

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Hadley Rose called the Special Meeting of the Simsbury Charter Revision Commission to order at 5:36 p.m. on Thursday, October 15, 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: Mary Glassman, Robert Crowther, Melissa Osborne, Thomas Benneche and James Ray. Staff included Thomas Cooke, Director of Administrative Services and Joe Mancini, Director of Finance. Robert DeCrescenzo, Town Attorney, arrived at 5:47 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**a. Approval of Minutes – Special Meeting of October 1, 2015.**

- Changes to Minutes of Special Meeting on October 1, 2015 are as follows:

Page 2, Section C, Sentence 2: The agenda topics for October **15** (not October 21)

Page 2, Section C. Paragraph 2: The agenda topics for October 29 will include items not covered in the October **15<sup>th</sup>** meeting (not October 21).

**The Minutes were unanimously consented with changes.**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

Ms. Joan Coe stated that Simsbury should not have a First Selectman and a Town Manager government because it's inappropriate to pay two people for the same job. She also mentioned that it would be a distraction for the Charter Revision Commission to update the Charter with Gender Neutrality language. Ms. Coe added that all budget items should be voted by the public.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**b. Discussion and possible action on Charge related to Gender Neutrality**

- Commissioner Glassman strongly supports having Gender Neutrality changes made to the Charter. She added that the changes may be small but it sends a message that the town is committed to equal opportunity.

**Commissioner Glassman moved to approve to have Gender Neutrality changes made as a draft for review by the Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Benneche and was unanimously approved.**

*Note: Action Items “c” and “d” were discussed simultaneously:*

- c. Discussion and possible action on Charge related to Budget Preparation and Budget Referendum**
- d. Discussion and possible action on Charge related to Content of Public Notices for the Budget**
  - Joe Mancini, Director of Finance, referred to the Memorandum dated Oct. 13, 2015 addressed to Chairman Hadley Rose. He provided specific examples of the challenges he faces of the budget process due to the Town Charter. Mr. Mancini stated that the options for hearing dates are overly restrictive; notice publications in the Hartford Courant are extremely expensive and the size of the notice makes it difficult to get adequate advertising space in the Hartford Courant in a timely manner. Suggestions offered by the Commission include not publishing a full budget in the Hartford Courant. Instead, indicate in the advertisement that a detailed budget is available online, at the Town Hall or will be mailed upon request. Mr. Mancini also proposed to have dates listed for public hearings to state “No Later Than” language. The Commission also discussed in detail sections 406 and 808 of the Charter. Robert DeCrescenzo agreed to work with the Bond Counsel on wording pertaining to section 406.

The Commission did not vote on Action Item “c”.

- d. Discussion and possible action on Charge related to Content of Public Notices for the Budget**

**Commissioner Benneche moved to adapt a short form of advertising of the budget provided that it is published online, hardcopies are available at the Town Hall and residents can ask for the budget by mail. This is subject to changes from the Town Attorney if there are any statutory regulations that apply. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Crowther and was unanimously approved.**
- e. Agenda Items for Next Scheduled Meeting**
  - The agenda topics for October 29<sup>th</sup> meeting will include discussions of the Planning and Zoning Commissions and Open Space Committee. Robert DeCrescenzo will discuss language reviewed with Bond Counsel if available. Mr. DeCrescenzo also handed the Commissioners a booklet that includes information of Connecticut Town Charters to use as a comparison to Simsbury’s Town Charter.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Irene Muench