

CHARTER COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 27, 1992
HELENE HALL, HANA, MAUI

Present

James Cockett
Dolores Fabrao
Robert Nakasone (Chair)
Allan Sparks
Susan Nakano-Ruidas (Staff)

Excused

Sherrilee Dodson (Vice Chair)
Annette Mondoy
Victor Reyes
Anne Takabuki
Jamie Woodburn
Deborah Wright
Lloyd Yonenaka

I. CALL TO ORDER

Noting that a quorum was not necessary for public meetings, Chair Nakasone called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m.

II. OVERVIEW/DISCUSSION OF CURRENT CHARTER FOR COUNTY OF MAUI AND PRESENTATION OF IDEAS FOR AMENDMENTS

A. Chair Nakasone introduced commission members present and noted that there would be no time limit for public testimony.

B. Commission member Sparks presented a brief history of the Maui County Charter, subsequent amendments to the Charter and an overview of our current At-Large system. "The real district is the entire county."

Sparks noted that "true districts" are generally less costly to run in for office, less confusing for the voters, and quite possibly encourage more people to run for office. With Maui's current population, "you would need 11,153 for an equal district system. For you in Hana, you would share your district with parts of Kuau, Ulupalakua, Kaupo and 1/2 of Kula to get the 11,153."

Other ideas being "toyed with" include staying with the At-Large system, but fixing the residency requirements - splitting the three central seats into Wailuku/Kahului/and one other part and eliminating the At-Large seat and adding it to East Maui.

Chair Nakasone noted that other proposals for structuring nine equal districts include combining Hana with Lanai and Molokai, in consideration of lifestyle and the type of environment being comparable to Lanai and Molokai.

Nakasone also noted that "nine is not the magic number. Looking at single seat districts, you might be looking at possibly eleven members on the Council."

II. PRESENTATION OF IDEAS FOR AMENDMENTS (Continued)

C. Commission member Cockett presented a brief overview of his committee looking at all department heads, their qualifications and any requests they might have for Charter amendments. He also noted that resolutions had been received from the Council requesting Council approval on some mayoral appointments, a change from the current status for the departments of Finance, Public Works and Planning.

Cockett also noted that his committee has also received an amendment from the Public Safety Commission (noting that they have been acting as a "Fire Commission") asking for more say in the safety portion in protecting Maui.

III. PUBLIC TESTIMONY

- A. John Blumer-Buell addressed commissioners as a member of the Hana Community Association Board of Directors. He noted that "there is real interest in what you are doing; the Council of Community Associations has discussed the (Charter) Commission several times and there is a lot of interest in sponsoring a public televised forum."
- B. John Akana (individual) said that "Hana would benefit by eleven members because the districts would be smaller. I think Lanai would benefit from that too, because of the smaller numbers."

Regarding "canoe" districts, Akana noted that "being a canoe district (statewide), our communication with our elected personnel is not that great. Our representatives get no more money for travel - no staff." However, Akana also noted that Malama Solomon and O'Keiffe fly to Hana - "they come to Hana more often than those stationed on Maui."

Akana: "Eleven would decrease our area. Perhaps that would give us more contact with our elected officials."

When asked if he favored single-seat or at-large systems, Akana replied: "The single-seat district is more influential. (In the present at-large system) "I don't know the people on Molokai or Lanai, or their involvement in government. If you have a real good political machine, you can sell that candidate. The person with money can really sell themselves through the media."

Asked how he felt about being "linked up" with Lanai and Molokai, Akana replied: "Our philosophy is similar. I would think the people from central Maui are different from Lanai and Hana because of the influx of people."

III. PUBLIC TESTIMONY

B. John Akana (Continued)

Hana is still rural; Lanai is still rural; Molokai is still rural."

Asked if he had to be hooked-up with somewhere else, what his preference would be, Akana responded: "As long as the philosophy is alike, and that it isn't so difficult to get the representative there...it could be alright."

Akana asked if there was "anything in the Charter that has reference to the set up of the (planning) Advisory Committee." (Sparks replied that only the Planning Commission is in the Charter.)

Akana: "I would like to see one representative from each district appointed to that Planning Commission. With one from Hana, we will be represented. Right now, we have no voice on the Commission."

Commissioners told Akana they "would take this under advisement - the appointment of members to the Planning Commission should consider geographic districts."

Commission member Fabrao noted the commissioner's philosophy - "If it's working well, why fix it?"

Chair Nakasone: "Another thing brought up on Molokai was townships or neighborhood boards. They feel the community will be better served by creating these. We will have a speaker on Neighborhood Districts in the later part of February (and we'll be able to ask) if this has been effective or created another level of government."

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Nakasone noted that there was not a quorum present and closed the public meeting at 7:55 p.m.

ACCEPTED:

Robert Nakasone *in* 2/13/92
Robert Nakasone, Chairman Date