

Charter Study Committee
Regular Meeting
October 19, 2011
Municipal Center - Room 302

Minutes

PRESENT: Richard Drezek, Stephen Martino, Scott Saunders, Thomas Warnat, Christopher Wazorko,
Robert Cornish

ABSENT: Robert Berube

STAFF: Robert E. Lee, Town Manager, Daniel Grasso, Intern

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

2. Public Comment

Public comment was allowed. Five members of the public offered comment. The public comment period closed at 6:56.

Mr. Lee announced that Plainville Finance Director Rob Buden was unable to attend the meeting due to the date change. Mr. Lee noted that Rob Buden and representatives from Mansfield will come to the November 3rd meeting to describe their experiences with combined finance departments. Mr. Lee also passed out language from the Town of Colchester which has a combined finance department in their Charter.

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of the September 29 was made by Mr. Martino.

Second by: Mr. Saunders

All those in favor 6, Opposed 0, Motion passed unanimously

4. Discussion of Town Charter

Discussion of the budget items that need to be considered. Mr. Drezek brought up the Glastonbury and Farmington models as ones that Plainville might want to consider. After discussion it was determined that the committee will discuss the combined finance departments at the Nov. 3 meeting. The committee also decided to discuss options to improve

the budget process at the meeting on Nov. 17. Mr. Lee will provide information from the towns of Glastonbury and Farmington to the committee before this meeting.

The committee decided to continue to discuss the following options for improving the budget at the Nov. 17th meeting:

- Town Council set the budget
- Allow the Council to change budget after second vote or allow them to change after 3rd vote
- Glastonbury model
- Farmington Model
- Town Meeting format
- The Committee will also consider whether to add a quorum requirement to any of the items and whether to split the Town and the Board budget

A discussion followed on how best to appoint Constables. The Committee will recommend eliminating the election of constables and instead have them appointed. The Committee decided to recommend that two of each will be recommended from the Democrat and Republican town committees and two at-large constables will also be appointed. All of the nominees will have to be approved by the Town Council. Mr. Lee will check with Town Attorney to ensure this process is legal.

The Committee decided not to further consider changing the duties of the Town Manager to change the budget presentation.

The Committee discussed whether to reduce the Board of Education terms to two years similar to those of the Council. Mr. Saunders pointed out that there is a steep learning curve when people are elected to the Board of Education. He said it can take up to two years to get up to speed with all of the complexities of the Board of Education and that having shorter terms would make it difficult for new people who are elected.

Motion to remove this item from further discussion by Mr. Drezek

Second by Mr. Wazorko

Passed unanimously 6-0

The Committee discussed whether or not to have term limits for elected officials.

Motion to remove this item from further discussion by Mr. Cornish

Second by Mr. Martino

Passed unanimous 6-0

A discussion followed on whether to allow four year terms for Council members. The Committee decided to move forward the idea of four year over-lapping terms for the Council, similar to the Board of Education. Mr. Wazorko pointed out that minority set aside provisions

need to be considered. Mr. Saunders began a discussion about requiring recall for Council members if they are moved to four year terms. He felt that with two-year terms if the public is unhappy with a candidates performance then they can wait until the next election cycle and vote them out, but with four year terms the people cannot get rid of them.

Mr. Lee and Mr. Waranat pointed out that a recall provision would allow people to start a recall provision for any reason. They agreed that criminal matters should be subject to recall but allowing it for any reason will lead to political grandstanding.

5. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Mr. Saunders

Second by: Mr. Martino

All those in favor 6, all those opposed 0, Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.