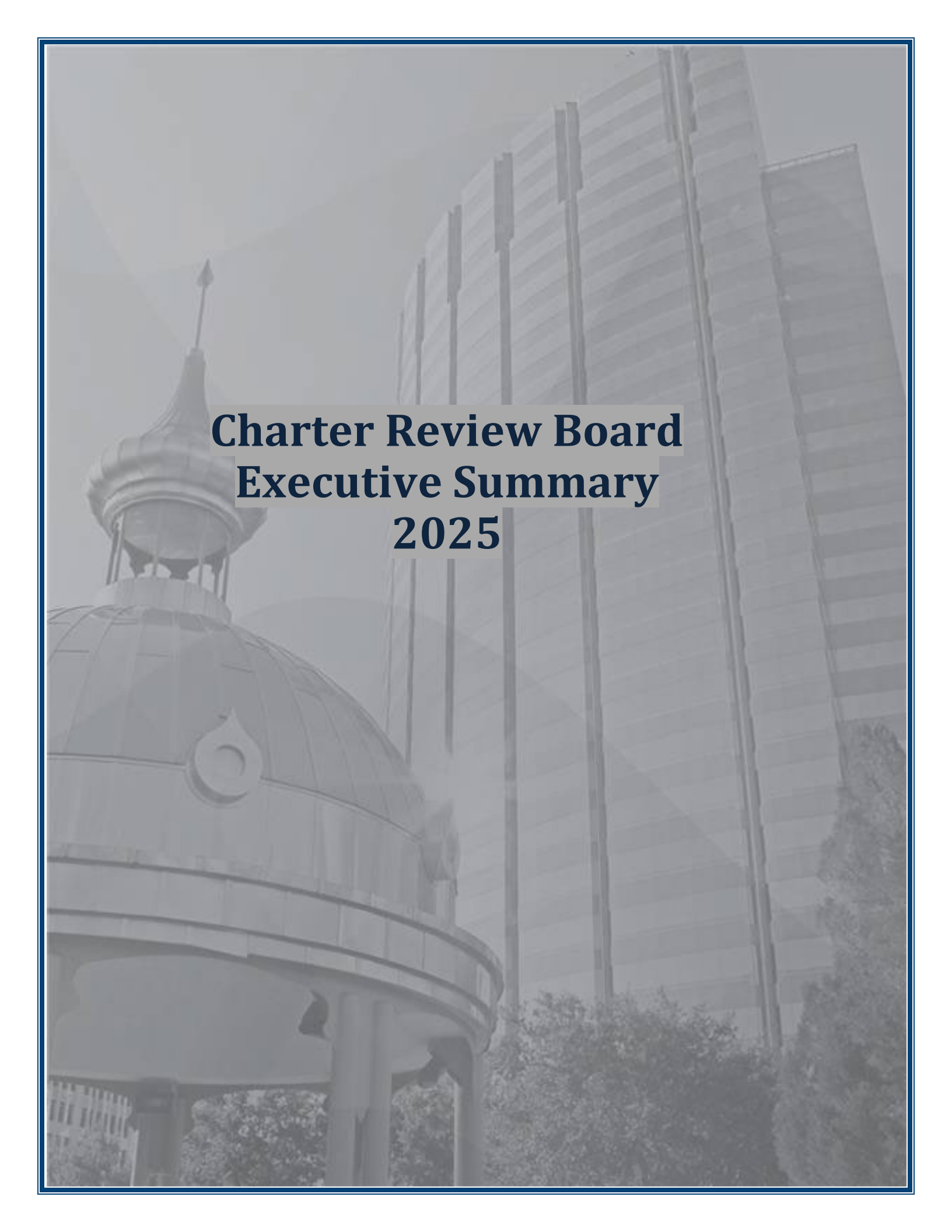


The background of the page features a grayscale photograph. On the left, there is a classical building with a large, ornate dome topped with a spire. To the right, a modern glass skyscraper rises into the sky. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent dark gray rectangular area in the center.

Charter Review Board Executive Summary 2025

Table of Contents

History and Duties of the Charter Review Board	3
2025 Charter Review Board Members	4
Staff to the 2025 Charter Review Board.....	18
Overview of Issues Addressed by the 2025 Charter Review Board	20
Summary Chart of Sections Reviewed and Actions Taken	20
Summary of Charter Review Board Meetings and Actions.....	21
February 11, 2025 – Organizational Meeting	21
March 11, 2025 – Initial Charter Review	21
April 8, 2025 – Process and Planning Discussions.....	21
May 13, 2025 – Agency Presentations	21
June 10, 2025 – Financial Impact Resolution Development.....	22
July 8, 2025 – Fire Chief Proposal and BOCC Structure	22
August–September 2025 – BOCC Composition Deliberations	22
October 14, 2025 – Adoption of Section 8.05 Resolution	22
November 4, 2025 – Final Deliberations	23
December 9, 2025 – Final Meeting and Close-Out	23
2025 CRB Financial Impact Statement Resolution	24
Meeting and Public Hearing Schedule of the 2025 Charter Review Board.....	24
Rules of Order of the 2025 Charter Review Board.....	27
Home Rule Charter.....	31

History and Duties of the Charter Review Board

The Hillsborough County Charter was approved by the voters in 1983 and became effective on May 28, 1985. Section 8.02 provides for a Charter Review Board to be appointed by the Board of County Commissioners every five years. Each Commissioner appoints two members who are electors in the Commissioner's district. Elected officials may not be appointed to serve on this Board. Members of the Charter Review Board are appointed for a period of one year and serve without compensation.

The fourteen-member Board is an autonomous body and by Charter is empowered to conduct a comprehensive study of any or all phases of County government. The members meet regularly during the year and allow citizen input on the issues being proposed and discussed. The Charter Review Board has no power to change taxes, government services, or government of the Cities of Tampa, Plant City, and Temple Terrace. The Clerk of the Circuit Court, Property Appraiser, the Sheriff, Supervisor of Elections, and Tax Collector are not included under the Charter. The duties of these offices are based upon the Florida Constitution and the State of Florida Statutes.

In accordance with the Charter, the Charter Review Board, after two public hearings and upon approval of two-thirds of its members may file any proposed amendments to the Charter with the Supervisor of Elections, who shall place these issues on the ballot at the next regular general election. Charter amendments by ordinance may be voted on at a special election if the Board of County Commissioners choose.

2025 Charter Review Board Members



Art Wood

Chair, Charter Review Board

Appointed by Commissioner Christine Miller - District 4

Personal Statement

It has been a great honor and privilege to serve again on the Charter Review Board. I am grateful to Commissioner Miller for the appointment. I want to thank fellow board members and staff for their guidance, contributions, and participation.

Biography

Art Wood is an established financial executive and community leader with more than four decades of professional and civic experience. He earned his BSBA and MBA from the University of Florida and served in the United States Air Force from 1967 to 1970 before beginning his long career in the credit union industry.

From 1974 to 2014, Mr. Wood served as a CEO and President of multiple credit unions, following earlier service as a credit union volunteer. Throughout his career, he has remained deeply involved in community boards, professional trade associations, and charitable organizations. He has also been politically active, including serving as Chairman of the Hillsborough County Republican Party in 2012 and campaigning on behalf of principled conservative candidates.

Julianne Holt

Vice Chair, Charter Review Board

Appointed by Commissioner Harry Cohen - District 1



Personal Statement

I would like to thank Commissioner Harry Cohen for appointing me to the 2025 Charter Review Board. The opportunity as a citizen to be involved in this extremely important task was a highlight of my year. To hear elected officials, private citizens, and other members of the Board express their views for the operation of Hillsborough County was enlightening and brought me great satisfaction. Throughout the process one thing became very clear: people care about our community and are committed to its continued success.

Biography

Julianne M. Holt is a distinguished attorney and public servant with more than four decades of legal experience. A lifelong Tampa resident, she served as the elected Public Defender for Florida's 13th Judicial Circuit for 32 years, becoming the first woman to lead Hillsborough County's largest criminal defense law firm. During her tenure, she managed over 190 employees and oversaw tens of thousands of cases annually.

A summa cum laude graduate of South Texas College of Law, Ms. Holt began her career in private practice before serving as a Special Court-Appointed Assistant Public Defender. She has been recognized with numerous honors, including the Hillsborough Association of Women Lawyers Lifetime Achievement Award, the NAACP Unsung Hero Award, the Tiger Bay Club Lifetime Achievement Award, and induction into the Hillsborough County Women's Hall of Fame. She continues her public service through various leadership roles.



Sue Carlton

Board Member, Charter Review Board

Appointed by Commissioner Harry Cohen - District 1

Personal Statement

As a journalist, you cover local politics; you don't participate in them. So the chance to be part of Hillsborough's Charter Review Board after I left the Times, working alongside people of strongly differing views, was just a great experience. When you care about where you live, it's especially valuable to be even a small part of the process of figuring out what comes next.

Biography

Sue Carlton is a veteran journalist and longtime Tampa resident whose career spans more than three decades at the *Tampa Bay Times*. A Miami native with deep Florida roots, she covered criminal courts, politics, legal affairs, business, and urban development, ultimately serving as Tampa City Editor and a longtime metro columnist. In 2012, she was named Best Columnist in Florida by the Florida Society of News Editors.

Beyond journalism, Sue is a devoted advocate for Florida's natural environment and volunteered for more than a decade with a sea turtle conservation organization. She left the *Times* in 2024 and now enjoys long urban hikes, exploring Florida's parks and coastlines, and life near downtown Tampa with her husband and their dog.



Dr. Carolyn Collins

Board Member, Charter Review Board

Appointed by Commissioner Gwen Myers - District 3

Personal Statement

I extend my sincere gratitude to Hillsborough County Commissioner Gwendolyn Myers for appointing me to serve on the Hillsborough County Citizen Review Board. This experience provided valuable insight into county governance, the County Charter, and the roles and responsibilities of the Board of County Commissioners, as well as the importance of public engagement and informed ballot processes. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve alongside dedicated board members and for the support of county staff and community participants throughout the process.

Biography

Dr. Carolyn L. Hepburn Collins, MPA, RD, LD/N, has dedicated her life to healthcare, education, and community service. She served for more than 34 years as a Clinical Nutrition Specialist at Tampa General Hospital, contributing to advanced medical programs including cardiac, kidney, liver, lung, and bone marrow transplant services, and maintained a consulting dietitian career spanning more than two decades.

Dr. Collins holds degrees from Florida A&M University, Florida State University, Golden Gate University, and Florida Beacon College, where she received an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters. From 1986 to 1992, she hosted the television program *BLACK CONTACT* on WTVT Channel 13, earning a national CEBA Award, and has served as President of the Hillsborough County NAACP, chaired FAMU alumni organizations, and held leadership roles on numerous local boards.



Kim Droege

Board Member, Charter Review Board

Appointed by Commissioner Chris Boles - District 6

Personal Statement

It has been my honor and privilege to serve on the 2025 Charter Review Board. I always welcome opportunities to give back to my community, learn and enjoy a new experience. I want to thank my fellow Board members for their service, our Chair, Art Wood and our Vice Chair, Julianne Holt. I want to thank the County staff for their support, guidance, dedication, professionalism, and encouragement throughout. Finally, I want to thank Commissioner Chris Boles for the appointment and trust he placed in me.

Biography

Kim Droege is a media host, nonprofit leader, and public affairs advocate with extensive professional and international experience. She is the host of the award-winning interview program *Connecting with Kim*, which airs on Tampa Bay Arts and Education Network and Sun Radio, and is available through multiple streaming platforms.

A graduate of Northwestern University with a degree in economics, Kim spent her corporate career with AT&T and IBM, working globally with top-tier accounts and living abroad in Europe and Asia. She speaks and reads multiple languages and has served in leadership roles for numerous nonprofit organizations in the U.S. and internationally.

Kim currently serves as Vice President and Program Chair of the Tampa Tiger Bay Club and is a member of the South Shore Council for Community Foundation Tampa Bay. She received a Florida House of Representatives Commendation for her role in passing 2024 legislation protecting seniors and vulnerable adults from fraud and currently serves on the Hillsborough County Charter Review Board.



KrisAnne Hall

Board Member, Charter Review Board

Appointed by Commissioner Donna Cameron Cepeda

District 5

Personal Statement

I am honored to have been chosen by Commissioner Donna Cameron-Cepeda to serve on the Hillsborough County Charter Review Board. Participating in this once-every-five-years constitutional process is a privilege I do not take lightly. As James Madison reminded us, "The people are the only legitimate fountain of power. It was an honor to work alongside fellow members who approached this responsibility with respect for that truth, the rule of law, and the People of Hillsborough County. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve and to help safeguard limited, accountable government.

Biography

KrisAnne Hall is a constitutional attorney, educator, author, and nationally recognized scholar on American constitutional history. She holds a bachelor's degree in biochemistry from Blackburn College and a Juris Doctor from the University of Florida Levin College of Law. Prior to her legal career, she served in the U.S. Army as a military intelligence Russian linguist.

Mrs. Hall spent nearly a decade as a Florida prosecutor and later worked with a national First Amendment law firm defending civil liberties. She has authored six books, produced award-winning documentaries, and taught constitutional law to legislators, law enforcement officers, and citizens nationwide. Internationally, she has advised foreign leaders and assisted in drafting constitutional reforms.

She is the founder and Chief Counsel of Liberty First Legal, Inc., a national nonprofit law firm, and serves as a professor and department chair at River University School of Government. She has been married for over 29 years and is the mother of an adult son.



Karen Jaroch

Board Member, Charter Review Board

Appointed by Commissioner Joshua Wostal - District 7

Personal Statement

It was an honor to be appointed to the Charter Review Board by Commissioner Josh Wostal and a pleasure to serve with fellow members. Although I was disappointed that the board narrowly missed placing a measure on the November ballot to increase county representation, I remain committed to advocating for a similar measure as it progresses through the legislature.

Biography

Karen Cox Jaroch is a licensed professional engineer, conservative activist, and public servant in Hillsborough County. A graduate of H.B. Plant High School and the University of South Florida, she began her career at Texas Instruments and Northrop Grumman before later entering grassroots political advocacy.

She co-founded the Tampa 9-12 Project and led the successful “No Tax for Tracks” campaign. Ms. Jaroch served six years on the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Board, including as Vice Chair and Chair of the Finance & Governance Committee. She was elected countywide in 2020 as a Supervisor for the Hillsborough Soil and Water Conservation District.

Currently serving as Florida State Director for Heritage Action, she remains active in public policy advocacy. She is married with four children and continues to promote community engagement, natural resource protection, and family-centered values.



Debra Jodoin

Board Member, Charter Review Board

Appointed by Commissioner Donna Cameron Cepeda - District 5

Personal Statement

It has been an honor to serve on the Hillsborough County Charter Review Board. I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to this governance and to work alongside dedicated community members committed to transparency, accountability, and the long-term success of Hillsborough County. My time has reinforced my belief in the power of community involvement. I am thankful for the opportunity to serve.

Biography

Debra Jodoin is a committed Hillsborough County resident with a strong dedication to civic engagement and transparent local governance. She previously worked with the Hillsborough County Supervisor of Elections Office, gaining firsthand experience in election administration and public accountability.

She is passionate about ensuring that residents' voices are represented in county decision-making and that policies support a growing, thriving community. Her work reflects a long-term commitment to strengthening local government for future generations.



Rick Kunz

Board Member, Charter Review Board

Appointed by Commissioner Joshua Wostal - District 7

Personal Statement

I like what Edward Winslow, a pilgrim leader from the Mayflower, wrote in the 1600's, "It is our duty to seek the good of others, and therein we serve God." What a privilege it has been to serve our County even if in a small way.

Biography

Rick Kunz is a lifelong Floridian with a background in ministry, international missions, and leadership. An Eagle Scout, he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice from the University of South Florida and a Master of Divinity from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

He pastored churches in Missouri and Oklahoma before serving for 27 years with the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. Alongside his wife, Kris, he helped establish churches and provided pastoral leadership in Zimbabwe, Argentina, and the Middle East.

Rick and Kris have six adult children and thirteen grandchildren, and he remains committed to faith-based service and mentorship.



Beth Leytham

Board Member, Charter Review Board

Appointed by Commissioner Chris Boles - District 6

Personal Statement

It has been my honor to serve on the Charter Review Board and to be among many engaged and like-minded – and not so like-minded, too – citizens with whom I served. To me, Hillsborough County's Charter is a thoughtful, living document and its review is one of the most consequential efforts in which a citizen of this county can participate.

Biography

Beth Leytham is the president and owner of The Leytham Group, a strategic communications and issues management firm serving public and private sector clients throughout Tampa Bay. Her work spans public affairs, crisis communications, and politically sensitive infrastructure and development projects, including housing revitalization, transportation initiatives, and major construction efforts.

Recognized for her expertise in managing complex public-facing challenges, Beth has been named among Tampa Bay's most influential professionals by *Florida Trend* and the *Tampa Bay Business Journal*. She holds a degree in political science from Ball State University and executive education credentials from Northwestern University.

Beth is engaged in civic leadership and has served on numerous nonprofit boards. She currently serves on the Hillsborough County Charter Review Board and is a graduate of Leadership Tampa.



Sid Shah

Board Member, Charter Review Board

Appointed by Commissioner Ken Hagan - District 2

Personal Statement

As our term comes to a close in February 2026, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt appreciation to each of you. While we faced challenges and engaged in thoughtful debates, we did so with respect, professionalism, and a shared commitment to serving the citizens of Hillsborough County. I am especially grateful to Hon. Ken Hagan for appointing me to this Board and providing me the opportunity to serve alongside such dedicated and thoughtful colleagues. It has been a privilege to work with all of you, and I have genuinely enjoyed our collaboration and camaraderie throughout the term. Thank you for your time, energy, and commitment. I look forward to staying connected and continuing to support our community in the years ahead.

Biography

Sudhir (Sid) Shah is a semi-retired entrepreneur with more than 40 years of leadership experience in business and community service. He currently serves on the Hillsborough County Charter Review Board and the Visit Tampa Bay Multicultural Advisory Committee and previously served two terms as a Community Development District Supervisor.

A long-time leader within Tampa's Indian American community, Mr. Shah is a Pillar Trustee of the India Cultural Center and a key organizer of the India Festival of Tampa Bay. He also played an instrumental role in the passage of Florida House Resolution 8053 recognizing the contributions of Hindu Americans.

Mr. Shah is married to his wife, Nita, and is the proud father of two children and grandfather of four. His interests include cultural engagement, philanthropy, and community collaboration.



Melissa Snively

Board Member, Charter Review Board

Appointed by Commissioner Christine Miller - District 4

Personal Statement

I was honored to be appointed by Commissioner Christine Miller to serve on the Hillsborough County Charter Review Board, where I collaborated with fellow members to review and recommend amendments aimed at enhancing transparency, accountability, and local governance. I believe that a transparent and well-functioning government is vital to building public trust and serving our diverse community effectively. I am proud to have contributed my experience and dedication to this important effort shaping the future of Hillsborough County.

Biography

Melissa Snively is a business leader, community advocate, and former elected official with more than 30 years of experience in the insurance industry. She has owned and operated a State Farm Insurance Agency since 2001 and holds the Chartered Life Underwriter designation.

Melissa has served in numerous leadership roles across the Tampa Bay region, including Chair of the Greater Brandon Chamber of Commerce and Chair of the HCA Brandon Hospital Board of Trustees. She was elected to the Hillsborough County School Board in 2014 and re-elected in 2018, serving as Chair while overseeing a \$3 billion budget.

She has received numerous awards recognizing her service and leadership and continues to serve on regional and national advisory boards.



Jim Taylor

Board Member, Charter Review Board

Appointed by Commissioner Ken Hagan - District 2

Personal Statement

Hillsborough County is the only home I know. So, to be given this opportunity by Commissioner Hagan to serve my community was a genuine honor. It was a pleasure to engage in the battle of ideas with my fellow CRB colleagues. Thank you to the Hillsborough County staff who provided our committee with undeniable professionalism, insight, and courtesy.

Biography

Jim Taylor is a government relations professional with nearly 15 years of experience advising elected officials and navigating legislative processes at all levels of government. Prior to entering the private sector, he led Hillsborough County's government relations team, gaining extensive insight into local governance.

As Vice President at Shumaker Advisors, Jim has secured millions in appropriations and delivered policy successes for clients across government, healthcare, technology, and business sectors. A third-generation Tampa native, he remains deeply involved in civic and faith-based leadership.

Jim is married with four sons and enjoys boating, Tampa sports, and supporting Florida State University athletics.



Gerald White

Board Member, Charter Review Board

Appointed by Commissioner Gwen Myers - District 3

Personal Statement

It has been an honor to serve on the Hillsborough County Charter Review Board. I remain deeply committed to ensuring that our county charter reflects transparency, accountability, and fairness, while remaining responsive to the evolving needs of our diverse communities. I am proud to contribute my experience in public service, labor leadership, and the energy industry to help strengthen local governance and uphold the public trust.

Biography

Gerald L. White is a lifelong Hillsborough County resident and energy professional with over 42 years at Tampa Electric Company, where he serves as an Unlimited Stationary Engineer and Superintendent of Generation. His career reflects a strong commitment to leadership, labor advocacy, and public service.

Mr. White has held numerous civic leadership roles, including Vice Chairman of the Hillsborough County Citizen Advisory Committee, Vice Chairman of the Hillsborough County Hospital Authority, and Commissioner of the Tampa Housing Authority. He has also served as Chairman of the Florida Workers' Compensation Oversight Board and contributed to multiple county initiatives.

A four-time member of the Hillsborough County Charter Review Board, Mr. White brings deep institutional knowledge and a collaborative approach to governance. He and his wife, Ann, have been married for 42 years and are the proud parents of four accomplished children.

Staff to the 2025 Charter Review Board

Elizabeth Cardenas

Director – Hillsborough County Government Relations & Strategic Services



Elizabeth Cardenas serves as the Director of the Office of Government Relations and Strategic Services for Hillsborough County. She oversees a variety of policy and compliance sectors in this role. Beth earned her Juris Doctor from Roger Williams University College of Law; her Master's of Public Administration from the University of South Florida; and her Bachelor's degree from the University of Tampa. She serves in leadership roles in the Junior League of Clearwater-Dunedin, the State of Florida Junior League State Public Affairs Committee, Florida Women Leading Government, and her law school alumni board.

Mary Helen Farris

General Counsel - Hillsborough County Attorney's Office

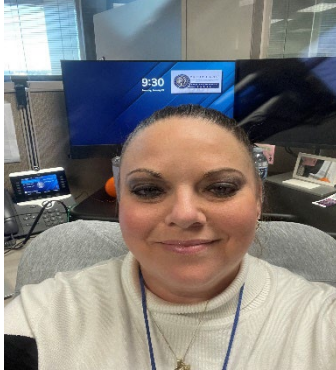


Mary Helen Farris is the Deputy County Attorney/General Counsel for the Hillsborough County Attorney's Office and has been with the Office since 1992. Mrs. Farris received her undergraduate and law degrees from the University of Florida and was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1987. She specializes in the areas of Government Ethics, Florida Sunshine Law, Florida Public Records Law, Election Law, and constitutional issues with an emphasis on the county charters. Mrs. Farris is Florida Bar Board Certified in City, County and Local Government Law, and is a past Chair of the City, County and Government Law Section of the Florida Bar and a past Chair of the City, County and Local Government Law Certification Committee.

Staff to the 2025 Charter Review Board

Allison Desiano

Recording Secretary - Clerk of the Circuit Court



Allison has served with the Hillsborough County Clerk of Court & Comptroller's Office since March 1999. In this role, she brings decades of institutional knowledge and a strong commitment to public service. Outside of work, she is the proud mother of one daughter and actively volunteers with her daughter's dance studio, supporting competitions, special events, and performances.

Michael Streator

Recording Secretary - Clerk of the Circuit Court



Michael has served with the Hillsborough County Clerk of Court & Comptroller's Office since 2019. He earned a Bachelor's degree in History from John Carroll University in 2009. Outside of work, he enjoys traveling internationally, exploring new cuisines, and is a full-time season ticket member of the Tampa Bay Lightning team.

Overview of Issues Addressed by the 2025 Charter Review Board

Summary Chart of Sections Reviewed and Actions Taken

Charter Section / Topic	Subject Matter	Status / Outcome
Section 8.05	Financial Impact Statement	Resolution adopted and transmitted to BOCC
Article IV (4.02–4.06)	BOCC Composition, Districts, Terms	Discussed extensively; no amendment advanced
Article VI	County Attorney – Written Report	Reviewed; no amendment advanced
Section 4.08	Enactment of Ordinances and Resolutions	Reviewed; no amendment advanced
Section 9.09	Planning	Reviewed; no amendment advanced
Section 4.10	County Internal Auditor / Inspector General	Reviewed; no amendment advanced
Fire Chief Proposal	Executive / Legislative Reporting	Discussed, no amendment advanced
Article VIII	CRB Member Term Limits	Discussed; no amendment advanced
Article IV	BOCC Term Limits	Discussed, no amendment advanced
Sections 2.01 & 9.01	Powers / Limitation on State Law	Reviewed; proposal withdrawn
State SMD Legislation	External Legislative Context	Reviewed informationally
School Board Referendum Process	Charter / Statutory Interaction	Reviewed informationally
Section 8.03	Citizen Initiative	No action taken
Section 8.01	Charter Amendments by BOCC	Withdrawn prior to agenda

Summary of Charter Review Board Meetings and Actions

February 11, 2025 – Organizational Meeting

The Charter Review Board (CRB) convened for its inaugural meeting on February 11, 2025. Elizabeth Cardenas, Director of Government Relations and Strategic Services, called the meeting to order and provided an administrative overview. Chief Operating Officer Rick Van Arsdall administered the oath of office. Members present included Sue Carlton, Dr. Carolyn Collins, Kim Droege, Kris Anne Hall, Julianne Holt, Karen Jaroch, Debra Jodoin, Rick Kunz, Beth Leytham, Sid Shah, Melissa Snively, Jim Taylor, Gerald White, and Art Wood.

Leadership elections resulted in Art Wood being elected Chair and Julianne Holt elected Vice Chair. Deputy County Attorney Mary Helen Farris and Senior Assistant County Attorney Julia Mandell provided legal and procedural guidance, including Sunshine Law requirements, Charter amendment thresholds, and the CRB's advisory role. Members discussed meeting schedules, public engagement expectations, and adopted rules of order.

March 11, 2025 – Initial Charter Review

At the March meeting, Chair Wood guided the Board through its first substantive Charter review. Attorney Farris presented an article-by-article overview, prompting members to identify sections for further consideration. Sections pulled for discussion included Article IV (Board of County Commissioners), Article V (County Administrator), Sections 2.01 and 9.01 (powers and preemption), Section 9.09 (planning), Section 4.10 (internal auditor), and Section 8.05 (financial impact statements).

Members actively engaged in discussion, including Dr. Carolyn Collins, Kim Droege, Karen Jaroch, Beth Leytham, and Gerald White. Topics included single-member districts, Commissioner lawsuits, planning authority, and the potential creation of an Inspector General. No formal action was taken.

April 8, 2025 – Process and Planning Discussions

The April meeting focused on procedural structure for considering Charter amendments. Following discussion led by Dr. Collins, the CRB adopted a multi-step review process requiring staff legal review, presentation, and subsequent deliberation prior to any vote. Public comment was received from Deborah Owens, who raised concerns regarding planning authority and audit timing.

Section 9.09 (Planning) was discussed in depth, with CRB members requesting presentations from the Planning Commission and County staff. Attorney Mandell cautioned regarding statutory limits on Charter authority.

May 13, 2025 – Agency Presentations

The CRB received joint presentations from Planning Commission Executive Director Melissa Zornitta and Development Services Director Adam Gormly regarding comprehensive planning

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY 2025 CHARTER REVIEW BOARD EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

and development processes. Members, including Dr. Collins, Kim Droege, and Kris Anne Hall questioned infrastructure capacity, flooding mitigation, and the impacts of the Live Local Act. Section 8.05 (Financial Impact Statement) was discussed extensively. Karen Jaroch advocated for increased transparency for voters, while Sue Carlton and Beth Leytham raised concerns about legal constraints and ballot clutter.

June 10, 2025 – Financial Impact Resolution Development

Discussion continued on Section 8.05, with Attorney Farris explaining relevant court decisions limiting ballot language. The CRB voted unanimously to pursue a resolution recommending centralized, publicly accessible financial impact information rather than a Charter amendment.

July 8, 2025 – Fire Chief Proposal and BOCC Structure

Commissioner Chris Boles presented a proposal to alter the Fire Chief's reporting relationship. Extensive discussion followed among CRB members and legal counsel, with questions raised by Kim Droege, Sid Shah, Melissa Snively, and Jim Taylor regarding chain of command, emergency response, and fiscal impacts. After debate, the CRB voted to remove the Fire Chief proposal from further consideration.

The meeting also included public comment from David Coleman, Quinton Robinson, and Attorney Gordon Schiff, each addressing transparency, governance, and district representation.

August–September 2025 – BOCC Composition Deliberations

Throughout August and September, the CRB focused heavily on Board of County Commissioners composition. Public comment and testimony were received from Commissioners Harry Cohen, Donna Cameron Cepeda, Christine Miller, Joshua Wostal, Gwen Myers, and former officials including Mariella Smith and Joseph Citro. Attorney Gordon Schiff and members of the public also spoke.

CRB members debated expansion from seven to nine commissioners, single-member versus countywide districts, minority representation, fiscal impacts, and the risk of State legislative intervention. Despite numerous motions, no proposal achieved the ten affirmative votes required to advance.

October 14, 2025 – Adoption of Section 8.05 Resolution

The CRB formally adopted the Section 8.05 Financial Impact Statement resolution by a 12–1 vote. Karen Jaroch presented the final language, and Attorney Farris clarified the transmittal process. Continued discussion on BOCC composition followed, with speakers including Commissioners Boles, Cameron Cepeda, and Harry Cohen, former Tampa City Councilmember Joseph Citro, and Attorney Gordon Schiff.

November 4, 2025 – Final Deliberations

The November meeting marked the culmination of BOCC structure deliberations. Motions addressing nine-member boards, seven single-member districts, and hybrid models were all considered and failed. Public comment was received from Commissioner Chris Boles, Commissioner Harry Cohen, Attorney Gordon Schiff, and others.

By the conclusion of the meeting, the CRB acknowledged that consensus did not exist to advance further Charter amendments. Remaining topics, including term limits and School Board referendum processes, were discussed but left unchanged.

December 9, 2025 – Final Meeting and Close-Out

The Charter Review Board convened on December 9, 2025, for its final scheduled meeting of the year. Vice Chair Julianne Holt called the meeting to order and outlined the remaining scope of work. Members reviewed the cumulative status of all Charter sections discussed throughout 2025 and confirmed which items had been completed, withdrawn, or left unresolved.

Discussion revisited unresolved topics including Board of County Commissioners composition, term limits for both commissioners and CRB members, the interaction between State legislation and local charter authority, and the statutory process by which the Hillsborough County School Board may request referendum placement by the Board of County Commissioners. Members acknowledged that while these issues were substantively discussed earlier in the year, no consensus emerged to advance Charter amendments.

Public comment was minimal, with speakers reiterating previously stated positions regarding representation, district structure, and voter choice. CRB members emphasized transparency, the extensive nature of the year's review, and the importance of preserving the institutional record of deliberations.

The CRB formally acknowledged that the only affirmative action resulting from the 2025 Charter review process was the adoption of the Section 8.05 Financial Impact Statement resolution transmitted to the Board of County Commissioners. All other Charter provisions reviewed were either retained without amendment or withdrawn following discussion.

With no further business, the CRB discussed next steps related to report finalization and transmittal. Members expressed appreciation for staff support from the County Attorney's Office and Government Relations and Strategic Services. The meeting concluded with adjournment, formally closing the 2025 Charter Review Board process.

2025 CRB Financial Impact Statement Resolution

RESOLUTION R25-112

A RESOLUTION OF THE CHARTER REVIEW BOARD OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA, REQUESTING THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE CHARTER REVIEW BOARD REGARDING THE REQUIRED FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT ON ALL COUNTY PROPOSED REFERENDA; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Upon motion by Charter Review Board member Karen Jaroch, seconded by Charter Review Board member Julianne Holt, the following Resolution was adopted by **12 to 1** vote with member(s) Sue Carlton voting "No." Charter Review Board Member(s) Carolyn Collins being absent.

WHEREAS, the Charter Review Board of Hillsborough County has conducted a thorough study of the Charter of Hillsborough County; and

WHEREAS, the Charter Review Board discussed the current process to provide a financial impact statement on proposed county referenda; and

WHEREAS, the Charter Review Board voted to prepare a Resolution requesting the Board of County Commissioners to consider several changes to the financial

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CHARTER REVIEW BOARD OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA THAT:

Section 1. The Board of County Commissioners should consider estimating the financial impact for a period of two years as well as the life of the tax or other referenda.

Section 2. The Board of County Commissioners should consider including an estimation of the increase in the cost per household.

Section 3. The Board of County Commissioners should consider eliminating the 75 word limit, as the State has preempted the placement of the financial impact statement from

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY 2025 CHARTER REVIEW BOARD EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

appearing on the ballot.

Section 4. The Board of County Commissioners should consider adding the anticipated benefits to the citizens of Hillsborough County.

Section 5. The Board of County Commissioners should consider placing the financial impact statement in a prominent link on the first page of the County's webpage.

DONE AND RESOLVED THIS 14TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 2025. CHARTER

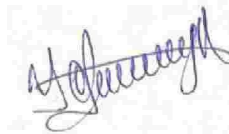
**REVIEW BOARD
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA
STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF HILLSBOROUGH**

I, Victor Crist, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Ex Officio Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners of Hillsborough County, Florida, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the Board at its regular meeting of October 14, 2025, as the same appears of record in Minute Book 593 of the Public Records of Hillsborough County, Florida.

WITNESS my hand and official seal this 10th day of February, 2026

ATTEST:
VICTOR CRIST,
CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT

By: _____



Deputy Clerk

Approved as to form
And legal sufficiency:

By: Mary Helen Farris
Deputy County Attorney/General Counsel

**Meeting and Public Hearing Schedule of the
2025 Charter Review Board**

Tuesday, February 11, 2025

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

Tuesday, April 8, 2025

Tuesday, May 13, 2025

Tuesday, June 10, 2025

Tuesday, July 8, 2025

Tuesday, August 12, 2025

Tuesday, September 9, 2025

Tuesday, October 14, 2025

Tuesday, November 4, 2025

Tuesday, December 9, 2025

Rules of Order of the 2025 Charter Review Board

Rule 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of these rules is to provide for the smooth and orderly functioning of the business of the Charter Review Board of Hillsborough County, Florida (Board) and to provide a basis for resolving questions of procedure when they arise.

Rule 2. STANDING RULES OF ORDER

The Roberts Rules of Order--Newly Revised (11th Edition), are adopted as parliamentary authority for the conduct of all meetings of the Board except when they are inconsistent with these rules of order or any other provisions of law which apply to this Board.

Rule 3. QUORUM

A quorum is the number of Board Members necessary to legally transact business. Eight (8) Members of the Board shall constitute a quorum. Should a quorum not be present, the Board is authorized to take citizen comment, to take steps to obtain a quorum, and to adjourn.

Rule 4. PRESIDING OFFICER

The Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Charter Review Board. In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman shall preside. In the absence of either the Chairman or Vice-Chairman, a presiding officer shall be selected by a majority vote. The Chairman and the Vice-Chairman shall be selected at the Board's organizational meeting. The presiding officer of the Board shall have the following functions:

- (a) determining that a quorum is present.
- (b) opening the meeting and calling the meeting to order.
- (c) recognizing Members of the Board to speak.
- (d) recognizing members of the general public or staff to speak.
- (e) putting to vote all questions which come before the Board as motions.
- (f) deciding all questions of order.
- (g) refusing to recognize frivolous or dilatory motions.
- (h) refusing to recognize motions out of order.
- (i) adjourning meetings when there is a sudden emergency affecting the safety of the Board and others.

The decision of the presiding officer shall stand unless reversed by a majority vote after the proper motion has been made and seconded to reverse such a decision.

Rule 5. VOTING

Voting shall be done by a show of hands. Votes on Charter amendments shall be by roll call. The Clerk of the Board will officially record the votes. Proposed amendments to the Home Rule Charter of Hillsborough County shall be approved by two-thirds (10) Members of the Board.

Rule 6. ABSTENTION

No Board Member may abstain from voting on any matter before the Board upon which official action is to be taken unless there is or appears to be a possible conflict of interest under the provisions of applicable laws. In such cases, said Board Members shall comply with the disclosure requirements of State Law.

Rule 7. MOTIONS

No matter may be officially acted upon by the Board unless a motion has been made by a Board Member to take such action and said motion has been seconded by another Board Member. When a motion has been made and seconded, the presiding officer shall conduct debate on the merits of the motion.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY 2025 CHARTER REVIEW BOARD EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The presiding officer shall have the authority to close debate and call for a vote on the motion. The presiding officer cannot close the debate as long as any Board Member wishes to speak, unless a majority of the Board votes to call for the question and to vote on the motion. The presiding officer, as a matter of prerogative and duty of the chair, may once during each hour and thirty minutes of the meeting of the Board call a ten minute recess.

Rule 8. SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

These are applied to original motions in order to more appropriately dispose of the original motions. Subsidiary motions include:

- (a) motion to amend.
- (b) motion to postpone.
- (c) motion to refer to committee or staff.

When such motions are made and seconded, the subsidiary motion supplements the original motion and must be decided by a majority vote before the original motion can be acted upon.

Rule 9. PRIVILEGED MOTIONS

These motions are of such great importance that they take precedence over all other motions and questions and are not debatable. These motions include:

- (a) fixing a time to adjourn.
- (b) adjournment. (c) taking a recess.

Rule 10. RECONSIDERATION

A motion to reconsider any vote or proceeding of the Board may only be made by a Board Member who had previously voted on the prevailing side. No item may be reconsidered unless a motion has been made and seconded and a majority of the Board votes to so reconsider.

Rule 11. SCHEDULING OF AGENDA ITEMS

The Chairman has the primary authority and responsibility for determining subject matter appropriateness relative to the scheduling of all agenda items before the Board. Accordingly, the Chairman will screen all agenda scheduling requests for appropriate disposition. Board Members may request that items be placed on the agenda by filing written requests with the Chairman via staff one week preceding the next Board meeting.

At each meeting, upon motion and second, Board members may place item on the next agenda by majority vote.

Rule 12. AGENDA AND ORDER OF BUSINESS

An agenda of matters to be discussed by the Board shall be prepared by the Chairman and shall be made available to the public a reasonable time before the Board meeting. In cases of special circumstances or emergencies, items not on the agenda may be acted upon by the Board.

Rule 13. REGULAR MEETINGS

Regular meetings of the Board shall be held a minimum of once monthly at a time to be set and a place to be selected by the Chairman.

Rule 14. SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special meetings of the Board may be called at any time by the Chairman, or by the Vice-Chairman in the absence of the Chairman. Notice of special meetings shall be in writing or by telephone or by electronic

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY 2025 CHARTER REVIEW BOARD EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

communication as designated by the Member.

The Chairman or his duly authorized representative shall serve each Board Member with a notice of a special meeting at least 48 hours before the meeting. Said notice shall state subject matter(s) to be discussed at the special meeting.

Rule 15. EMERGENCY MEETINGS

Emergency meetings of the Board may be called at any time by the Chairman, but at emergency meetings there can be no vote or no action on matters relating to the substance of any Charter Amendment. Notice shall be given in writing or by telephone or by electronic communication in whatever manner is best designed to give actual notice to the Member. Emergency meetings may be called although “due public notice” may be impracticable or impossible. Minutes of emergency meetings must be kept in the same manner as those for regular and special meetings.

Rule 16. MINUTES

Written minutes of all meetings of the Board shall be recorded by the Clerk/Secretary of the Board. These written minutes shall be open for public inspection. Minutes of previous meetings may be circulated for corrections and studying by Board Members as long as any changes, corrections or deletions are discussed during an official meeting and are duly approved by the Board at said meeting.

Rule 17. OPEN MEETINGS

All regular, special, and emergency meetings of the Board shall be open to the public in accordance with Chapter 286, Florida Statutes.

Rule 18. RESOLUTIONS

All resolutions shall be in writing and shall embrace only one subject.

Rule 19. AUDIENCE COMMENTS

This agenda item is designated to furnish a public forum for citizens to address the Board concerning matters of personal and general interest. Each person appearing under this section of the agenda will be limited to three (3) minutes. At the discretion of the Chair, this time may be changed.

Sign-in sheets shall be made available for citizens to request the ability to address the Board. The following statement shall be printed on the sign-in sheets:

“The Charter Review Board welcomes comments from citizens about any issue or concern. Your opinions are valued in terms of providing input to the Board members. However, it is requested at the same time when you address the Board that comments are not directed personally, but rather directed at the issues. This provides a mutual respect between the Board members and the public.”

Rule 20. WAIVER OF RULES OF ORDER

Where not in conflict with law, any of the above rules of order may be temporarily suspended for the meeting in session by a majority vote plus one.

Rule 21. AMENDMENTS

These rules of order may be amended by action of a majority vote of the Board; provided, however, such amendments shall not become effective until the same have received a like vote at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY 2025 CHARTER REVIEW BOARD EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rule 22. USE OF THE COUNTY ATTORNEY

Board members wishing to make use of the County Attorney's Office for preparation of draft charter language, resolutions, and proposals shall request approval for such use at a Board meeting. The Board shall authorize such work by a majority vote.

Rule 23. EFFECTIVE DATE

These rules shall become effective immediately upon adoption by the Board



Hillsborough
County Florida

Home Rule Charter

Approved by Hillsborough County Voters
September 1983

As amended by Hillsborough County Voters

P.O. Box 1110, Tampa, FL 33601
Phone: (813) 276-2640

HCFLGov.NET

Charter-At-A-Glance

- Responsibilities of the executive branch (County Administrator) and legislative branch (County Commission) are specified, and neither branch is to exercise powers pertaining to the other branch.
- There are seven members of the County Commission; four are from single-member districts, and three are elected countywide. Every elector of the County may vote for a majority of the commissioners: the commissioner representing the elector's district, and three commissioners elected at large.
- Terms of County Commissioners are staggered.
- The Charter does not affect any court, any constitutional office, district school board or any municipality.
- Special laws enacted by the Florida Legislature may be affective in Hillsborough County without approval by the County electors if they relate to: civil service, aviation, the port, sports, transportation, hospitals, planning, environment, solid waste management, consumer affairs, resource recovery, criminal justice, historic preservation, and the arts.
- There are provisions for recall of elected officials.
- There is a provision for a Charter Review Board to be appointed by the County Commission two years after the implementation and every five years thereafter. The Charter Review Board is empowered to conduct a study of County government and propose amendments to the charter.
- Amendments also may be proposed by the County Commission by ordinance adopted by five commissioners, or by initiative.
- No amendment may be effective unless it is approved by a majority vote of the electors of the County.

Article I. Creation
PREAMBLE

We, the people of Hillsborough County, Florida, in order to attain greater local self-determination, to exercise more control over our own destiny, to create a more responsible and effective government, and to guarantee equal civil and political rights to all, do avail ourselves of the opportunity afforded by the Florida Constitution to become a chartered county and do hereby ordain and establish by this home rule Charter a new form of government of and for Hillsborough County.

ARTICLE I. CREATION

Sec. 1.01. Chartered County.

The county government for Hillsborough County shall be that of a chartered county under Section I, Article VIII of the Florida Constitution pursuant to which this Charter is adopted. Its boundaries are as provided by law. This is not a charter for consolidation of county and municipal governments in Hillsborough County but solely a charter for the county government and it is the intent of the people that it be so interpreted.

Sec. 1.02. Extent.

As used in this Charter, the term "the county government" means the government of Hillsborough County, but such term does not include and this Charter does not affect any court; any constitutional officer, as defined in Section 1(d) of Article VIII, Florida Constitution: clerk of the circuit court, property appraiser, tax collector, sheriff or supervisor of elections; district school board; any municipality, whether created or enlarged before or after the adoption of this Charter; or any governmental body which has jurisdiction extending beyond the boundaries of Hillsborough County, and the relationship of the county government to them shall be the same as it would have been if this Charter had not been adopted.

Editor's note(s)—Printed herein is the county's charter, being Ord. No. 83-9, § 2. Ord. No. 83-9 was effective on August 9, 1983. The charter was effective upon approval at referendum. The charter was approved at an election held on September 20, 1983. Amendments are indicated by parenthetical history notes following amended provisions. The absence of a history note indicates that the provision remains unchanged from the original charter. Obvious misspellings have been corrected without notation. For stylistic purposes, a uniform system of headings, catchlines and citations to state statutes has been used. Additions made for clarity are indicated by brackets. Appendix A has been editorially added and contains the title of Ord. No. 83-9 and sections 1, 2 (introductory language), 3 and 4 of such ordinance.

ARTICLE II. POWERS

Sec. 2.01. Powers.

The county government shall have all powers of local self-government not inconsistent with general law; special law approved by the vote of the electors of Hillsborough County; special law relating to civil service, aviation, the port, sports, transportation, hospitals, planning, environment, solid waste management, consumer affairs, resource recovery, criminal justice, historic preservation, and the arts, which laws may be effective as to Hillsborough County without approval by vote of the electors; or this Charter.

ARTICLE III. SEPARATION OF POWERS

Sec. 3.01. Separation of legislative and executive powers.

The power of the county government shall be divided between legislative and executive branches. No person belonging to one branch shall exercise any powers appertaining to the other branch unless expressly provided herein.

ARTICLE IV. LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Sec. 4.01. [Legislative responsibilities and powers of local self government.].

All legislative responsibilities and powers of local self government of the county not inconsistent with this Charter shall be assigned to and vested in the board of county commissioners.

Sec. 4.02. Board of County Commissioners.

The board of county commissioners shall consist of seven commissioners, each of whom shall be elected from one of seven districts and each of whom shall be entitled to have other employment which does not prevent the member from having the time to discharge the duties of a commissioner. Prior to voting on any matter of county business, any commissioner having a conflict of interest shall declare that conflict to the board.

Sec. 4.03. Districts.

The territory of three districts shall embrace the entire territory of the county and be designated as districts 5, 6 and 7 respectively. The territory of four districts shall be established by dividing all of the county into four separate areas, designated as districts 1 through 4 respectively, as nearly equal in population as practicable.

Sec. 4.04. Residency requirement and limit on terms.

Each candidate for a seat on the board of county commissioners shall be a citizen of the United States of America, a registered voter of the district for which the candidate qualifies, and a resident of Hillsborough County. No person who has, or but for resignation could have, served as a commission member from districts 1 through 4 for more than six years in two consecutive terms shall be elected as commission member from districts 1 through 4 for the next succeeding term, and no person who has, or but for resignation would have, served as a commission member from districts 5 through 7 for more than six years in two consecutive terms shall be elected as commission member from districts 5 through 7 for the next succeeding term.

Sec. 4.05. Election and term of office.

Except as provided herein, all elections for the board of county commissioners shall be as provided for county commissioners in non-charter counties. Each commissioner shall be elected by the electors residing in the district for which the commissioner qualifies. Each commissioner shall be elected for a term of four years, except as provided for initial commissioners in the transition article and except that, in order to reflect population shifts between decennial censuses as quickly as possible, in 1990 and every ten years thereafter the commissioners to be elected from districts 1 and 3 shall be elected for terms of two years, and in 1992 and every ten years thereafter the commissioners to be elected from districts 2 and 4 shall be elected for terms of two years. Terms of office shall commence on the second Tuesday following the general election at which the commissioner was elected.

Sec. 4.06. Reapportionment.

Within 120 days after the certification of the federal decennial census, the board of county commissioners shall reapportion districts 1 through 4. Before doing so, the board of county commissioners shall cause an accurate description of the proposed new boundaries of such districts to be entered upon its minutes and a certified copy thereof to be published once each week for four consecutive weeks (four publications being sufficient) in a newspaper of general circulation published in the county and via electronic media. The notice shall include the date of the meeting at which the board shall consider such boundaries and take testimony from the public regarding boundary changes. Proof of such publication shall be entered on the minutes of the board. The publication of the notice shall be for information only and shall not be jurisdictional. Should the board of county commissioners desire to make substantial changes to the proposed boundaries that were initially advertised and considered at the public meeting, the board of county commissioners shall hold an additional meeting to consider such new boundaries within 28 days of the first meeting and shall cause an accurate description of the new proposed districts to be advertised once each week for two weeks in a newspaper of general circulation and via electronic media. Whenever the boundaries of the existing districts are changed, the board shall cause its clerk to furnish the department of state with a certified copy of its minutes, reflecting the description of the boundaries of the district, as changed.

(Res. No. 2010-03, § 1, 8-12-2010)

Sec. 4.07. Compensation.

Salaries of all commission members shall be as provided by ordinance at 75 percent or higher of the salary which would have been provided by general law had this Charter not been adopted. Such salary shall constitute full compensation for all services and expenses, provided that commissioners may be reimbursed for mileage while traveling on commission business within Hillsborough County and for travel expenses when traveling outside of Hillsborough County on official business, in accordance with general law. The chairman shall receive additional remuneration in an amount of ten percent of the basic salary for the period of time such person serves as chairman of the commission.

Sec. 4.08. Enactment of ordinances and resolutions.

The commission may take official action only by the adoption of ordinances, resolutions, or motions. Unless otherwise provided herein, all ordinances, rules and resolutions shall be adopted by at least four (4) affirmative votes, and all motions shall be adopted by majority vote of the members present. A majority of the full commission shall constitute a quorum to conduct business.

Sec. 4.09. Conflict with municipal ordinances.

In the event of a conflict between a county ordinance and a municipal ordinance, the municipal ordinance shall prevail within the municipality regardless of whether the municipal ordinance was adopted or enacted before or after the county ordinance.

Sec. 4.10. County Internal Auditor.

1. To advise the board of county commissioners, assist the board of county commissioners in conducting continuing studies of the operation of county programs and services, there shall be a county internal auditor.
2. The county internal auditor shall be appointed by five (5) affirmative votes of the board of county commissioners. The board of county commissioners, at any time, may remove the county internal auditor with five (5) affirmative votes. The county internal auditor shall be responsible directly to the board of county commissioners. The county internal auditor need not be a resident of Hillsborough County at the time of appointment, but shall become a resident of Hillsborough County within a reasonable period of time and remain a resident of Hillsborough County while in office.
3. The county internal auditor shall be a certified public accountant holding an active license to practice public accountancy in the State of Florida, and/or shall be qualified by education and experience in governmental accounting, internal auditing practice, and fiscal controls. The county internal auditor shall not engage in any other business or occupation. The compensation of the county internal auditor shall be fixed by the board of county commissioners at a level which is commensurate with the requirements of the position. The county internal auditor's compensation, including severance pay, may be set by contract.
4. The board of county commissioners shall biennially establish an audit committee of 3 to 5 members who shall be selected by the board of county commissioners from among qualified applicants from the public and who shall meet without compensation from time to time for the purpose of making internal audit program recommendations to the board of county commissioners. The board of county commissioners shall annually, after receiving recommendations from the audit committee, give direction to the county internal auditor. The Hillsborough County internal auditor's work may include audits of all aspects of this Charter Government and its offices and its officials with written audit reports submitted to both the board of county commissioners and the county administrator. To the extent it is reasonable, the County internal auditor's work shall comply with professional standards for internal auditing. To the degree necessary to fulfill the responsibilities directed by the board, the auditor shall have free and unrestricted access to Charter government employees, officials, records, and reports and where appropriate, may require all divisions, offices, and officials of the Charter government to provide all oral and written reports and to produce documents, files and other records.
5. The county internal auditor shall hire, on either a full-time or part-time basis, and may remove assistants. The number and qualifications of assistants shall be provided by the board of

county commissioners. The county internal auditor may also be authorized by the board of county commissioners to hire outside expertise as may be deemed necessary. The county internal auditor's budget shall be set by the board of county commissioners.

6. The office of county internal auditor shall be deemed vacant if the incumbent: takes up residence outside of Hillsborough County; dies; resigns; or is removed by five (5) affirmative votes of the board of county commissioners. A vacancy in the office of the county internal auditor shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

7. The county internal auditor shall not hold any political office nor take part in any political activity other than voting.

(Ord. No. 10-12, § 1, 8-18-2010)

Editor's note(s)—The date given for Ord. No. 10-12 is the adoption date.

ARTICLE V. EXECUTIVE BRANCH: COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Sec. 5.01. County Administrator.

The executive responsibilities and powers of local self government of the county not inconsistent with this Charter shall be assigned to and vested in the county administrator. One or more assistant county administrators may be appointed by the county administrator with the advice and consent of the board and shall serve at the pleasure of the county administrator.

Sec. 5.02. Administrative organization.

All functions of the executive branch shall be allotted among not more than ten divisions or offices. Each division or office shall be administered by a division or office head in accordance with the administrative code. Each division or office head shall be appointed by the county administrator with the advice and consent of the board and shall serve at the pleasure of the county administrator. Each division or office head shall report to and be responsible to the county administrator or designated assistant county administrator. The county administrator may, as allowed by ordinance, require one division or office to undertake a task of another division or office on a temporary basis or until the board provides otherwise.

Sec. 5.03. County Administrator; qualifications, appointment, compensation.

(1) The county administrator shall be a full-time officer who holds a masters degree in public administration, management, or related field and shall have three years of executive or management experience in public administration. The county administrator shall be appointed by an affirmative vote of not less than five members of the board of county commissioners and may be removed at any time by an affirmative vote of not less than five members of the board or upon the affirmative vote of four (4) members at each of two (2) regular meetings not less than thirteen (13) days apart and no more than twenty-eight (28) days apart. The administrator need not be a resident of the county at the time of appointment, but shall within a reasonable time become and remain while in office a resident of the county. The county administrator shall not engage in any other business or occupation.

(2) The compensation of the administrator shall be fixed by the board of county commissioners by ordinance at a level which is commensurate with the requirements of the position. The county

administrator's compensation, including severance pay, may be set by contract if allowed by and pursuant to ordinance.

(3) The office of county administrator shall be deemed vacant if the incumbent; takes up residence outside the county; is by death, illness, or other casualty unable to continue to perform the duties of his office; resigns; or is removed by the board of county commissioners in the manner prescribed in section 5.03(1). A vacancy in the office shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. The board of county commissioners may appoint an interim administrator in the case of vacancy, temporary absence, or disability of the present administrator until a successor has been appointed and qualified or the administrator returns.

Sec. 5.04. Political activity by Administrator.

The county administrator shall not hold any political office nor take part in any political activity other than voting.

Sec. 5.05. Performance bond.

The county administrator shall be required to post a performance bond in accordance with general law.

ARTICLE VI. COUNTY ATTORNEY

Sec. 6.01. Legal affairs.

The legal affairs of the County shall be assigned to and vested in the Office of the County Attorney. The office will consist of the County Attorney who shall be head of the office together with such chief assistants and other assistant county attorneys and legal support personnel as may from time to time be required subject only to budget determinations of the Board of County Commissioners. All attorneys and employees of the office shall serve at the pleasure of the County Attorney.

(Ord. No. 04-9, § 1, 2-11-2004)

Sec. 6.02. County Attorney duties.

(1) The County Attorney shall be responsible for representing, and is hereby authorized to represent, the Board as its County Attorney. The County Attorney shall provide legal services, including management and participation in all litigation and other such legal services, required to protect the interests of the County; and shall render legal advice and perform other legal and administrative responsibilities as described elsewhere herein to the Board and to all other departments and agencies of County government that the Board from time to time authorizes and directs.

(2) The duties, responsibilities and authority of the County Attorney shall include, without limitation:

(a) Providing legal advice and counsel to, and legal representation of, the Board, the County Administrator and the departments, agencies and officers of the County on all matters pertaining to the business of the County or in connection with the duties of the department, agency or office;

(b) Coordinating with the County Administrator and various departments and offices under his jurisdiction regarding all matters affecting and implicating overall County

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY 2025 CHARTER REVIEW BOARD EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

administration, including, without limitation, budgetary, personnel and procurement matters;

(c) Advising and providing recommendations to the Board regarding the need for the selection of any special counsel to be retained to provide legal representation in specified matter; and

(d) Supervising, monitoring and coordinating, as appropriate, the representation services and work of outside attorneys employed pursuant to Subsection (c) above.

(3) Upon direction of the Board and with the consent of the County Attorney, the County Attorney's Office may provide legal advice and counsel to and representation of one or more of the County officers created under Section 1(d) of Article VIII of The Florida Constitution or any other state or local governmental office, unit or entity serving the County's interest and welfare and as may be authorized by law or interlocal agreement. At the request of the Board of County Commissioners, the County Attorney is hereby authorized to represent the Board of County Commissioners when it is acting as any other separate agency or legal entity consisting of the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners. The responsibility and authority of the County Attorney when serving as attorney in these matters shall include, but not be limited to, those duties and responsibilities as herein set out for the County Attorney.

(4) Nothing herein contained shall be construed as requiring the attorney to render legal services in any particular circumstance where, in the professional discretion and judgment of the attorney, the rendering of such legal services would violate the provisions of the Code of Professional Responsibility of the Florida Bar or create a direct conflict of interest between the County and attorney.

(Ord. No. 04-9, § 1, 2-11-2004)

Sec. 6.03. County Attorney qualifications, appointment, compensation.

(1) The County Attorney shall be and remain a member of The Florida Bar and shall have had at least five (5) years experience in Local Government Law or equivalent and such other experience as determined by the Board. The County Attorney need not be a resident at the time of appointment but shall within a reasonable time become and remain a resident of the County and remain so while in office. The County Attorney shall be a full time employee of the County and shall not otherwise engage in the practice of law except as may be authorized by the Board. The County Attorney shall be appointed by an affirmative vote of not less than five

(2) The compensation of the County Attorney, including severance pay and other benefits, shall be fixed by contract, ordinance or resolution as determined by the Board at a level commensurate with the requirements of the position.

(3) The Office of the County Attorney shall be deemed vacant if the incumbent is removed, resigns, moves his residence from the County or is, by death, illness or other casualty, unable to continue in office. In the case of temporary vacancy or absence or disability, until a successor has been appointed or the County Attorney returns, the Chief Assistant County Attorney or other Assistant Attorney designated by the County Attorney shall serve as the County Attorney upon approval of the Board.

(Ord. No. 04-9, § 1, 2-11-2004)

Sec. 6.04. Special attorneys; bond counsel; disclosure counsel.

(1) Special attorneys may be employed by the Board of County Commissioners upon the recommendation of the County Attorney regarding the need for the selection of any special counsel to provide legal representation in specified matters.

(2) Bond and disclosure counsel shall be selected by the Board of County Commissioners from a list of not less than three (3) qualified respondents to publicly noticed solicitations for bond and disclosure counsel and upon the recommendation of the County Administrator and County Attorney.

(Ord. No. 04-9, § 1, 2-11-2004)

Sec. 6.05. Political activity by County Attorney.

The County Attorney shall not hold any political office nor take part in any political activity other than voting.

(Ord. No. 04-9, § 1, 2-11-2004)

ARTICLE VII. ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

Sec. 7.01. Purpose of administrative code.

The board of county commissioners shall enact and amend by ordinance an administrative code organizing the administration of the county government into divisions and offices and setting forth the duties, responsibilities, and powers of the county administrator, any assistant county administrators, if any, and divisions and offices of the county government not in conflict with the provisions of this Charter. It shall be the responsibility of the county administrator to compile, publish, and disseminate the administrative code, and to recommend revisions thereof in a continuing program to provide greater efficiency and economy in the operation of government.

Sec. 7.02. Initial code.

Within ninety (90) days after the first organizational meeting of the board under this Charter, the county administrator shall submit a proposed administrative code to the board of county commissioners. The board of county commissioners shall adopt the proposed code, as submitted or amended, within three (3) months after the date submitted. If not adopted within three (3) months, the code, as proposed by the administrator, shall govern the operations of the county administrator, divisions and offices until such time as one may be adopted formally by the board of county commissioners.

ARTICLE VIII. AMENDMENTS TO CHARTER

Sec. 8.01. By the Board of County Commissioners.

The board of county commissioners may propose amendments to this Charter by ordinance approved by at least five (5) members.

Sec. 8.02. Charter Review Board.

Within two years after the effective date of this Charter and every five years thereafter, the board of county commissioners shall appoint a charter review board consisting of fourteen (14) electors of the county. Each commissioner shall appoint two members of the charter review board who shall be electors in that commissioner's district, and none of whom may be an elected official. Members of the charter review board shall serve for a term of one year without compensation. Such board shall be empowered to conduct a comprehensive study of any or all phases of county government. The board of county commissioners shall provide such professional, technical, and clerical assistance as may be reasonably required by the charter review board upon submission of an appropriately documented request by the charter review board. The charter review board shall, after two public hearings and upon approval of two-thirds of its members, file any proposed amendments to the Charter, if any, with the supervisor of elections who shall provide for a vote on it pursuant to Section 8.04.

Sec. 8.03. Initiative.

The power to propose amendments to this Charter by initiative is vested in the people:

- (1) The power may be invoked by filing with the supervisor of elections a petition containing a copy of the proposed Charter amendment. Each petition must be circulated in each numbered board district and must be signed by a number of electors in each of one-half of districts 1 through 4 and of the county as a whole equal to eight percent of the votes cast in each of such districts and the county as a whole in the last preceding election in which a president or presidential electors were chosen. The address of each signer, and date of each signature, must appear on the petition. Each petition shall embrace but one subject and matter properly connected therewith. A date certain must be designated to and certified by the supervisor of elections as the beginning date of any petition drive, and said drive shall terminate six months after that date. In the event sufficient signatures are not acquired during that six- month period, the petition drive shall be rendered null and void and none of the signatures may be carried over onto another identical or similar petition.
- (2) The petition shall be filed with the supervisor of elections who shall, within a period of not more than thirty (30) days, determine whether the petition contains the required valid signatures. The supervisor shall be paid the sum specified by general law by the persons or committee seeking verification.
 - (a) If it is determined that the petition does not contain the required signatures, the supervisor shall so certify to the board of county commissioners and the petition drive shall be at an end. No additional names may be added to the petition, and the petition shall not be used in any other proceeding.
 - (b) If it is determined that the petition has the required signatures, the supervisor shall so certify to the board of county commissioners and place the amendment on the ballot.
- (3) All other procedures shall be as provided by general law for constitutional amendments with the supervisor of elections performing the duties of the secretary of state.

Sec. 8.04. Elections and notice.

All elections shall be held and conducted pursuant to the provisions of general law except as otherwise provided in this Charter. Charter amendments by ordinance shall be voted on at special elections or regular elections as the board of county commissioners chooses. Charter review and initiative amendments shall be voted on at the next regular general election. Amendments shall become effective upon approval by a majority vote of the electors voting at the next scheduled countywide election or special referendum election.

Sec. 8.05. Financial impact statement for all proposed County Charter amendments and Countywide referenda.

For all County elections, a separate financial impact statement, not exceeding 75 words, including a two-year estimate of the increase or decrease in revenues or costs to the County resulting from approval of all proposed County Charter amendments and all other proposed Countywide referenda unrelated to a County Charter amendment, shall be prepared by the County Budget Director who shall receive input and advice from a committee to be established by Board of County Commissioners' Resolution, and placed on the ballot immediately following the ballot question.

(Res. No. 2011-02, § 1, 1-31-2011; Ord. No. 18-19, § A, 6-21-2018)

Editor's note(s)—Pursuant to the holding by the Florida Supreme Court in *Orange County v. Singh*, 268 So.3d 668 (Fla. 2019), and Florida Division of Elections opinion DE 22-010, issued February 4, 2022, placing a financial impact statement for all proposed county charter amendments and Countywide referenda on the ballot is not permitted as it is preempted by F.S. § 97.0115.

ARTICLE IX. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 9.01. Limitation on State law.

No law passed by the state legislature shall be effective as to the county government:

- (a) Unless it is approved at referendum; or
- (b) Except to the extent:
 - (1) The Florida Constitution or this Charter requires that it be effective; or
 - (2) It permits this county government to grant powers to, receive powers from, or combine powers with other governmental entities; or
 - (3) It solely affects:
 - (i) Tax authorization not inconsistent with this Charter; or
 - (ii) The relations of this county government to any governmental body which has jurisdiction extending beyond the boundary of Hillsborough County; or
 - (4) It is authorized under Section 2.01.

Sec. 9.02. Construction of the Charter.

It is the intent of the electorate in adopting this Charter that this Charter shall be liberally construed to achieve the objectives of local home rule and separation of branches as set forth herein.

Sec. 9.03. Code of Ethics.

The code of ethics for public officers and employees and the penalties for violation thereof as provided by general law or more restrictive ordinance, if any, shall be applicable to all employees and office holders of this county government.

Sec. 9.04. Political activities.

Political activities of officers and employees of the county government shall be governed and controlled by general law except as provided herein and except that the county administrator's assistants and division and office heads, and the county attorney and his assistants, shall not hold any political office nor take part in any political activity relating to county commission elections, other than voting.

Sec. 9.05. Severability.

It is the intent of the electorate in adopting this Charter that if any section, subsection, sentence, clause, term or word of this Charter is held invalid, the remainder of the Charter shall not be affected.

Sec. 9.06. Vacancies.

Vacancies in commission districts shall be deemed to exist and be filled in accordance with the Constitution and Laws of Florida.

Sec. 9.07. Public meetings.

Meetings of the board of county commissioners and other boards shall be held and conducted as provided by general law and rules of the board not inconsistent therewith.

Sec. 9.08. Recall.

The people shall have the power to recall elected officials by recall election initiated, called, held and conducted as provided by general law for chartered counties.

Sec. 9.09. Planning.

There shall be for Hillsborough County and its municipalities a single local planning agency created by such special law or laws which need not be approved by a referendum. It shall have responsibility for comprehensive planning and related activities as are committed to it by general law or applicable special laws.

Sec. 9.10. Environmental protection.

There shall be for Hillsborough County and its municipalities a single local environmental protection commission created by such special law or laws which need not be approved by referendum.

Sec. 9.11. Discrimination prohibited.

To be consistent with Federal and State constitutions, laws, rules, and regulations, the County government shall not deprive any person of any right because of race, sex, age, national origin, religion, disability, or political affiliation. The Administrative Code shall provide adequate means for protecting these rights, including equal opportunity assurances.

(Res. No. 2011-01, § 1, 1-24-2011)

Sec. 9.12. Lowering of salaries.

The salaries of commissioners and the county administrator may be lowered to the extent allowed by general law.

ARTICLE X. TRANSITION AND SCHEDULE

Sec. 10.01. Offices and officers of former government.

Unless otherwise provided by this Charter, all offices, officials, boards, commissions, and agencies of the former government shall continue to perform their respective duties and functions until such minimum time allowed for the adoption of an administrative code pursuant to section 7.02. At said time, said duties and functions shall be performed in accordance with the administrative code.

Sec. 10.02. Interim Countywide Districts.

The commissioners elected countywide in the year 1982 shall immediately become commissioners from districts 5 and 7 respectively and stand for initial election 1986.

Sec. 10.03. Initial Commissioners.

By November 15, 1983, the board of county commissioners shall establish the apportionment of districts 1 through 4 under procedures provided in section 4.06 and using the 1980 federal decennial census population figures. At the 1984 general elections commissioners from districts 1 through 4 and district 6 shall be elected, with the terms of the new commissioners from districts 1 and 3 to be for two years only and the terms of commissioners from districts 2, 4 and 6 to be for four years. The commissioners from districts 2 and 4 as drawn in 1981, who were elected by county-wide vote in 1982, shall serve as the commissioners from districts 5 and 7 respectively until the second Tuesday following the 1986 general election, but if either is not in office at the beginning of qualification in 1984, then a commissioner for new district 5 or 7, as the case may be, shall be elected in the initial election for a term of 2 years.

Sec. 10.04. Effective date of government.

County government shall go into force and effect when the commissioners elected at the 1984 general election take office.

Sec. 10.05. Preservation of existing government.

All provisions of the laws or parts thereof rendered ineffective as to the county government by Section 9.01, which are not inconsistent with this Charter shall become ordinances of this government subject to modification or repeal as are other ordinances; however, they shall stand repealed as of November 15, 1985.

Sec. 10.06. Preservation of existing ordinances.

All ordinances, codes, rules, regulations and resolutions of the county of Hillsborough or any of its agencies which are not inconsistent with this Charter, shall become ordinances, rules, regulations of the county government subject to modification or repeal as are other ordinances.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY 2025 CHARTER REVIEW BOARD EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sec. 10.07. Rights reserved.

(a) Obligations Honored. All lawful rights and obligations, of whatever kind or nature in existence on the date this Charter is approved by the electors, of the local government becoming a part of the county government on the one hand, and any person, firm, corporation, other government or agency on the other hand, shall become the rights and obligations of the county government.

(b) No Enlargement of Obligations. All such rights and obligations shall be limited to the area, or funds, which would have been subject to such rights or obligations if this Charter had not been adopted.

Sec. 10.08. Classified employees and officers.

All employees in the classified service and officers of the county shall be transferred to the division, office, or agency to which the functions, powers, and duties in which they were engaged upon the effective date of this Charter are allocated under this Charter. Such transfer shall be without examination or diminution of existing compensation, pension, or retirement rights, privileges, or obligations of any such officer or employee. The adoption of any subsequent classified service plan shall not adversely affect the tenure, pension, seniority, or promotional rights of any county officer or employee in the classified service when this Charter is adopted.

CHARTER COMPARATIVE TABLE

ORDINANCES

This table shows the location of amendment to the Charter. The Charter was section 2 of Ord. No. 83-9, which ordinance was effective on August 9, 1983. The charter was approved at referendum on September 20, 1983. An asterisk (*) after an ordinance number in the table below indicates the adoption date rather than the effective date has been given.

Ordinance Number	Effective Date	Section	Charter Section
83-9	8- 9-1983		Char. (note)
04-9	2-11-2004	1	6.01
			6.02
			6.03
			6.04
			6.05
2010-03	8-12-2010(Res.)	1	4.06
10-12	8-18-2010	1	4.10
2011-01(Res.)	1-24-2011	1	9.11
2011-02(Res.)	1-31-2011	1 Added	8.05
18-19	6-21-2018	A	8.05