

## MINUTES

### SPECIAL MEETING OF THE KILLINGWORTH CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

Monday, February 6, 2023 7:00 p.m. via GoToMeeting

**Members in Attendance:** Joanne Gorman, Joan Gay, Casey Jacob, Eric Nunes, Cathy lino and Kathleen Zandi, Chair

**Members Excused:** Arjumund Abid

**Visitors (as identified on screen):** First Selectman Nancy Gorski, Laura Lefko (Joined at 8:13) and Clerk Jamie Sciascia

The meeting was Called to Order at 7:02 p.m. by K. Zandi, Chair

#### **Public Comment:**

Joanne Gorman read in full two public comments that were submitted via email (the emails themselves are attachments at the end of these minutes).

The first submission was from Michael Venuti who asked that the Charter “do something to make Killingworth affordable especially for our younger generation...”

The second submission was from Fire Commissioner Jennifer L. Liptak who disagrees with the CRC’s recommendation made on November 23, 2022 in Motion #3 that the two elected Fire Commissioners may not be current members of the KVFC. In her email, Commissioner Liptak asked questions about and presented arguments against the change spelled out in Motion #3 from November 23, 2022.

After listening to the Public Comments, Casey Jacob suggested that at the next Public Hearing the CRC advised the Community that because of time constraints, the CRC can’t consider any more new issues and can only consider feedback on what the CRC is proposing be revised. Casey Jacob also suggested encouraging the First Selectman to keep a running list of new issues, for the next Charter Revision Commission to address. Chair Zandi asked that Mr. Venuti be encouraged to take his concerns to the Planning and Zoning Commission and the BOS. The CRC noted that Commissioner Liptak’s letter raised a number of issues that could be discussed at a future meeting when it is on the agenda.

Joan Gay asked if all the Public Comments received could be posted on the CRC’s SharePoint Folder. Joanne Gorman will send all emails to Jamie Sciascia to post on the SharePoint folder. Discussion about connecting Public Email to Minutes took place.

If you would like to submit questions/feedback to the CRC, please send them via email to: [Charterrevision@townofkillingworth.com](mailto:Charterrevision@townofkillingworth.com).

**Approval of Minutes:**

Motion #1 - Joanne Gorman *Moved* and Casey Jacob *Seconded* a motion to accept the Minutes from the Special Meeting of January 12, 2023 (After the Public Hearing) and the Minutes from the Special Meeting of January 30, 2023 as presented.

Voting to Approve the January 12, 2023 Special Minutes (After Public Hearing): J. Gay, Cathy Iino, C. Jacob, K. Zandi

Voting to Abstain on the January 12, 2023 Special Minutes (After Public Hearing): Eric Nunes, Joanne Gorman

Motion passed (4-0-2).

Voting to Approve the January 30, 2023 Special Minutes: J. Gay, J. Gorman, Cathy Iino, C. Jacob, E. Nunes, K. Zandi

Motion passed unanimously (6-0-0).

**Follow-up with Town Clerk:**

Chair Zandi reported that she spoke with Town Clerk Mooney about three topics:

**1. Capitalization of “Boards” -**

Town Clerk Mooney mentioned that in 2007 an editorial analysis of the Charter was performed and one outcome was the observation that capitalization was not consistent throughout the Charter. Town Clerk Mooney suggested not taking any more further action on Capitalization, sending the CRC’s concerns about use of Capitalization to town Attorney David Tycz. Town Clerk Mooney mentioned that changes were only made to the online version of the Charter versus the actual hardcopy.

The CRC discussed in length about how a motion was made in a previous meeting regarding the capitalization of Committees, Boards and Commissions. Chair Zandi will scan the 2007 document and send it to the CRC.

**2. Reference to Statute -**

The CRC discussed the five different ways the Charter currently references State Statutes: “as specified in”; “in accordance with”; “consistent with”; “as set forth in” and “as provided for”. Town Clerk Mooney advised that she was unsure which way is more proper but she always utilizes “in accordance with”. Further discussion took place about writing “in accordance with” (C.G.S.§ #) and a motion was made thereafter.

First Selectman Gorski recommended summarizing everything for Attorney Tycz that the CRC has questions on to prepare him in advance. She will give Attorney Tycz a heads-up that this is coming his way.

Motion #2 - Eric Nunes **Moved** and Joanne Gorman **Seconded** a motion that most references to Connecticut General Statutes generally be made as (CGS§ #) but “in accordance with” may be added as necessary for clarity.

Voting to Approve: J. Gay, J. Gorman, C. Jacob, E. Nunes, C. Iino, K. Zandi

Motion passed unanimously (6-0-0).

Motion #3 - Casey Jacob **Moved** and Eric Nunes **Seconded** a motion to add a definition of C.G.S. § # to Section 1-2 Definitions.

Voting to Approve: J. Gay, J. Gorman, C. Jacob, E. Nunes, C. Iino, K. Zandi

Motion passed unanimously (6-0-0).

### **3. Needing a Hard Copy Letter of resignation, Not in Email -**

Kathy Zandi spoke with Town Clerk Mooney about whether municipal officers can resign via email or submit letters of resignation via email. Town Clerk Mooney provided CGS § 7-103 which requires “resignation in writing.”

#### **Updates from Working Groups:**

Casey Jacob shared for Working Group #4 a draft Memo recommending the creation of a Code of Ethics and an Ethics Commission for the Commission's review. The CRC provided their feedback on same and edits were made during the meeting. First Selectman Gorski confirmed that according to the Personnel Manual and Labor Attorney as well as State Statutes, a Code of Ethics and Ethics Commission is mandatory.

Motion #4 - Casey Jacob **Moved** and Joanne Gorman **Seconded** a motion to approve the Memo recommending creation of a Code of Ethics and an Ethics Commission drafted to the Board of Selectmen as presented in response to Motions #3 & 4 on October 17, 2022 and that this Memo be sent along with the Charter recommendations to the Board of Selectmen.

Voting to Approve: J. Gay, J. Gorman, C. Jacob, E. Nunes, C. Iino, K. Zandi

Motion passed unanimously (6-0-0).

Cathy Iino shared for Working Group #3 a draft Memo recommending the creation of a Town Governance Committee for the CRC's review. The CRC provided their feedback on same and edits were made during the meeting.

Discussion on when to send the Memo to the Board of Selectmen took place. The CRC agreed to send the Revised Charter along with the two Memos at the same time to the BOS.

Motion #5 - Cathy Iino **Moved** and Joan Gay **Seconded** a motion to approve the Memo recommending the formation of a Town Governance Committee drafted to the Board of Selectmen as presented in response to Motion #3 on December 19, 2022, and that this Memo be sent along with the Charter recommendations to the Board of Selectmen.

Voting to Approve: J. Gay, J. Gorman, C. Jacob, E. Nunes, C. lino, K. Zandi

Motion passed unanimously (6-0-0).

Chair Zandi went over Agenda items for Saturday, October 11, 2023 CRC meeting. Casey Jacob went over the CRC's "To Do" list.

First Selectman Gorski will get back to the CRC about the State Statutes for setting Salaries.

**Adjournment:**

Chair Zandi adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:06 p.m.

**Submitted By:** Jamie Sciascia, Clerk

**Public Comment Emails:**

**From:** Mike Venuti <[fivesilverfox@comcast.net](mailto:fivesilverfox@comcast.net)>

**Sent:** Thursday, February 2, 2023 7:38:39 PM

**To:** Charter Revision <[charterrevision@townofkillingworth.com](mailto:charterrevision@townofkillingworth.com)>

**Subject:** Affordable housing

Hi

Lifelong resident and would love to see charter do something to make Killingworth affordable especially for our younger generation who after graduating simply can't find affordable homes or rents. Latest issue of Haddam Killingworth news has a brand new multi family rent compromised of 3 buildings on 4.6 acres with a total of 56 rents and amenities. I know very well our zoning board has adopted regulations to allow affordable development and elderly but simple truth is the refs aren't practical if they were then builders would build but they haven't because regulations aren't serious about tackling affordability and looking at what works in other towns. It's a mistake to keep passing the buck because one day we may find our out dated regulations have forced many to leave town where as if we had real working solutions to home ownerships or multi family rent perhaps some of these young adults would choose to stay and volunteer in the fire department and ambulance but without the younger generation around how long before Killingworth has to turn to a professional staffing for our volunteer department and how much will our taxes go up? Having lived in town my entire life I can tell you killingworth doesn't adapt to change or needs quickly but this is one change I believe has to be looked at and perhaps with an outsiders eye

Sincerely

Michael Venuti

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** Liptak, Jennifer <Jen.L.Liptak@pfizer.com>

**Sent:** Monday, January 30, 2023 7:54:20 PM

**To:** Charter Revision <charterrevision@townofkillingworth.com>

**Subject:** Section 4-14(a): Charter Revision: The Board of Fire Commissioners

Dear Charter Revision Committee:

Please find my questions and comments below on Section 4-14 (a):

Motion #2 - Cathy lino Moved and Joan Gay Seconded a motion to accept Working Group #3's recommendation to amend the original language under Section 4-14(a): The Board of Fire Commissioners shall consist of three (3) members: two elected Commissioners, one from each political party elected at each municipal election for a term of two (2) years, and one Commissioner who will be the Senior Trustee duly elected by the Killingworth Volunteer Fire Company to now read:

The Board of Fire Commissioners (BoFC) shall consist of three (3) members: a) Two (2) Commissioners will be elected at each municipal election for a term of two (2) years. The elected Commissioners may not be of the same political party and **may not be current members of the KVFC**; b) One (1) Commissioner will be the Senior Trustee duly elected by the Killingworth Volunteer Fire Company.

Voting to Approve: J. Gay, C. lino, E. Nunes, K. Zandi

1. Why is this being proposed?
  1. What justification do you have for proposing this?
    - i. This is reminiscent of previous discourse with the KFVC and the BOS, witnessed personally over the last 4 years, while serving on the BOFC.
  1. Are you insinuating there is a conflict of interest with a KVFC member serving on the BOFC?

2. Is this being applied across the other Commissions/Committees, where potential conflicts of issues may be present?
  1. Are you restricting members to serve on commissions/committees where they have siblings in roles that could be influenced by that commission/committee?
  2. Are you restricting anyone who was a previous Town employee from participating on Committees/Commissions?
  3. Are you restricting current members of the KVFC from participating in any other commissions/committees?
  4. Are previous KW Librarians be allowed to be on the Library Committee?
3. As a current member of the Board of Fire Commission, who did not have a fire service background, I would strongly urge you to reconsider add this restriction.
  1. An understanding of the fire service is incredibly important to be effective and efficient in this role.
  2. Having a fire service background helps explain equipment needs, repairs, etc., to the BOS and BOF who traditionally do not have fire service experience or understand what the needs are for the KFVC.
  3. And, helps the FC understand proposals from the KVFC for new equipment, changes to equipment and repairs, as well as the budgetary aspects for these.
4. The BOFC does not have the ability to approve or make final decisions on budgets. Again, to reiterate this point, the **BOFC does not have the ability to approve the KVFC budget or approve the release of funds.**
  1. We are an advisory board.
    - i. Representing the Town, as per Section 4-14(b), which each member would understand going into this role.
      1. We approve disbursements of funds that have been previously approved by the BOS and BOF.
      2. The BOS and BOF make the final decisions/approvals on everything monetary.
      3. I do not see where a conflict of interest can occur.
5. There are three types of members for the KVFC, considered "Current members":
  1. **Active Member:** Self-explanatory
  2. **Life Member:** A member who has served actively for 30 years. They may still respond to and participate in calls as long as they meet minimum requirements.
  3. **Veteran Member:** A member who has served 10 years and chooses to go to this status. They no longer respond to incidents or participate in drills. This is a "social" member.
6. To be clear, you are proposing that no member of the KVFC may run for a seat on the BOFC. Is that accurate?

In the Town of Killingworth, you would be hard pressed to find someone who isn't a member, married to a member, has a member in their family, etc. Killingworth is not New York City where you may never know a Fireman or a someone in the Fire Service in your lifetime.

Based on my experience in the last four years, I cannot help but think this is politically motivated and it makes me very sad. I would love to understand the background to this proposed language change.

Thank you and take care!

**Kindest regards,**

**Jennifer**

**Jennifer L. Liptak**

KW Fire Commissioner and Killingworth Resident

C: 860-941-9898