

From: Carolyn Keily March 5, 2012 12:07:47 PM
Subject: Charter Revision Commission Minutes 02/28/2012
To: SimsburyCT_CharRevComm
Cc:

CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
February 28, 2012

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Robert Heagney called the regular meeting of the Charter Revision Commission to order at 7:08 P. M. in the North Conference Room of Eno Memorial Hall, 754 Hopmeadow Street. The following members were also present: James Fleming, Brad Mead, John O'Neil, Peter Pabich, and Dave Ryan. Dan Munroe listened by phone. Also present were Attorney Robert DeCrescenzo; Lisa Gray, Commission Clerk; and Mary Glassman, First Selectman.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. PUBLIC AUDIENCE

None

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Pabich to approve the minutes of the February 28, 2012 meeting, as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mead. Commissioner Ryan abstained. Motion passed.

V. INVITED GUESTS

Mary Glassman appeared before the commission and asked the members to consider whether the role of Personnel Director should be fulfilled by the First Selectman or by a hired professional. She felt that the Charter should reflect the current staff structure in which the Human Resources function is performed by the Director of Administrative Services.

Commissioner Mead asked Selectman Glassman her opinion on the Town Manager vs. First Selectman issue. She responded that, since the town has changed

and grown a great deal over recent years, she is in favor of professional management to protect the town's legal interests.

Commissioner Fleming asked for Selectman Glassman's opinion on two-year vs. four-year terms for members of the Board of Selectmen. She responded that the town is more likely to find candidates willing to run for the position if the term is four years instead of two, and a four-year term also provides a better opportunity for long-range planning.

Chairman Heagney expressed his opinion that the current requirement to revise the charter every five years could be changed to ten years given that the latest revisions have dealt with similar issues and resulted in the same conclusions. He felt that the five-year timeframe between revisions is too short when one considers that preparations for the revision begin approximately 18 months before the effective date of the new charter, effectively changing the timeframe from five years to three-and-a-half years.

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He suggested that the wording be changed, providing for the charter to be revised up to every 10 years. This would allow for revisions before the 10-year mark, if necessary. Mary Glassman responded that 10 years is too long, as a lot can change in 10 years. Attorney DeCrescenzo suggested that the wording could be "five years from the effective date" of the charter.

The commission continued to debate the two-year vs. four-year issue for the Board of Selectmen, and it was decided to request that Attorney DeCrescenzo research and see what other CT towns are doing on this issue.

VI. TOWN COUNSEL'S REPORT

Attorney DeCrescenzo distributed a memo, dated February 28, 2012, regarding the current Charter Chapter V. Town Meeting, including a proposed alternative to the elimination of the Town Meeting. The proposed alternative would be a provision that could be added to the revised Charter to allow a town meeting by initiative with a lower petition threshold. This would allow residents to call a town meeting under certain conditions and for particular purposes outlined in the memo.

Attorney DeCrescenzo also distributed a memo, dated February 28, 2012, regarding Charter revision issues identified for review by town staff,

along with his recommendations for resolution of each issue.

A motion was made by Commissioner O'Neil to approve and implement the recommendation made by Attorney DeCrescenzo with regard to item #5, Tax Bills. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mead, and unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ryan to approve and implement the recommendation made by Attorney DeCrescenzo with regard to item #3, Constables. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mead, and unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Fleming to approve and implement the recommendation made by Attorney DeCrescenzo with regard to item #2, Town Officers. The motion was seconded by Commissioner O'Neil, and unanimously approved.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

The commissioners discussed the need to change the next regularly scheduled meeting of March 13 because Chairman Heagney will not be available on that date. Chairman Heagney will direct staff to individually contact the commission members to determine an alternative meeting date.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Pabich to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 PM.

Brad Mead, Secretary