

CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE:  
GOVERNANCE OPTIONS – PROS & CONS

**Option #1** Status Quo / Current Existing Structure

Executive Branch: Three (3) person Board of County Commissioners elected Cape-wide (partisan) with a strong-appointed County Administrator

Legislative Branch: Fifteen (15) Assembly Delegates, one elected from each Cape town (non-partisan) voting in proportion to their population (a weighted vote). Ordinances (laws) passed by a majority of the weighted vote cast.

PROS (for both Executive & Legislative Branches):

- system of checks and balances
- existing costs to operate are a known factor
- each Cape town has an individual voice in Cape-wide Legislative Branch
- no complaints from towns
- many feel it has worked and has been effective
- historic (Legislature in existence since 1989; Executive much longer)
- represents all citizens Cape-wide (in Executive Branch)

CONS (for both Executive & Legislative Branches):

- proportional system (weighted vote in Legislative Branch) not considered the “gold standard” for equal representation of citizens
  - can be subject to domination by a few (2 to 4) individual town representatives that can carry the vote (in the Legislative Branch)
  - power is highly concentrated in Executive Branch yet responsibility there is defused
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**Option #2** Assembly of Delegates (Legislative Branch) Resolution #13-01

Executive Branch: Five (5) person Board of County Commissioners (one elected from each of five Cape-wide districts) with an appointed County Administrator

Legislative Branch: Fifteen (15) Assembly Delegates one elected from each Cape town (non-partisan) with a weighted vote

PROS (for Executive Branch):

- increasing the number of elected County Commissioners will help
  - avoid quorum issues
  - lessen the potential for open meeting law violations
  - broaden the regional aspect and increase Cape-wide representation with County Commissioners being elected from regional districts
  - ability to create a legal sub-committee (involving two County Commissioners) without violating Open Meeting Laws

CONS (for Executive Branch):

- more diffusion of authority and responsibility
- increases the number and cost of officials to oversee and operate a small budget
- no clear “leader” for the County
- less efficient

[See pros and cons referenced above under Option #1 (Status Quo) for Legislative Branch. Under Option #2 Legislative Branch remains unchanged. Only changes are to the Executive Branch]

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**Option #3** Charter Review Committee Model

Executive Branch: One (1) appointed County Executive (replaces the elected Board of County Commissioners)

Legislative Branch: Eleven (11) District Representatives (one elected from each Cape district) non-partisan, with an equal vote - becomes the policy making body for the County, responsible for appointing the County Executive

PROS:

- citizens could be more “invested” in their district representation than in the current County Commissioners
- district representative would serve citizens versus towns
- would create equal representation (no weighted vote)
- would create a single policy-making body (Legislative Branch) to increase efficiency
- creates more opportunity to think ‘regionally” and could increase visibility as each district would have equal power and thus generate more electoral interest in some areas especially if representatives were paid more than current Assembly members
- would work well with and in contrast to the Cape Cod Commission where every town has an equal individual vote

CONS:

- does not provide the same system of checks and balances as existing structure
- unknown cost (cost of legislative representation could increase)
- each individual Cape town would not have a separate and single voice
- voters may be less familiar with the people they elect due to districts not towns (Legislative Branch)

[for purposes of presentation at public comment sessions scheduled for 10/2/13, 10/9/13 and 10/16/13]