

CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION
KILLINGWORTH, CT
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES*

May 17, 2021

Conducted as a Virtual Meeting via GoToMeeting

Members Present: Robert Rimmer (Chair), Walter Adametz, Joan Gay, Nancy Gorski, Mary Casey Jacob, Mary Meixell, Kathleen Zandi.

Others Present: Catherine Iino, Malorie Neveu, Laura Lefko, Kristi LiDonni, Rob Cote, and Shauna Ham, clerk.

1) Call to order. At 7:02pm, Chair Rimmer called the meeting to order.

2) Public Input.

- Laura Lefko expressed discontent with the Commission's decision to allow voters to serve on appointed boards; related discussion followed.
- Kristi LiDonni commented that early Charter Revision meetings had discussed minor changes such as outdated language, but there have now been some major changes proposed. LiDonni asked if there would be another survey.
- Rob Cote commented that he does not think that many people are aware of the changes that are happening and noted that the only time he is aware of Town happenings is when there are people actively advertising at the dump. He added that a survey including the specific proposed changes would be good. Laura Lefko also supported the idea of an additional survey.
 - Commission members discussed revisiting the idea of producing a second survey, possibly in line with the next public hearing. R Rimmer stated he will include it as an agenda item for a future meeting.

3) Approval of April 27, 2021 and May 3, 2021 minutes.

Motion: W Adametz moved to approve the minutes of April 27, 2021. J Gay seconded.

Discussion: MC Jacob presented two proposed amendments and one question:

- 1) On page 3, under the discussion of the motion to change the tax collector to an appointed position, the last bullet point: identify Eileen Blewitt as a guest. It should be clear that while she participated in discussion, she is not a member of the Charter Revision Commission.
- 2) On page 4, two items before adjournment: remove "for the 5/03/21 meeting," so that the sentence reads, "MC Jacob and J Gay will prepare rough drafts of the changes discussed herein." MC Jacob

and J Gay are drafting revisions after each meeting, but not for Commission discussion on a meeting-by-meeting basis.

- 3) On page 3, MC Jacob questioned the motion language, "...staggered from first selectman election year..." R Rimmer commented that the motion was ultimately tabled, so it may not be necessary to alter the language at this time.

Motion: MC Jacob moved, and Meixell seconded, to make the first two proposed amendments to the minutes of April 27, 2021.

Vote, to approve two proposed amendments: Motion passed unanimously (7-0-0).

Vote, to approve minutes of April 27, 2021 as amended: Motion passed unanimously (7-0-0).

Motion: N Gorski moved to approve the minutes of May 3, 2021. J Gay seconded.

Discussion: MC Jacob questioned the wording of the motion on page 3, whether it should read, "gender-specific *language*," as opposed to "gender-specific *pronouns*," which would have expanded the meaning of the vote to include changing the term "Chairman" to "Chair." R Rimmer commented that the revised list of discussion items includes "Consider use of "Chair" rather than "Chairman" throughout the Charter." K Zandi agreed with MC Jacob that the feeling had been to remove gender-specific language; J Gay recalled that the motion had been specific to pronouns. Members agreed to leave the minutes as submitted and address the use of "Chairman" separately.

Vote, to approve the minutes of May 3, 2021 as submitted: Motion passed unanimously (7-0-0).

4) Bills: Shauna Ham, Clerical Hours

4-5-2021 - \$70.98, 4-27-2021 - \$112.73, 5-03-2021 - \$96.03

Motion: W Adametz moved to approve payment to the clerk for preparations of the 4/05, 4/27, and 5/03/2021 meeting minutes. J Gay seconded.

Vote: All in favor, motion passed unanimously (7-0-0).

5) Review and Discussion of Current Charter and Revisions to Current Charter.

- Consider use of "Chair" rather than "Chairman" throughout Charter.

Motion: K Zandi moved to change the terminology "Chairman" to "Chair" throughout the Charter. MC Jacob seconded.

Discussion: M Meixell agreed that "Chairman" should be changed to a gender-neutral term, but wondered if "Chair" was the best word. MC Jacob felt that "Chair" is more comfortable to people than "Chairperson." Others agreed that "Chair" seems to be a common and familiar term ("to chair a meeting," for example).

Vote: All in favor, motion passed unanimously (7-0-0).

- Place responsibility for creating an Annual Report with the First Selectman rather than Board of Finance. Charter §9-5(e).
 - C Iino explained that the Annual Report provides a general overview of what has happened in town over the course of that year, and includes the Board of Finance’s audit information. It is more than a display of financial numbers though; it includes narratives and serves as a historical record for the Town.
 - R Rimmer suggested leaving the first half of §9-5(e), changing the second half from Board of Finance to First Selectman, and to relocate it to §7 of the Charter. Rimmer added that he is not sure that they want to define in the Charter what will be in the report, to leave it up to the First Selectman.
 - W Adametz reported that the towns of Granby and Willington cite §7-406 of the CT General Statutes, which states:

Sec. 7-406. Town reports. The board of finance or other corresponding board in each town, or, if there is no such board, the selectmen, shall annually prepare and have published a town report. Such report shall be available for distribution and shall contain, in addition to reports of town officers or boards required by law to be included, a statement of the amount received by such town under the provisions of part IIa of chapter 240 together with an itemized account of the disposition of such amount, and such other matter as the board of finance or other corresponding board deems advisable. Towns with a population of five thousand or less, as computed by the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, shall publish their receipts and expenditures and the names of all persons, firms or corporations, other than recipients of support under sections 17b-122, 17b-124 to 17b-132, inclusive, 17b-136 to 17b-138, inclusive, 17b-194 to 17b-197, inclusive, 17b-222 to 17b-250, inclusive, 17b-263, 17b-340 to 17b-350, inclusive, 17b-689b and 17b-743 to 17b-747, inclusive, receiving money from such towns, together with the total amount of payments in excess of fifty dollars to each, unless such town has a bookkeeping system approved by the secretary setting forth all the receipts and expenditures in detail, in which case it shall not be necessary for the town to publish in its report the names of all persons, firms or corporations receiving money from such towns, together with the total amount of payments in excess of fifty dollars to each.
 - R Rimmer suggested that perhaps they could make it more of a collaborative effort; leave the responsibility in §9-5(e), but change the wording of the third sentence to something to the effect of: “The Board of Finance, *with assistance from the First Selectman*, shall then compile an Annual Town Report, which incorporates the material thus received, as well as the auditor's report.”
 - A comment was made that if the report is about more than just finances, maybe the First Selectman should prepare the report with assistance from the Board of Finance. R Rimmer commented that they should seek legal guidance.
 - MC Jacob suggested they leave preparation of an annual financial report with the Board of Finance, and have the First Selectman responsible for preparing a broader report.
 - J Gay commented that she liked Rimmer’s earlier recommendation.

Motion: W Adametz moved to revise §9-5(e) to allow the Board of Finance to work with the First Selectman to compile the Annual Town Report. N Gorski seconded.

Discussion: There was some concern about whether the intent of the motion was clear enough, and concerns about whether the change would violate State statute. R Rimmer stated that the subcommittee formed at the 5/03/21 meeting (W Adametz, N Gorski, and R Rimmer), can look into this further.

Motion: J Gay moved to table the motion. W Adametz seconded.

Vote: All in favor, motion passed unanimously (7-0-0).

6) Upcoming Meeting Schedule.

Members discussed the timeline and accepted that there is not sufficient time to get on the November 2021 ballot. Several members reported conflicts with being able to attend the 5/19 and/or 5/20/21 Special meetings. By consensus, members agreed to cancel both the 5/19 and 5/20/21 Special meetings. The next two meetings will be Tuesday 6/01, and Monday 6/07/21.

Members discussed ideas for increasing meeting productivity. N Gorski suggested looking into corresponding State statutes in advance of meetings. W Adametz suggested that they create and utilize more subcommittees; having two weeks between meetings (returning to the original meeting schedule of first and third Mondays) would allow more time for groups to get together/work. Another suggestion was to assign items individually. R Rimmer invited members to contact him with any additions to the list of remaining discussion items; he will use that list to divide and assign items to individual members to work on.

5) Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 9:17pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Shauna Ham