:

Angel de la Portilla, Chair
Mark Arias
Tom Callan
Chuck O'Neal
Cornita Riley
Eugene Stoccardo
Beverly Winesburgh
Dotti Wynn

Summary of Recommendation

The Governmental Structure Committee recommends no changes to the role of the County Administrator in the Orange County Charter.

Overview of Committee Process

At its January 30, 2024 meeting, the 2024 Orange County Charter Review Commission ("CRC") assigned to the Governmental Structure Committee (the "Committee") the study of the role of the County Administrator.

In the course of its previous meetings as it reviewed its "separation of powers" topic, the Committee extensively reviewed the evolution of the office of County Administrator under the Orange County Charter, starting with the pre-Charter and 1986 Charter status quo, with a County Administrator hired by the 5-member County Commission, through the 1988 Charter revisions instituting the County's current Chairman/Mayor system, where the County Administrator's primary duty is to "assist the county mayor in the daily management of the county."

At its March 1, 2024 meeting, the Committee spoke at length with County Administrator Byron Brooks. Mr. Brooks discussed the role of the County Administrator, and his experience serving the Mayor and providing support to the Board of County Commissioners. Discussion was raised by some Committee members about adding to the Charter duties of the County Administrator a duty to advise and timely provide information to the BCC. Mr. Brooks advised the Committee that the County Administrator and County's staffs' existing role included providing support to the BCC, and that Mr.

Brooks is available to meet with Commissioners on a regular basis. Mr. Brooks also advised that the Charter's existing annual BCC reconfirmation process provides for strong accountability to the BCC.

At its March 15, 2024 meeting, the Committee revisited the concept of adding to the Charter duties of the County Administrator a duty to timely support and provide information to the BCC upon request. The Committee also discussed a proposal to enable any one Commissioner to direct the County Administrator in the Administrator's provision of support. Deputy County Administrator Danny Banks joined the Committee's discussion and talked the Committee through typical examples of County staff's implementation of BCC direction, including recent examples of BCC work sessions. In the course of its discussion, the Committee also reviewed Sec. 302.D.13., enumerating one of the duties of the County Mayor (to "Carry out other powers and duties as required by this Charter or may be prescribed by the board") and its application to the County Administrator's duty to assist the County Mayor and thereby to carry out duties prescribed by the BCC.

After discussion and consideration of the information presented, the Committee voted 6-2 at its March 15, 2024 Committee meeting to recommend no changes to the role of the County Administrator in the Orange County Charter.