

ARTICLE __

Miscellaneous Provisions

601. Charter Amendments

This Charter may be amended by the procedures provided in Article XI-A of the Maryland Constitution.

602. Termination of Charter

This Charter may be terminated upon the adoption of a new form of government in accordance with the Maryland Constitution and the public general laws of the State. (a) This Charter may be terminated, and the County returned to the form of government in effect prior to the adoption of this Charter, using the same procedures provided in Section XXX of this Charter.

The council members provided under this Charter shall be members of the Board of County Commissioners, the Office of the County Executive shall stand abolished, and the person who held the Office of the Executive may not be a member, officer, or employee of the Government.

(b) Thirty (30) calendar days following the approval by the voters to terminate this Charter, the Charter shall stand terminated. The council members then in office shall become the Board of County Commissioners for the County and shall remain in office until their successors are qualified for office.

(c) All laws, ordinances, and regulations in effect at the termination of this Charter shall remain in force until changed by the action of the General Assembly or the Board of County Commissioners, as provided by the Constitution of Maryland and the public general laws of this State.

603. Charter Review Commission

(a) A Charter Review Commission shall be appointed by the Council in the third year of the installation of newly elected council members after the election of 2030. no later than six (6) months following the installation of newly elected council members after the election of 2020. A Charter Review Commission may be appointed at such other times as the Council, in its discretion, may determine but at least once every ten (10) years beginning in 20202040. The Charter Review Commission shall be composed of seven (7) registered voters of the County, including at least one (1) member from each Council District established pursuant to Section 204 of this Charter. No person shall be eligible for appointment to the Commission who holds elective office. The chair of the Commission shall be elected from and by the members of the Commission.

(b) The Commission shall review the provisions of this Charter and make recommendations as to the necessity for deleting, adding, or amending its contents.

(c) Beginning in the year 2030 and every ten (10) years thereafter, the Commission shall consider if the County contains sufficient population to warrant increasing the number of council members. Any recommendation to increase the number of council members shall include a recommendation that the council members elected at large and by district shall each increase by one (1).

(c) The Commission shall receive an appropriation sufficient to carry out its duties and responsibilities. The members of the Commission may not be entitled to compensation but shall be entitled to reimbursement for reasonable expenses related to their duties to the Commission.

(e) Except as provided in subsection (f) of this ~~S~~ection, the Commission shall make its report to the Council at a public hearing within twelveeighteen (1218) months following its creation.

(f) The Commission may be required to report to the Council earlier than the deadline established in subsection (e) of this ~~S~~ection, if the Council establishes the report deadline at the time the Commission is created.

(g) Upon delivery of the Commission report, the Commission shall be deemed dissolved and its ~~work task terminated~~completed.

604. Independent Auditor

The Council shall engage a certified public accountant to annually make ~~annually~~ an independent post audit of all financial records and actions of the Government, its offices, agents, and employees. The complete report of the audit shall be presented to the Council and Executive and copies of the complete report, including addenda, corrections to the report, and all correspondence relating to the audit, shall be made available to the public at a cost not to exceed the cost of reproduction.

605. Ethics Commission

A. There is a County Ethics Commission that consists of five (5) members, and one (1) alternate member. All members are Charles County residents. The County Council and County Executive shall each appoint two members of the commission, respectively. One member shall be appointed by the Charles County Bar Association. The alternate member shall be selected by the Council or the Executive on a rotating basis beginning with the Council at the first opening of an alternate position after the effective date of the charter.

B. The commission shall operate under the terms, rules, and procedures set forth in county law, including Chapter 170 of county code, the Code of Ethics.

C. Financial disclosures required by the commission shall include specific information on contributions and compensation received by the reporting individual or a campaign on the behalf of the reporting individual from residential and commercial property developers. Those reported contributions shall include both direct contributions or those from a political action committee.

D. All required financial disclosures required by the commission, including under Chapter 170 of county code, shall be made available and searchable by the County Attorney or designee in an appropriate electronic format.

606. Planning Commission

Consistent with the Maryland Land Use Article, the County Council shall appoint seven (7) Charles County residents as members of the Planning Commission.

607 Board of Appeals

Consistent with the Maryland Land Use Article, a Board of Appeals shall consist of six (6) Charles County residents, five (5) members and an alternate. The County Executive shall appoint two (2) members of the board. The County Council shall appoint three (3) members of the board. The County Executive and County Council shall appoint the alternate member on a rotating basis beginning with the County Executive at the next alternate opening after the effective date of the charter.