

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

AUGUST 3, 2022

A Meeting of the Charter Revision Commission was held on August 3, 2022 at the Bristol Public Library, 5 High Street, Bristol, CT. Members present: Chairman Jon Fitzgerald, Vice Chairman Calvin Brown, Michele Roalf, Melanie McKinley, John Lafreniere, Richard Carter and Daniel Micari.

Also Present: Edward Krawiecki and Jeffrey Steeg from City of Bristol Corporation Counsel.

1. Call to order.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Jon Fitzgerald.

2. Introduction of Commissioners.

3. Discuss and approve the minutes of the meeting held on June 21, 2022 and take any action as necessary.

On motion made by Commissioner Lafreniere and seconded by Commissioner Brown it was unanimously voted: to approve the Public Hearing and Regular meeting minutes.

4. Discuss the charter revision process, and public participation on the charter revision process.

Charter Revision is now on step 6 "Recommended changes" of the attached steps for revising or developing a municipal charter. No public participation.

5. Public participation regarding the city council's recommendation that the charter revision commission delete from its draft report the recommendation to amend charter sections 20, 40, and 51 that would increase the city council from 2 to 3 members per council district through multiparty representation and would increase the membership of the board of finance from 8 to 11 members.

None.

6. Discussion by charter revision commissioners of the city council's recommendation that the charter revision commission delete from its draft report the recommendation to amend charter sections 20, 40, and 51 that would increase the city council from 2 to 3 members per council district through multiparty representation and would increase the membership of the board of finance from 8 to 11 members, and to take any action as necessary.

Chairman Jon Fitzgerald stated there are two options 1. To take out and delete the recommendation to amend charter section 20, 40, and 51 or 2. To keep the recommendation in which case, it will go back to City Council to accept or reject. If the recommendation is rejected it will not go on the ballot but if it's approve by City Council it will be put on the ballot. He believes the recommendation should be kept so that the public can have the opportunity to petition the question on the ballot. He further suggested to reject the city council's proposal to delete from draft report the recommendation to amend charter sections 20, 40, and 51 that would increase

the city council from 2 to 3 members per council district through multiparty representation and would increase the membership of the board of finance from 8 to 11 members.

Commissioner Brown believes the report should be kept as is. He suggested to send back the recommendation to City Council to allow the public to petition the question.

Commissioner Roalf stated that people don't like one party rule, as council went from all democrats to all republicans. She agrees that the public should decide on the matter.

Commissioners Daniel Micari and Richard Carter also agree to keep the recommendation for the sake of the public.

On motion made by Calvin Brown and seconded by Commissioner Roalf it was unanimously voted: to reject the recommendation made by the City Council delete from its draft report the recommendation to amend charter sections 20, 40, and 51 that would increase the city council from 2 to 3 members per council district through multiparty representation and would increase the membership of the board of finance from 8 to 11 members

7. Discussion by charter revision commissioners of meeting dates and agendas and take any action as necessary.

There will be no further charter revision commission meetings.

8. Adjourn.

At 7:07 p.m. a motion was made by Commissioner Lafreniere and seconded by Commissioner Brown and it was unanimously voted: to "Adjourn."

Respectfully Submitted
Genesis Ojeda
Recording Secretary

BASIC STEPS FOR REVISING OR DEVELOPING A MUNICIPAL CHARTER

Below is a simple step-by-step outline of the charter development or revision process, as prescribed in *Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) 7-188* "Initiation of action for adoption, amendment or repeal of charter or home rule ordinance."

STEP 1: INITIATION

A charter revision proposal must be initiated by either a 2/3 vote of the entire membership of the municipal appointing authority (town or city council, board of selectmen, etc.), or a petition signed by not less than 10% of the electorate.

CGS §7-187(a); §7-188(b)



STEP 2: APPOINTMENT

Within 30 days, the appointing authority must appoint a charter commission, charter revision commission, or home rule ordinance revision commission. The commission must consist of five to fifteen electors (registered voters), not more than 1/3 of whom may hold another public office in the municipality, and with no more than a bare majority from the same political party. "The commission shall proceed forthwith to draft a charter or amendment to the existing charter, or amendments to the home rule ordinance as the case may be."

CGS §7-190(a)



STEP 3: PUBLIC HEARINGS

The commission must hold at least two public hearings; one prior to beginning "substantive work," and one after the commission has completed a draft report, but before submitting it to the appointing authority. The commission may hold other meetings it deems necessary.

CGS §7-191(a)



STEP 4: SUBMISSION

The appointing authority shall prescribe a date, no later than 16 months from appointment, by which the commission must submit the draft report, including the proposed revisions, to the municipal clerk. Although the appointing authority can prescribe a date, decisions are not definitive.

CGS §7-190(b); §7-191(b)



STEP 5: FINAL PUBLIC HEARING

The appointing authority shall hold its last public hearing within 45 days of submission of the commission's draft report

CGS §7-191(b)



STEP 6: RECOMMENDED CHANGES

Within 15 days of the last hearing, the appointing authority may recommend changes to the draft report.

- If there **are** recommended changes, the commission shall confer with the appointing authority concerning such recommendations and may amend its report or reject the recommendations. In either case the commission shall make its final report within 30 days of receiving such recommendations.
- If there are no recommended changes, the commission's report becomes final and the appointing authority shall act on it.

CGS §7-191(b), (c)

**STEP 7: APPROVAL OR REJECTION BY APPOINTING AUTHORITY**

Within 15 days after receiving the final report, the appointing authority shall, by majority vote, either approve or reject the proposed changes. Following a vote to reject, a petition may be filed for referendum within 45 days after rejection by the appointing authority. The commission shall terminate upon acceptance or rejection of its final report by the appointing authority.

CGS §7-190(c); 7-191(d)

**STEP 8: PUBLICATION**

Within 30 days of the authority's approval or certification of a petition from the electorate, the charter and amendments shall be published in full at least once in a general newspaper having circulation in the municipality.

CGS §7-191(d)

**STEP 9: REFERENDUM**

After approval or the filing of a petition, the appointing authority decides by majority vote whether to hold a vote on the charter, amendments or revisions at either a regular election (majority vote of participants needed for approval), or a special election (majority equal to at least 15% of qualified electors needed for approval). The election must be held not more than 15 months after approval by the appointing authority or certification of a petition.

CGS §7-191(e), (f)

**STEP 10: CERTIFICATION**

Not later than 30 days after approval by the electors, the municipal clerk must notify the Secretary of the State, in writing, of the results. The clerk must also file three certified copies of the charter, amendments or revisions with the Secretary of the State.

CGS §7-191(g)