

February 26, 2008

The following is an attempt to encapsulate the time line and protocol for the establishment of a charter committee and subsequent charter form of government for Cumberland County Government.

1. Title 30-A, Section 1321, subsection 1, provides that the county commissioners, by order, can provide for the establishment of a charter commission. The Commissioners simply establish the charter commission by Order.
2. Therefore, the only election that needs to happen is the election of the 6 voter members, 2 from each Commissioner District, as provided for in section 1322, subsection 1, paragraph A.
3. The candidates for the 6 voter member charter commission positions must circulate nomination petition as provided in for in Title 21-A, sections 351, 352, 354, 355 and 356. These petitions and nomination requirement information is to be made available at the Cumberland County Government office. A minimum of 50 and maximum of 80 signatures must be obtained by each candidate. The petitions must be submitted to the applicable municipalities for certification of the registered voter status of the signers. ***The petitions are to be submitted to the municipalities for verification by May 27, 2008 at 5:00pm. Thereafter certified petitions must be submitted to the SOS office by June 2, 2008 at 5:00pm.***
4. Once certified for the ballot, the SOS office will include the county charter commission office on each ballot, as well as candidates nominated for the ballot, for the November 4, 2008 General Election.
5. ***The county commissioners shall make appointive members within 30 days after the voter members have been selected.*** No more than 2 appointive members may be members of the same political party. One appointive member must be a county commissioner, one must be a municipal officer and one must be either a Senator or Representative.
6. ***Immediately after receiving notice of the members by the county commissioners, the county clerk shall notify the appointed and elected members of the charter commission of the date, time and place of the commission's organizational meeting. The clerk shall set the date, time and place and give at least 10 days notice of the meeting.***
7. ***Within 20 days after the election of a charter commission the county commissioners shall credit \$500.00 to the charter commission account.***
8. The charter commission shall hold at least 3 public hearings to receive information, views, comments and other material relating to its functions. ***The first hearing shall be held within 30***

days after the charter commission's organizational meeting.

9. *At least 10 days before a hearing, the charter commission shall publish the date, time and place of the hearing in a notice in a newspaper having general circulation in the county.*

10. *Within 9 months after its election the charter commission shall:*

- (1) Prepare a preliminary report including the text of the charter which the commission intends to submit to the voters and any explanatory information the commission considers desirable;
- (2) Have the report printed and circulated throughout the county; and;
- (3) Provide sufficient copies of the preliminary report to the county clerk for distribution to each voter requesting a copy

11. *Within 12 months after its election the charter commission shall submit its final report to the county commissioners. This report must include;*

- (1) The full text and an explanation of the proposed charter;
- (2) Any comments that the commission considers desirable;
- (3) A written opinion by an attorney admitted to the bar of this State and that the proposed charter does not conflict with the United States Constitution, the Constitution of Maine or the general laws.

12. *The county commissioners may extend the time limits for the preparation and submission of preliminary and final reports of the charter commission for up to 24 months after the election of the charter commission, if the extension is necessary to:*

- (1) Properly complete the reports;
- (2) Have them printed or circulated; or
- (3) Obtain the written opinion of an attorney

13. *WHEN THE FINAL REPORT IS FILED, THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS SHALL ORDER THE PROPOSED CHARTER BE SUBMITTED TO THE VOTERS OF THE COUNTY AT THE NEXT REGULAR OR SPECIAL STATEWIDE ELECTION HELD AT LEAST 60 DAYS AFTER THE FINAL REPORT IS FILED.*