

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Hadley Rose called the Regular Meeting of the Simsbury Charter Revision Commission to order at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 5, 2015. 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. Staff included Deputy Director of Administrative Services Sean Kimball and Town Attorney Robert DeCrescenzo.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

Ms. Joan Coe of 26 Whitcomb Drive suggested that the Commission should decide if Simsbury's form of government will include a Town Manager. She added that other topics are side issues and can be voted on after the form of government is decided.

Mr. Carl Meyer of 7 Deep Wood said that he has submitted comments from the public to the Commission regarding Board of Education term limits.

ACTION ITEMS

The Commission unanimously consented to amend the agenda to discuss Action Item C.

c: Discussion and possible action on staff recommendation to eliminate the Human Relations Commission

Ms. Mickey Lecours provided background information regarding the Human Relations Commission. She said it was established by an ordinance in 1993 for the purpose of eliminating discrimination. Only two members attended the Commission meetings between 2008 and 2011. Ms. Lecours-Beck recommended either assigning the anti-discrimination goal to another commission or redefining the goal so that it is more specific.

Mr. Robert DeCrescenzo distributed a memo dated November 5, 2015 stating that the Human Relations Commission is not required by the State. There was discussion among the Commission and Robert DeCrescenzo about four alternatives he suggested that the Commission can recommend to the Board of Selectmen. Robert DeCrescenzo added that if a person has a grievance they are told to speak with CHRO and EOC. Discussion among the Commission also included the lack of participation and value offered by Human Relations Commission since it hasn't performed its duties since 2011.

Commissioner Mielert moved to recommend the elimination of the Human Relations Commission and for the Board of Selectmen to refer to the options listed in Town Attorney's Robert DeCrescenzo letter dated November 5, 2015. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Benneche. Commissioners Mielert, Hadley, Henault, Glassman, Benneche, Ray, Pabich and Crowther voted in favor of the motion. Commissioner Osborne voted against the motion. The motion was accepted.

a. Approval of Minutes – Special Meeting of October 29, 2015.

The minutes were unanimously approved as submitted.

b: Discussion and possible action on Charge related to Terms of Office for Boards and Commissions

Chairman Rose suggested that the Board of Selectmen should change from a two-year to a four-year term. He added that once a board member becomes settled in the position, they have to start running for office again and focus on the election.

Commissioner Henault said that the Commission should decide if Simsbury is going to have a town manager, a town council or keep the First Selectman's position prior to deciding on the terms of office.

d. Agenda items for next scheduled meeting

Chairman Rose said that the Commission will begin discussing the possibility of a Town Manager position. Commissioner Osborne requested that a member of the Economic Development Commission is present at the next meeting because they requested reducing its five-year term in order to attract more people.

Chairman Rose added that the Commission will also discuss any changes in duties for the First Selectman. He will ask Tom Cooke to distribute the report completed by a consultant a year ago that discussed the duties of the First Selectman and Town Manager.

Tom Cooke has arranged to have others from nearby towns speak at the next meeting about their forms of government. Some towns have a blend of First Selectman and Town Manager while others have moved to strictly a Town Manager form of government.

SECOND PUBLIC AUDIENCE

Mr. Carl Meyer of 7 Deep Wood interrupted the meeting requesting a second public audience since he did not take advantage of the first. There was no objection among the Commission.

Mr. Meyer said that 10 people wrote to the Commission wanting term limits for the Board of Education and expected the Commission to discuss the topic this evening. Chairman Rose replied that term limits for the Board of Education was discussed at the last meeting and the Town Attorney stated in a letter that term limits cannot be implemented in Connecticut.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Irene Muench