

New eComment for Charter Board

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 [Charles County, MD](#)

New eComment for Charter Board

David Heidelbach submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Charter Board

Item: 4.a) February 29, 2024 Written Comments

eComment: I have some questions concerning the draft charter sections. ARTICLE 4 Executive 404 Term of Office (b) No Executive may serve more than two four-year consecutive terms. Why consecutive? If the goal is to keep executives from serving for decades should that not be removed? Our current Commission President is in his fourth term and would be qualified under this wording. 405. Qualifications must be a resident and five-year registered voter of the County I strongly object to including residency requirements in order to be elected. This not only excludes potentially highly qualified applicants but also insures that anyone running has been carefully vetted and well funded by the powers that be in the county. Requiring residency after election is fine but this provision seems designed to avoid loss of power by those who currently hold it. The time limit on voter registration makes it likely to extend the requirement even more. Unless there is a pending election, who registers to vote as one of the first things they do after a move? 406. Compensation the Executive shall receive: (1) a Salary of \$150,000 per annum; The Salary of the Executive may not be increased or reduced during his or her current term. What research has gone into this salary? Since the term of office will not start until after the 2016 election this locks this salary in place for 6 years before it is reviewed. If it turns out to be not competitive, the likelihood of attracting good candidates becomes rather small. With no provision for inflation it also risks mid term departure due to family financial reasons and the disruption that would go with that. Seriously under paying an individual with this sort of power also increases the chance of graft. ARTICLE 2. County Council 206. Term of office (d) A council member shall not have more than 4 absences, from regularly scheduled standing council meetings, in a calendar year. This is not to include attendance at Special Meetings called within the calendar year. (e) Each council member shall be required to host at least quarterly (4) townhalls within their respective district each calendar year. The At Large member shall be required to host at least 1 townhall per district within the calendar year. Or what happens???? This needs to be clearly defined and reviewed by county attorneys. Otherwise it is meaningless and gives the impression that charter

can do something it cannot. 210. Vacancies The Council shall provide by law for the conduct of special elections to fill any vacancy on the Council that occurs during the first 3 years of a term. Special elections for a single position are prohibitively expensive and likely to have a low turnout not reflective of voter intent.

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