



CP16#0667

ALL POLITICS IS LOCAL

# Charter advocate gives council mediocre grades

Posted on April 10, 2015 by Kaitlin Gillespie

Clark County District 2 council candidate Chuck Green, a Democrat, had words to share with the council Tuesday evening.

Green, who advocated for the home rule charter last year, presented what he's calling a "Clark County Home Rule Charter Report Card." I would have cried if I ever got grades like this in school. The grading was based on "quantity, quality and relationships," according to the report card, but beyond that I'm not entirely sure what criteria Green used. Many of these are, however, concerns I've heard from local politics buffs, all of whom need some more relaxing hobbies.

I'll let the report speak for itself. Here I've broken it down with Green's comments, as well as what sections of the charter he's referring to where appropriate. The full report is also attached if that's easier.

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### Charter Implementation Work Plan: Incomplete

What Green says: "Council seems to be distracted into spending more time on other subjects rather than focusing on implementation of the Charter, including an attempt to codify the organization of administrative departments, two attempts at posting a motto in the hearing room, and debating what font to put on the hearing room wall."

### Separation of Powers: D-

What the charter says: "On January 1, 2015, the effective date of this charter, the legislative and executive powers shall be separated into two (2) branches of government. Each branch is to dutifully fulfill its responsibilities, and shall not extend its authority into the other branch, as defined in this charter."

What Green says: "The separation of powers provision in the Charter is not being respected, with a Councilor inserting a new Comprehensive Plan alternative without involvement of appropriate staff and uploading files to 'The Grid' without appropriate approvals."

"Despite clear separation of powers between Executive and Legislative branches, there is still evidence that council members are meeting directly with county staff (Comprehensive Plan) without notification of, and authorization from, the Acting County Manager."

### County Code Revisions: Needs improvement

What the charter says: "On or about December 31, 2015, the prosecuting attorney shall propose amendments to the Clark County Code that are necessary to make code consistent with this charter."

### Code amendments to incorporate new rights of initiative and referendum: F



Chuck Green, council candidate

What the charter says: "The people of Clark County reserve the power to make certain proposals at their option and to approve or reject them at the polls, independent of the council."

### **Appointments to Boards and Commissions: C**

What the charter says: "(The council shall) have concurrent authority with the county manager to nominate members to the following boards and commissions. Members are appointed by the council:

1. Clark County planning commission.
2. Clark County historic preservation commission.
3. Board of equalization of assessment."

What Green says: While the Councilors have made a number of appointments to Boards and Commissions, there were still 18 vacancies left to be filled as of March 1, 2015.

### **Preparation for two new councilors: Incomplete**

What Green says: "Other than a retreat in January 2015, there is no formal work plan in place to prepare for and implement Charter provisions during 2015, including space remodeling to accommodate two new councilors in 2016."

### **Appointment of Acting County Manager: A-**

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If you're wondering if the council took Green's criticism to heart, don't count on it. The only comment I've heard on the report card is from Councilor David Madore, who said during the council's board time Green presented nothing more than "nonsense charges." What do you think?



**Kaitlin Gillespie**

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## **Comments**



**Robert Freund** · Top Commenter · Clark College – Vancouver, Washington

County Charter. Great idea in the beginning, however after 80% career politicians elected, it would appear the people got just what they asked for.....lack of involvement in the process and a name councilor??? like something out of high school. If one is to look at city annexation, please explain just how much county is left to council??? hmmm , more rat's nibbling at the cheese. Lean, streamline, service. accountability and responsibility in all departments. good day

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · [Follow Post](#) · April 13 at 5:19pm



**Steve Foster** · Top Commenter · University of Colorado Boulder

In the "quality" category they should also get negative grades on labeling. The Charter creates a county council. Nowhere does it create or even reference a "board." If you are a councilor it means, presumably, that you are a member of a council. Despite logic or any legal basis, they have officially named themselves the "Board of County Councilors."

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**Michele Wollert** · Top Commenter

It might help if the Clark County Council spent some time every week discussing their progress on Charter implementation.

We don't hear a word about it in public from them unless they respond to one of the few journalists left in the universe with whom they still communicate (and then we get sound bites and spin, not data).

There are clear benchmarks and timelines. The Council should add a standing agenda item for every Wednesday Board time: Charter Implementation Progress Report. Do it themselves in a proactive, transparent manner or else a citizen like [Chuck Green](#) will do it for them. Simply referring folks to the Grid does not cut it.

The Council is spending their time on distracting, divisive issues and are stretched thin because of it. Implementing the Charter should be top priority and it does not look like they give it much thought.

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**Chuck Green** · Top Commenter · Ridgefield, Washington

[Katie Gillespie](#): as you noted in your post, at the bottom of the grading part of the Report Card, criteria used were: Quality, Quantity and Relationships. The comments section shows the specifics as to what went into several of the grades.

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**Nick Ruark** · Top Commenter · Vancouver, Washington · 156 followers

"Nonsense charges", eh ?? Pretty much what myself and many others would expect him to say. Can't wait till he can be voted out.

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · 4 · [Follow Post](#) · April 10 at 8:05pm



**John Laird** · Top Commenter · Works at Retired Journalist

Thank God for Chuck Green! Yea Clark County!

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · 8 · [Follow Post](#) · April 10 at 7:31pm

## Clark County Home Rule Charter Report Card

**Group being reviewed:** Clark County Council

**Reviewer:** Clark County citizens monitoring the Home Rule Charter's implementation.

**Date:** April 1, 2015

Element/ Charter Section	Grades by Quarter			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Charter Implementation Work Plan</b>	I			
<b>Separation of Powers (Executive and Legislative Branches; Articles 2 and 3)</b>	D-			
<b>County Code Revisions (10.8)</b>	N			
<b>Code Amendments to incorporate new rights of Initiative and Referendum (Charter Article 7; CCC 1.04.010, Clark County designated as a second-class county, no longer valid under state law)</b>	F			
<b>Appointments to Boards and Commissions (Section 2.4)</b>	C			
<b>Preparation for two new councilors</b>	I			
<b>Appointment of Acting County Manager (3.2)</b>	A-			

grading based on **Quantity, Quality, and Relationships.**

A = Excellent, B = Good, C = Fair, D = Poor, F = Failing

I = Incomplete, N = Needs Improvement

### General Comments

Quarter 1: the Council seems to be distracted into spending more time on other subjects rather than focusing on implementation of the Charter, including an attempt to codify the organization of administrative departments, two attempts at posting a motto in the hearing room, and debating what font to put on the hearing room wall. The separation of powers provision in the Charter is not being respected, with a Councilor inserting a new Comprehensive Plan alternative without involvement of appropriate staff and uploading files to "The Grid" without appropriate approvals. While the Councilors have made a number of appointments to Boards and Commissions, there were still 18 vacancies left to be filled as of March 1, 2015. Despite clear separation of powers between Executive and Legislative branches, there is still evidence that council members are meeting directly with county staff (Comprehensive Plan) without notification of, and authorization from, the Acting County Manager. Other than a retreat in January 2015, there is no formal work plan in place to prepare for and implement Charter provisions during 2015, including space remodeling to accommodate two new councilors in 2016. We are expecting greatly improved performance for Quarter 2. An example of this is the new "Definitions" part of The Grid, while ongoing work, is a positive sign.