

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Hadley Rose called the Special Meeting of the Simsbury Charter Revision Commission to order at 5:40 p.m. on Thursday, March 24, 2016. The meeting was held in the Board of Education Conference Room of the Simsbury Town Offices located at 933 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, CT. In attendance were the following commission members: Paul Henault, Mary Glassman, Anita Mielert, Melissa Osborne, Thomas Benneche, James Ray, Edward Pabich and Robert Crowther. Also in attendance was Robert DeCrescenzo, Town Attorney.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

Ms. Joan Coe of 26 Whitcomb Drive suggested the Commission to revisit the description of the form of government in the Charter from First Selectman/Board of Selectman to Manager/Council. She added that since Commissioner Mielert was against having a Mayor/Council form of government, Ms. Coe suggested Manager/Council form of government. A Manager/Council form of government highlights the key word “management” not “Mayor”. Ms. Coe commented that having a First Selectman with a salary and office while overseeing the Town Manager sends mixed signals. Ms. Coe also recommended having the Board of Selectmen appoint a person as interim Town Manager until a professional Town Manager can be appointed.

ACTION ITEMS

a. Review of Minutes – Regular Meeting of March 17, 2016

Changes are in red text:

Page 3, 2nd motion:

*Commissioner Mielert moved to strike the text **“At the time of appointment, said Manager need not be a resident of the Town or of the state of Connecticut, but the Town Manager shall reside in the Town during tenure of office”** in Section 501 Appointment of Town Manager of the draft Charter. Commissioner Ray seconded the motion. Commissioner Benneche moved to amend the motion to include a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen that the Town Manager lives within a certain geographic radius. Commissioner Tedone seconded the motion. Commissioner Mielert accepted the amendment of the motion and it was unanimously approved.*

Page 4, 2nd motion:

*Commissioner Benneche moved to have a Deputy First Selectperson **selected appointed** by the elected First Selectman **at the time of the election**. Commissioner Mielert seconded the motion.*

Commissioners Rose, Glassman, Mielert, Osborne, ~~Tedone~~, Tindall, Benneche, Ray, Pabich and Crowther voted in favor of the motion. Commissioners ~~Tindall~~ Tedone and Henault voted against. The motion carried 9-2.

Page 4, 3rd motion:

Commissioner Benneche moved to strike the following text from Section 411, paragraph 3: ~~“The First Selectman shall chair the Board of Selectmen’s Personnel Sub-Committee” and the Town Manager shall confer with the First Selectman on all matters coming before the Personnel Sub-Committee.~~” The motion was seconded by Commissioner Osborne and was unanimously approved.

The Commission approved the minutes with changes.

b. Discussion and Possible Action on Implementation of Town Manager Form of Government

The Commission members reviewed the draft Charter in detail with Robert DeCrescenzo, Town Attorney and made additional corrections.

Commissioner Crowther said that Economic Development was removed from the Charter and recommended adding it back since Simsbury is a town that interested in Economic Development. Commissioner Osborne commented that it is a critical role and should not be left to a part-time position. Commissioner Mielert recommended that the Town Manager handles Economic Development. Commissioner Benneche said that Economic Development is more policy and the Town Manager doesn’t focus on policy. Commissioner Mielert disagreed explaining that Economic Development requires meeting with customers, visiting sites and working with Town Engineers.

*Commissioner Ray moved to add the text in red to section 502, Item 9: “Assist the Board of Selectmen to develop long-term goals **including economic development** for the Town and strategies to implement such goals;”*

Commissioner Crowther seconded the motion. The motion was approved by Commissioners Henault, Glassman, Mielert, Benneche, Ray, Pabich, Crowther and Rose. Commissioner Osborne abstained from voting.

Commissioner Benneche requested Robert DeCrescenzo to create an index for the Charter since it is difficult to find sections. Robert DeCrescenzo suggested making a motion.

Commissioner Benneche moved to have Town Counsel create an index for the Charter. Commissioner Ray seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

f. Charter Revision Commission Next Steps

The Commission members were trying to determine a date for the public hearing based on their availability. Robert DeCrescenzo recommended that Tom Cooke, Director of Administrative Services is in attendance before finalizing a date.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Henault moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 pm. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Benneche and was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Irene Muench