

Charles County Charter Board Update and Next Steps

Public Hearing

District 4

February 15, 2024

What is a Charter? A Constitution

- The guiding document that establishes the structure of local government
- ► The equivalent of the Maryland State Constitution or incorporation for municipalities
- Composed by residents. Approved by voters. ONLY amended by voters
- A charter determines the way some public officials are elected, what their duties are, and how they are held accountable to the public

Forms of Government in Maryland

Commissioner

- Calvert
- Carroll
- Garrett
- St. Mary's
- Somerset
- Washington

Code Home Rule

- Charles (2002)
- Queen Anne's (1990)
- Caroline (1984)
- Worcester (1976)
- Allegany (1974)
- Kent (1970)

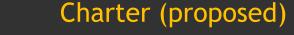
Charter

- Frederick (2012)
- Cecil (2010)
- Dorchester (2002)
- Talbot (1973)
- Harford (1972)
- Prince George's (1970)
- Howard (1968)
- Wicomico (1964)
- Anne Arundel (1964)
- Baltimore (1956)
- Montgomery (1948)

Code Home Rule and Charter

Code Home Rule (present)

Five Member Board of Commissioners



A County Council as defined in the charter

The Board makes both executive and legislative decisions



A County Executive manages day-to-day
Government. The Council enacts local laws

No power to impose new taxes. Bonding authority is not capped



Cannot impose new taxes.

Can establish a tax cap. Bonding is capped (at 15%)

Broad authority over planning. Imposes school excise taxes



Broad authority over planning
State authorization to impose school excise taxes

Police department requires General Assembly approval



Ability to establish a police department in charter

Charles County Council

Key Features

(Preliminary, 1.11.24, Charles County Charter Board)

- Term Limits <u>maximum</u> of two consecutive terms
- District-based Voting
- Attendance Guidelines
- Town Hall Requirements
- Council Review and Confirmation of Department Heads
- Oversight Responsibilities
- Independent Inspector General a watchdog for taxpayers

Charles County Executive

Key Features

(Preliminary, 12.13.23, Charles County Charter Board)

- Term Limits <u>maximum</u> of two consecutive terms
- Full-time Management of Services
- Restructured and Responsive Agencies
 - Permitting Department formerly PGM*
 - Department of Environment formerly PGM*
 - Fire Administrator within Department of Emergency Services to assist Volunteers
 - Department heads confirmed by Council
- Residency Requirements for Both Executive and Key Leadership Staff
- ✓ Town Hall Requirements

*Planning and Growth Management

Timeline

- ▶ June 8, 2023 Charter Board Members Sworn In
- November 9, 2023 Public Hearing, County Government Building, District 1
- December 7, 2023 Public Hearing, Potomac Branch Library, District 2
- ▶ January 25, 2024 Public Hearing, Waldorf West Library, District 3
- February 15, 2024 Public Hearing, Blue Crabs Stadium, District 4
- ▶ June 2024 Final document delivered to County Commissioners
- August 2024 Charter delivered to the State Board of Elections
- November 5, 2024 Voters consider the charter at the polls

The Details Matter! We Need Your Help

Public participation is critical throughout the process

- Board Meetings 30 minutes of public comment in each meeting
- > Public Hearings one in each of the four county districts
- ► E-comment at <u>www.charlescountymd.gov/government/boards-</u> commissions/charter-board
- ▶ Engage Board Members at community meetings and events
- Invite us to meet with you at CharlesCountyMD.gov
- Complete the survey
- ▶ Vote November 2024!

