

CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION
KILLINGWORTH, CT
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES*

January 19, 2021

Conducted as a Virtual Meeting via GoToMeeting

Members Present: Robert Rimmer (Chair), Walter Adametz, Mary Casey Jacob, Mary Meixell, Joan Gay (absent 7-7:30pm).

Members Absent: Nancy Gorski.

Others Present: Catherine Iino, Regina Regolo (left 8:17pm), Michael Drew, Graig Judge, Richard Darin (7pm), Dick Bauer (7pm), Don Offner (7pm), Jennifer Liptak (7-7:30pm), Annie Stirna (7:30pm), and Shauna Ham, clerk.

1) Call to order. At 6:33 pm, Chairman Rimmer called the meeting to order.

2) Public input. None.

3) Approval of January 4, 2021 minutes.

The minutes were reviewed and no amendments were made.

Motion: J Gay moved to approve the minutes of January 4, 2021. W Adametz seconded.

Vote: Four in favor, none opposed, MC Jacob abstained. Motion passed, 4-0-1.

4) Bills: Shauna Ham, Clerical Hours

12-07-2020 - \$87.68

12-21-2020 - \$91.85

1-04-2021 - \$91.85

Motion: W Adametz moved to approve payment to the clerk for preparations of the 12/07/2020, 12/21/2020, and 1/04/2021 meeting minutes. J Gay seconded.

Vote: All in favor, motion passed unanimously.

5) Creation of Survey to be distributed to residents.

- M Meixell shared the latest version of the survey, which includes examples/possibilities along with each topic heading; the final question (“other”) is completely open-ended. The intention is to include a link to the current charter. Participants will not be required to answer every question in order to submit their responses.
- J Gay commented that “term limits” was only included in the example for First Selectman (question #3), and suggested they also include “term limits” in the examples for Elections and Elective Positions (question #4). R Rimmer later suggested it should be added to question #2 as well (Board of Selectmen).

- Michael Drew, resident, asked the Commission what their intent is with the survey – how will they use the results? Commission members expressed that they intend the survey to serve multiple purposes, including: to communicate/raise awareness of the Commission’s work, provoke responses without leading answers, provide an opportunity for residents to communicate issues/concerns they have that perhaps the Commission has not considered, and overall to get people involved and thinking about the process, so hopefully more residents will have familiarized themselves with the Charter in preparation for future Town meetings and the ultimate vote.
- W Adametz expressed that this version serves the Commission’s purpose and commended the subcommittee for their efforts.
- There was some discussion about how much time residents should have to complete the survey. Members agreed it should be out for two weeks from the time it is made available.
- Later, after agenda item #11, C Iino recommended that the first question of the survey be: “Are you a resident of Killingworth?”

Motion: W Adametz moved to approve the survey presented by the subcommittee with the “term limits” edits as discussed. MC Jacob seconded.

Vote: All in favor, motion passed unanimously.

6) Purchase of Survey Monkey Annual Subscription - \$384.00.

C Iino reported that the Commission is able to use the RiverCog’s Survey Monkey access, so they do not need to purchase their own subscription. She will email contact information to M Meixell.

7) Distribution of Survey to Residents.

- C Iino suggested that the Commission create a short, simple video telling people about the survey; could be posted on Facebook.
- C Iino stated that she will include the survey link/information in her town-wide emails and on the Town website. She recommended a press release to the Source and HK Newsletter.
- The Commission will ask the Republican and Democrat Town Committees to send the survey to their email lists. C Iino will assist in gathering email addresses for all of the organizations in town who may be able to forward the survey announcement to each of their email lists.
- Members agreed that the cost of mailing postcards to every household is not necessary for this preliminary survey. It may be appropriate to send mailings for a second survey in the future.

8) Fire Commissioner Discussion.

- Richard Darin stated that the Commissioners have prepared a written response, which they will send to R Rimmer after the meeting.
- The Commissioners’ main concern is that the current charter is too vague in respect to the Commissioners’ duties; they seek clarity, want their role clearly defined. There is a current disconnect between what is expected of them and what is in the charter.
- The Commission needs more direct feedback from the Fire Commissioners – what is/is not working? R Rimmer invited the Commissioners to draft a proposal themselves, of what language they would want included in the Charter.

- There was some discussion about the inclusion of political parties in the Fire Commissioner section, whether the number of Commissioners (currently three) is working/appropriate, appointment of the Fire Marshall, and salary decisions.
- Jennifer Liptak summarized that they will share their already-prepared written response with the Charter Revision Commission, and they will write some language proposals for how they would like to see the Charter revised.

9) Finance Director Discussion.

Regina Regolo, Finance Director, listed her concerns, suggestions, and questions:

- 1) The concept of designated medium; eliminating the need to publish in the newspaper and just post everything on the Town website would save the Town a lot of money.
 - 2) Instances where probate court and Water Pollution Control are referenced; these are no longer relevant, but perhaps the language needs to remain in case they come back.
 - 3) Board of Finance section: language forcing them to change their auditor every three years is too restrictive; they have difficulty finding auditors or companies willing to quote on the business. Regolo suggested removing the language, “who may serve for three consecutive years, followed by one year of ineligibility,” from §9-4(b) and leave it to the BoF to decide on an annual basis.
 - 4) §9-4(c): consider raising the \$20,000 threshold, maybe \$50,000.
 - 5) Pension Committee is not mentioned in the charter; suggested looking into how it is represented in other towns’ charters.
 - 6) A member of the Board of Selectmen should not also be on the Board of Education; too much of a strain on the workings of either board.
 - 7) Need to clarify who is responsible for drafting the budget (Board of Selectmen, First Selectmen, or Board of Finance?)
 - 8) §8: the level of detail is not necessary; should be left open and flexible to what the future might hold.
 - 9) Curious if swearing in has to be done in person or if it could be done on a video conference (perhaps that is by state statute).
 - 10) Annual Report; not sure who should be responsible (BoF or BoS), but it should come out sooner than it currently does.
 - 11) Speaking as a resident, feels Killingworth is too small for a Town Manager.
- There was some discussion about the level of detail in various calendars and the intent of the changes made before. R Regolo emphasized that she feels there is a reason why things are laid out the way they are and they should be careful about making any big changes to the calendar.

10) Stakeholder meeting discussion.

- R Rimmer reported that the Historic Review Committee and Elizabeth Disbrow will attend the next regular meeting (2/01/2021).

- C Iino stated that the Public Health Agency is interested in participating in the charter revision discussions; CRC members agreed that they would prefer the PHA members attend one of their meetings, rather than the other way around. C Iino stated she would see if they would be able to attend the 2/01 meeting.

11) Review and discussion of current charter. Discussion tabled to the next meeting.

ASSIGNMENT: Members will review their equivalent to Killingworth's Article 9 in their respective charters for comparison and discussion at the next Regular meeting.

12) Adjournment: At 8:24pm, J Gay moved for adjournment. W Adametz seconded.

Vote: all in favor, none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Shauna Ham