

May 25, 2021

A Special Meeting of the City Council and Charter Revision Commission was held on Tuesday, May 25, 2021 at 7:17 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers, 111 North Main Street. Present: Mayor Zoppo-Sassu; Council Members Barney, Fortier, Hahn, Kelley, Preleski, and Rosado. Charter Revision Commissioners Carter, Czuchta, Krampitz, and Scotti. Absent: Charter Revision Commissioners FitzGerald, Lafreniere, and Ploszaj.

The call of the Special Meeting was presented:

*“City Council Members
Charter Revision Commission Members
City Hall
Bristol, Connecticut*

*SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL AND
CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION*

There will be a Special Joint Meeting of the Bristol City Council and Charter Revision Commission to be held on Tuesday, May 25, 2021 immediately following the Joint Meeting that is scheduled immediately following the regular Board of Finance meeting scheduled at 5:30 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers, 111 North Main Street, Bristol, Connecticut.

AGENDA

- 1. To discuss, recommend and refer changes to the Charter Revision Commission and to take any action as necessary regarding proposed revisions contained in their Draft Report:

 - a. Elimination of limits on successive terms for mayor, city council members, and board of education in Secs.12A and 39A.*
 - b. Changing the city treasurer from a two year elected official to a four year appointed official in Secs. 12 and 18.*
 - c. Changing the registrars of voters from a two year term to a four year term in Sec. 8.*
 - d. To renumber and reorganize the charter and add a table of contents.**
- 2. To discuss, recommend and refer any other additional changes to the Charter Revision Commission Draft Report, and to take any action as necessary.*
- 3. To recommend the Charter Revision Commission remove a reference to the town clerk Therese Pac in the preface of the Charter Revision Final Report, and to take any action as necessary.*
- 4. To adjourn.*

Per Order Mayor Ellen A. Zoppo-Sassu, Chair

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DATED this 18th day of May, 2021.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://bristolct-gov.zoom.us/j/92463489399?pwd=TjVrYnR5VlMvT0U2MzZKVDhDNEROQT09>

Meeting ID: 924 6348 9399

Passcode: 123456

Dial by your location

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)''

1. DISCUSSION REGARDING CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION DRAFT REPORT.

Mayor Zoppo-Sassu requested a summary of the Charter Revision process from the City Clerk.

City Clerk Pac provided a brief outline regarding actions to be taken on the Charter Revision Commission Draft Report and the subsequent process.

Mayor Zoppo-Sassu outlined the four proposals in the Charter Revision Commission Draft Report. She requested an explanation from Corporation Counsel Clift regarding how to correct the defect on the issue of term limits.

Corporation Counsel Clift stated in reviewing the underlying law on term limits it appeared that the adoption of term limits in 2013 was done without legal authority. He consulted with Attorney Steven Mednick, an expert in the field who concluded that action should be taken to eliminate these provisions since they were not legally permissible, enforceable, or defensible.

Corporation Counsel Clift read Attorney Mednick's letter concerning term limits. One remedy suggested by Attorney Mednick was to request the City's legislative delegation pass a law that provides express authority to limit terms of municipal elected officials by charter under the Home Rule Act. Another remedy would be a live legal case brought in the courts, but there was currently no candidate impacted by the decision. This could be a costly legal path. Placing the question on the ballot would subject the voters to make a legal judgment in a politically charged environment which would not be fair.

Charter Revision Commissioner Roman Czuchta expressed confusion about removing term limits from their Draft Report when the Charter Revision Commission was asked to review it.

Charter Revision Commissioner John Krampitz noted that the Charter Revision Commission discussed proposing a city manager and a four-year term for mayor, but did not propose a revision.

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Council Member Preleski did not recall a question on the ballot for a four-year term for Mayor.

(Council Member Kelley left the meeting at 7:56 p.m. and returned at 7:57 p.m.)

2. RECOMMENDATION REFERRED TO CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION TO REMOVE FROM DRAFT REPORT SECS. 12A AND 39A ELIMINATING TERM LIMITS ON SUCCESSIVE TERMS FOR MAYOR, CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS, AND BOARD OF EDUCATION.

On motion of Council Member Fortier and seconded, it was unanimously voted: To refer to the Charter Revision Commission to remove from their Draft Report the elimination of limits on successive terms for mayor, city council members, and board of education in Sections 12A and 39A.

3. RECOMMENDATION REFERRED TO CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION TO REVIEW A FOUR-YEAR TERM FOR MAYOR.

Council Member Preleski suggested the Charter Revision Commission consider a four-year term for the mayor.

Council Member Kelley noted there was bipartisan support for a four-year term for the mayor.

On motion of Council Member Preleski and seconded, it was unanimously voted: To refer to the Charter Revision Commission to consider a proposal for a four-year term for the mayor.

4. RECOMMENDATION REFERRED TO CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION TO REMOVE A REFERENCE TO TOWN CLERK THERESE PAC IN PREFACE OF CHARTER REVISION FINAL REPORT.

On motion of Council Member Hahn and seconded, it was unanimously voted: To refer to the Charter Revision Commission that they remove a reference to the Town Clerk Therese Pac in the preface of the Charter Revision Final Report.

5. ADJOURNMENT.

At 8:06 p.m., on motion of Council Member Fortier and seconded, it was unanimously voted: To adjourn.

ATTEST: _____

**Therese Pac
Town & City Clerk**