

LANAI COUNTY CHARTER COMMISSION

MINUTES

CAMERON CENTER, WAILUKU, HAWAII

April 6, 1976

The meeting of the Charter Commission was called to order by Vice-Chairman Mrs. Edwina Bright at 3:00 PM in the conference room Cameron Center, Tuesday 4/6/76.

Commissioners Present:

1. Edwina U. Bright, Presiding
2. Catalino Agliam, Lanai
3. Margret H. Cameron
4. Hideo Abe
5. Ralph M. Murakami
6. Stephen Petro, Molokai
7. Joseph M. Souki
8. Allan R. Sparks
9. Lloyd K. Sodetani

Staff: Cecilia T. Marciel

Absent and Excused:

1. Msgr. Charles A. Kekumano
2. Dr. Sanae N. Moikeha

Commissioner Bright stated the first on the agenda today is the program for the ensuing months including the possibility of the hiring of a specialist and called on Commissioner Cameron to begin the discussion.

Mrs. Cameron said she felt....."unless we have some kind of program to bring the Charter into every family's home, we will not have fulfilled our commitment. Spending money on translations is still not doing it; in order for everyone to understand the Charter more thoroughly, the Commission should hire someone capable and knowledgeable to handle this kind of thing".. She said she discussed the matter with Victoria Lawrence, "an expert in communications on the kinds of things we might do in order to make the Charter a household word". She spoke of ... "30-second spots on radio - saturate the airways and media with Charter, Charter, Charter - create word-pictures because they are effective - like the umbrella we used for human concerns - perhaps we should have some one come in and outline to us how this should be done".

Chairman Bright said that staff had prepared periodic news articles, speaking engagements are forthcoming, Roundtable discussions on KMVI are scheduled for an approximate 10-week period and the tabloid is yet to be printed. She asked for further discussions.

Comm. Abe felt the Commission needed someone to coordinate the efforts of selling the Charter, someone who could give some positive direction. He said he "would hate to see the Charter to down the tube at this point.

Abe: In view of recent developments, an example is the Water Board meeting - the way it was presented, the people got the impression that it was na obvious oversight as it refers to state laws.

Souki: I disagree with you, they're only guessing at that.

Abe: Yes, but Mr. Average Citizen on the street reading the paper gets the feeling that the Charter has faults.

Commissioners agreed that it was unfortunate that the reporter only chose that particular part of the BWS meeting to capitalize on and overlooked the many good points in the Charter. (Refer to Minutes of 3/29/76, Board of Water Supply, Pg 2, Par 5).

Comm. Abe agreed that after reading the Minutes of the subject meeting, he understands more fully and has a clear perspective of what transpired, but the average citizen does not get that impression after reading the newspapers.

Souki: I am not adverse to having someone sell the Charter; however, neither should we over-react to what we hear and read about it. I think we're going to have this happen from time to time and I don't think it's bad - the publicity is good.

(EWS) - they've only been hearing our side - I follow the premise that publicity is good - I think the people can judge - even if you get a PR person or not - we'll have adverse reaction. The Ethics section will probably have this same kind of reaction - but let's not panic over this kind of thing - we may have the same thing on the Council Term - how can a PR person stop all this kind of reactions?

Cameron: Yes, I think a PR person can - if we have a planned proposal that would go very doggedly on, very logically planned out, such as the plan for the EWS; what we've done for the Planning Commission; so this is what the Charter Commission has done and by that, we do give them a way to make a judgment. We have not had a chance to do this. I think we should say these are the changes we have made and why - I don't think we should sit back and just wait.

Murakami: I agree with Mr. Souki. Both he and I were at the EWS meeting and those people with vested interest in the Water Board are naturally coming up with arguments regarding the changes in their status, no matter whether we have a PR person or not, we're not going to stop these kinds of news articles that came up after the Water Board meeting. What was stated at the very end as a questionable kind of statement by the attorney was 'gee, we don't know if it's legal or not'..... I myself am not sure.....' Both Mr. Souki and I assured him that our legal counsel said it was not in conflict. Now you see that Julie (Maui News Reporter Julie Chase) picked up that to headline the story, but we know that these are not the facts. Now, how can a PR person reverse these kinds of steps that are said at a public meeting?

Petro: I don't think her purpose is to reverse this kind of thing - I think her purpose is to make the people aware of what the Charter really is, other than to get into public debate. We as a Commission have a responsibility to let the public know.

Murakami: Yes, I can see that, but if hire someone else, what about the workload on us? We certainly have to supply the information that this person needs, he has no background nor the knowledge of what transpired, or the rationale of our final decisions.

Petro: The timing is so crucial at this time.

Bright: In our early proceedings the reporters were absolutely bored; they not only fell asleep, they said we came close to sounding like the council and they didn't want to go through that twice a week. I think they are going to seek out any controversial items and pay that up so no one will come out with a positive thing that won't seem like over reactions on our part, in an attempt to present our side. As far as going along with what Mr. Murakami stated, Mr. Souki pointed out we don't have the time to effectively put this out, so that would be meaningless. My question was - and I asked it of Margret "When you have this person come in (PR person) is that person going to make the presentations? The answer - No, we are." We have been doing that. We had had some news stories, the tabloid is going to be published, the radio programs are already set through the Roundtable, the speaking engagements are going to continue as they have been.

Cameron: If I may respond to that - I don't ever listen to Roundtable - it comes at a bad time on Sunday mornings; and Monday evening I forget about it. The tabloid I probably won't read because it's filled with a lot of grey print; it will be there for people to read - some may - most of them won't. The speaking engagements are good, I hope they will continue. But my feeling is that let's go beyond that - I'm talking about someone who has a particular talent to make word pictures that will be remembered - regarding human concerns, etc., - it's a special talent.

Murakami: It's the cost factor I'm concerned with. Is it going to be some kind of feature in the papers that they (the newspapers) will not charge us for; or in the form of an advertisement, if you want to capture the eyes of the lay person; will we be given this kind of space whereby we're going to present the facts we want to present in a more commercial nature - so to speak?

Cameron: Someone has a special column in the Maui News - the Commission can have article on the Charter for a month. That's Victoria's program - Ron Vaught has something else. There are also radio spots - you could write your own - or she could write them.

Souki: I see a need on a business basis - what you want to hire is a promotion manager to sell a piece of merchandise - in this case it's the Charter. The cost factor is not going to come through ads or anything like that, it will be in her fee in consolidating all this through the media - buy, buy, buy and sell, sell, sell - the question is - how long a duration is this necessary? If we're simply going to listen to the presentation of this person and others who want to come in - we may buy the presentation, we may not - we may want to look over again what we already have planned as the Chairman mentioned. I would recommend that we pursue the matter and see if we really want to do this, whoever the person may be.

Murakami: Can we get any kind of figures in terms of plan?

Souki: That would be necessary.

Cameron: Yes, timetable, costs and plans.

Souki: Then we can look at that versus what we already have, then we'll be better able to make a decision - who knows, maybe what we already have may be more than ample.

Cameron: What is the cost of the printing of the tabloid?

Chairman: It's printed right there on today's handouts.

Cameron: Oh yes, well perhaps we can have the Maui News print the first one, then have the expert do the second one and really print the highlights.

Sodetani: I gather this reaction is caused by the news article about the Water Board (several Commissioners said "NO") - perhaps it is more emphatic since that time. I have spoken with many people about that particular article - people are not stupid - they realize what the Water Board is, they don't like the present system - especially big developers - it really is not under the control of the County as it should be. Not even consumers are happy. Now if the idea of hiring another person is to sell the Charter, I think it's our responsibility on ourselves as a group to work harder to get the Charter across. That person is coming in late, he has a lot of catching up to do - it took us a whole year to consolidate this whole thing - how can someone else coming in so late be able to do this? My suggestion at this time is to contact key people in the community to assist us in getting the information out. I don't want to say SELL, because it connotes something bad to me. I feel it is our duty and our obligation to come out with a good proposal and our job is not over - I don't want to push it over to someone else for guidance - we're the ones to provide that. We were appointed to serve and we accepted - and if you don't want to work at it - resign.

Cameron: I'm not giving my responsibility over to someone else - I am only asking for a consultant for guidance - someone who is a pro at this type of thing - who could do it a lot more efficiently - more cleverly - I think a consultant could get enough out of the Charter to find out what the salient features are - then be able to say...."these are the changes we made"....

Sodetani: Can't we do that? Isn't it obvious what the changes are?

Abe: Speaking for myself I feel totally inadequate in presenting the Charter to the public. This is no different than any other election - we're going out to ask people to vote for the Charter - it is a recognized fact that when you solicit votes it is not a hit and miss thing - it has to be planned. I don't think it should be dumped on the people and expect them to vote your way. The timing is important.

Petro: What is the other alternative if we do not hire a professional?

Chairman: Roundtable discussions, tabloid together w/pictures, news articles, speaking engagements. We have 10 Commissioners who have vast expertise, and to me, we are the ones who are supposed to plan it - We hired Mrs. M. for PR - she has gone ahead and set up all these things; now someone else is coming in - You're talking about a timetable - is that timetable from now 'till Nov 3? Is it only for a month together with the materials to be displayed during that month?

Mrs. Cameron: No during the whole time 'till Nov 3. We can put that person under a contract.

Upon questioning, Chairman Bright announced that the balance on hand in Commissioners budget is \$43,575.50 as of 2/29/76.

Sodetani: The objective is not to sell this document; the objective is to educate the people - it's the people who are to decide.

Chairman: Yes but we have to help them to decide.

Sodetani: Yes, but we're not going to sell (underlining added) it. You're talking about strategy, selling, campaigning, all these things - that shouldn't be coming into the picture. Our objective is to inform the public, not to go out and say....."Vote for this...."

Cameron: I feel that the Charter is a very important document - I would like to see everyone vote for it- but unless an individual knows why he voted YES or NO for the Charter, I feel we have failed.

Sodetani: That's true - but what have we done so far to disseminate this information?

Chairman: Two speaking engagements; Rotary Club, Joe Souki guest speaker appointed by Chairman Kekumano; the BWS, Murakami and Souki, speakers as requested by the BWS. We all agree that the public hearings were ineffective. (16 public hearings held in October, November 1975, and January 1976). I believe we all also agree that there is a need for more communication. This was a part of our program through November 3. It seems that many of you feel that you are not able to handle the kind of planning that is now more urgently needed; that you also feel that what we have planned so far is inadequate. A decision must be made whether or not these other people are going to come in to make their presentations.

Abe: I do not think that what we already have is inadequate - I think that the time of presenting it to the public is a crucial point.

CAMERON: My feelings about hiring a consultant is that she is able to do things and have effective communication.

Souki: If a consultant comes in and makes a presentation to us doesn't mean we're going to hire him - we may feel that what we already have is more than adequate - however, we have exposed ourselves to another alternative - and that is to assist the person we already have, Mrs. Marciel and assist her in this endeavor / on the other hand we may find the cost too high and what we have is sufficient - it does not obligate us in any way - let's open our minds.

Sparks: I MOVE this Commission explore the possibilities of having some consultants present themselves before the Commission with proposals and plans relating to more detailed exposure of the Proposed Charter to the public; also to include costs and length of time needed. SECONDED by Comm. Agliam - CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

BALLOT SAMPLES: Ballot samples A and B were discussed as presented by the sub-committee on Ballots - it was MOVED by Comm. Souki, SECONDED by Comm. Sparks that Sample A be accepted and recommended to the County Clerk for follow-up to the Lt. Governor. UNANIMOUS - Refer to Ballot A attached.

COMMISSIONERS ROUNDTABLE - KMVI: Commissioners chose their topics and all speakers confirmed. Refer to copy attached. Vice Chairman Bright to be present at all broadcasts.

PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL - TABLOID PRESENTATION OF PROPOSED AMENDED CHARTER - MAUI NEWS: Commissioners reviewed report of tabloid from Bob Jones, Advertising The Maui News, regarding printing of 20-page presentation including Charter, photos, illustrations, estimated cost breakdown, etc. The matter of bids was also discussed. Conclusion: Jones to appear before Commissioners at next meeting of 5/4/76, for further discussion.

Dialogue followed on whether or not Mrs. Edwina Bright, Commission Vice Chairman should be elected chairman, inasmuch as Chairman Kekumano is no longer a resident of Maui County and now lives in Juneau, Alaska. The consensus was that Mrs. Bright should be named Chairman. It was noted that Monsgr. has not resigned and consequently no vacancy exists. Commissioners did not feel it is fair for Mrs. Bright to serve only as "Acting Chairman" or Vice Chairman. It was felt the matter should be probed.

COMPENSATION TO COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Bright: We pursued the matter of the compensation as provided by law and I found out that: Kauai did not pay their Commission; Hawaii did not pay their Commission; Oahu did not. None of the three Islands had any reasons for not paying their Charter Commissioners. Maui paid their original Commission and plans to pay this one.

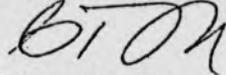
SPEAKERS BUREAU: It was decided to establish a Speakers Bureau comprised of Commissioners to speak at public meetings, before clubs, organizations, etc. It was felt that in order to give everyone an opportunity to appear, a system of rotation should be established. (List to be ready at meeting of 5/4/76).

It was also suggested that an "evaluation sheet" should be prepared and circulated at these meetings so that Commissioners would be better able to strengthen necessary areas and/or receive feedback for further studies and engagements.

There was nothing further - next meeting May 4, 1976 - 3:00 PM, Cameron Center.

Respectfully submitted,

FOR THE CHARTER COMMISSION:



Cecilia T. Marciel
Administrative Coordinator