

Minutes of the Charter Revision Commission's
Regular Meeting of September 16, 2020

1. Call to order.

Chair Jon FitzGerald called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM and read the call of the meeting.

2. Introduction of Commissioners

The commissioners introduced themselves. Present were: Jon FitzGerald, Kimberly Ploszaj, Roman Czuchta, John Krampitz, John Lefreneire, Richard Carter.

Absent was: Laurie Scotti

3. Discuss and approve the minutes of the public hearing held on August 5, 2020 and take any action as necessary.

After discussion, on motion made by Commissioner Ploszaj and seconded by Commissioner John Krampitz it was unanimously voted to approve the minutes.

4. Discuss and approve the minutes of the special meeting held on August 5, 2020 and take any action as necessary.

After discussion, on motion made by Commissioner Czuchta and seconded by Commissioner Ploszaj it was unanimously voted to approve the minutes.

5. Discuss public participation regarding revisions to the charter.

Jeffrey Caggiano, 27 Cricket Hill Road, Chairman of the Republican Town Committee addressed the Committee and stated that the Republican Committee has reviewed the topics on the agenda. The Republican Committee has no opposition to the possible recommendation of a city manager form of government. They are in agreement to the appointment of the Treasurer as opposed to elected. They are also in agreement to the 4-year term of the Mayor.

Dawn Leger, Grants Administrator, Economic and Community Development Department addressed the Committee and questioned what the proposed changes to Item No. 9, Section 18 would be. Chairmen FitzGerald will take that topic up as it appears on the agenda.

Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu, 58 Merriman Street, addressed the Committee and submitted the written testimony from Treasurer Thomas Barnes and herself that she had submitted to the 2019 charter revision commission asking for consideration changing the Office of the Treasurer from an elected position to an appointed. She stated she felt that the ballot had too many questions last time and caused an inability for the voters to process it. They wanted to emphasize that the language on the ballot needs to be clear and understandable.

She was also in favor of a city manager form of government. For the last 45 years there has only been 1 administrative position in the Bristol Mayor's Office. If you look at cities like East Hartford, Hamden and New Britain they employ up to eight people in the Mayor's office. She would be in favor of enhancing the role of the Mayor's office, job description and duties and a longer term of office.

Chairman FitzGerald stated that the Town Clerk is responsible for determining the number and wording of questions for the ballot.

6. Discussion of possible revisions to charter section 12 (city officers, elective) and take any action as necessary.

John Krampitz stated that this was on the ballot at the last election and it lost badly and thinks it was because it wasn't publicized enough. He suggested publishing it in the newspaper with an explanation and will have a better chance of passing.

No recommendations at this time. No votes taken.

7. Discussion of possible revisions to charter section 13 (recall of elected officers) and to take any action as necessary.

No recommendations at this time. No votes taken.

8. Discussion of possible revisions to charter section 14 (elective officers; terms; vacancies) and to take any action as necessary.

No recommendations at this time. No votes taken.

9. Discussion of possible revisions to charter section 18 (the treasurer) and to take any action as necessary.

No recommendations at this time. No votes taken.

10. Discussion of possible revisions to charter section 8 (town elections, town clerk, registrars) and of possible revisions to charter section 19 (registrar of voters) and to take any action as necessary.

No recommendations at this time. No votes taken.

11. Discussion of possible revisions to charter to recommend a city manager form of government and to take any action as necessary.

No recommendations at this time. No votes taken.

12. Discussion of possible revisions to charter section 12A (limits on successive terms for mayor and city council) and to take any action as necessary.

No recommendations at this time. No votes taken.

- 13. Discussion of possible revisions to charter section 16 (the mayor, powers and duties) and to take any action as necessary.**

No recommendations at this time. No votes taken.

- 14. Discussion of possible revisions to charter section 20 (city council meetings) and to take any action as necessary.**

No recommendations at this time. No votes taken.

- 15. Discussion of possible revisions to city council powers and to charter sections 21, 22, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, and 37 and to take any action as necessary.**

Tom Conlin, Assistant Corporation Counsel prepared a chart for the Committee showing Council Powers and their corresponding references to the State Statutes. He also provided copies of charters of other towns for comparison.

No recommendations at this time. No votes taken.

- 16. Discuss comments and potential topics for charter raised by the commissioners of the charter revision commission and take any action as necessary.**

No recommendations at this time. No votes taken.

- 17. Discuss the charter and proposed charter revisions raised by the commissioners of the charter revision commission and take any action as necessary.**

It was discussed that it would be helpful to obtain a copy of the job descriptions for the Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer to see the interaction between the two positions.

No recommendations at this time. No votes taken.

- 18. Discuss meeting dates and agenda and take any action as necessary.**

Chairman FitzGerald stated the next meeting of the Charter Revision Commission will take place on October 7, 2020 at 7:00 PM in the First Floor Meeting Room.

19. Old Business

There was no old business to come before the Committee.

20. New Business

There was no new business to come before the Committee.

20. Adjourn

At 7:58 PM, on motion by Commissioner Czuchta and seconded by Commissioner Ploszaj, it was unanimously voted: to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted:
Noelle Bates
Recording Secretary

Approved