

From: Carolyn Keily March 26, 2012 6:16:43 PM
Subject: Charter Revision Commission Minutes 03/22/2012 Public Hearing
To: SimsburyCT_CharRevComm
Cc:

CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING
MARCH 22, 2012

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Robert Heagney called the public hearing of the Charter Revision Commission to order at 6:04 P. M. in the Program Room of Simsbury Public Library, 725 Hopmeadow Street. The following members were also present: Darren Cunningham, James Fleming, Brad Mead, Dan Munroe, John O'Neil, Peter Pabich, and Dave Ryan. Also present were Attorney Robert DeCrescenzo; Lisa Gray, Commission Clerk; and other interested parties.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. PUBLIC AUDIENCE

John Carroll, 31 Terry's Plain Road, expressed his disappointment that the Design Review Board had not been made a permanent board in the Charter. He also recognized the town's need for professional management and noted that the town has been successfully operating under a council form of government for some time.

Chairman Heagney informed Mr. Carroll that, at the Commission's March 19, 2012 meeting, the Commission voted to reconsider the Design Review Board issue and that they would be doing that at the Special Meeting to be held following the Public Hearing.

Joan Coe, 26 Whitcom Drive, expressed her displeasure at the town not allowing residents to vote on the Town Manager form of government issue.

Mrs. Coe also referred to Section 301.(c)(2), pertaining to the elected membership of the Board of Education, and stated this section should be revised so that the seats are challenged.

She then referred to Section 402, Presiding officer, organization and procedure, and asked if its language, "All meetings of the Selectmen...shall be open to the public and shall afford to the Electors of the town an opportunity to address to the Selectmen suggestions, petitions and complaints." allows resident to petition the town for a Town Manager.

Pertaining to Sections 406 and 408, Mrs. Coe suggested that all budget items should go to referendum vote and that the town meeting should be eliminated for all monetary items.

Mrs. Coe objected to the revision to Section 502, Duties of the First Selectman, allowing the First Selectman to appoint a Town Officer to the position of Personnel Director, and requested that this paragraph be eliminated.

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Robert Kalechman expressed his dissatisfaction with the elimination of Section 708. Constables, and the fact that the issue of Ethics was not addressed in the Charter. He further disagreed with the requirement for review of the Charter being changed from once every five years to once every seven years.

Sue Bednarczyk, 118 East Weatogue Street, requested that referendums be expanded beyond financial issues, that public audience be allowed at all town meetings, and that a regional Ethics Board be established. She also disagreed with town staff reporting only to the First Selectman and not the entire Board of Selectmen.

Joan Coe spoke to Section 704 (3), pertaining to the Director of Culture, Parks, and Recreation, and stated that an appointed Board should not have the power to approve or disapprove of its staff Director. That power should only be given to the Board of Selectmen.

Mrs. Coe also expressed her opinion that Design Review Board should be made a permanent Board in the Charter, and that she would like to have a mechanism in the Charter to petition for a Town Manager, giving residents a choice on their form of government.

Hearing no further comments, Chairman Heagney closed the Public Hearing at 6:24 P. M.

Brad Mead, Secretary