

**Charter Revision Commission
Regular Meeting
February 16, 2012
Municipal Center – Council Chamber**

Minutes

Present: Daphne Adams, William Brayne, Robert Cornish, John Gasparini, Robert Michalic, Jo Rosinski

Absent: Robert Berube

Staff Present: Robert Lee, Town Manager, Dan Grasso, Intern

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Cornish.

2. Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the meeting minutes from the January 19, 2012 organizational meeting and the February 2, 2012 public hearing: Mr. Michalic

Second by: Ms. Adams

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

3. New Business

Chapter 1

The Commission discussed the foreclosure and back-tax process. It was determined that this was a Town Council policy rather than something that should be in the Charter.

Chapter 2

Section 3 Minority Representation

A discussion followed regarding minority representation. Members discussed the pros and cons of the number of candidates each political party may nominate. A discussion also followed on whether it would be possible to restrict the number of unaffiliated voters who can run for Council or BOE. Some members also pointed out that having minority representation allows for a watchdog on the Council. The Commission decided to table the item to check with the Town Attorney regarding the legality of changing this provision.

Motion to table by Mr. Gasparini

Second by Mr. Michalic

All in Favor 6, All Opposed 0, Motion Passes Unanimously

Next, the Commissioners discussed whether it was appropriate for immediate family members to serve on the same Council or Board at the same time. Members discussed the benefits and

the drawbacks of having family members on the Council. It was pointed out that a letter was sent to the town committee chairmen to get their opinion on this subject, but there has been no response. The Commission will check with the Town Attorney to determine the legality of this proposal.

Motion to table by Mr. Gasparini

Second Mr. Brayne,

All in Favor 6, All Opposed 0, Motion Passes Unanimously

Term limits

A discussion followed on term limits. Some items that were discussed included limiting the number of terms a person can serve on the Council or Board, and changing the length of the terms. Board of Education Chairman Saunders was asked her opinion on the need for four year terms for the BOE, and she stated they were necessary for Board members to get up to speed. The Commission will check with the Town Attorney to determine the legality of implementing term limits.

Motion to table Mr. Gasparini

Second Mr. Brayne

All in favor 6, All Opposed 0, Motion Passes Unanimously

The Board of Library Directors

It was pointed out that a change in a State Statute in 2007 and that law changed the name. The Commission will not recommend changing these to appointed positions. They are waiting to hear from the Library Board of Directors before making a decision.

Constables

The Commission will wait to discuss Constables until Mr. Berube is present, as he is a former Constable.

Judge of Probate

One of the members pointed out that the Judge of Probate language could be eliminated because Plainville is now in a district with Bristol.

Registrar of Voters

A discussion followed on the whether to change the language in the Charter regarding Registrar of Voters. (They are an elected position)

Justices of the Peace

The Commission decided that this language should be changed because Justices are not elected.

Motion to table Mr. Gasparini

Second Ms. Rosinski

All in Favor 6, All Opposed 0, Motion Passes Unanimously

Section 3 Breaking a Tie

Unaffiliated voters

The Commission would like to get an opinion from Town Attorney whether limiting the amount of unaffiliated voters who run for office is legal.

Voting Machines

The Commission pointed out that someone at the public hearing stated that this part can be removed. The Commission will check with Town staff to determine if the devices currently used for voting are considered machines, and if this section needs to be changed.

Section 4

Residency of the Town Manager and the Town Atty. was discussed. It was determined the Town Manager is required to live in Plainville, however the Attorney is not. The Commission agreed to keep this section intact.

Section 5

Next the Commission discussed the appointment process with regard to filling vacancies on the Board or Council due to a resignation. The Commissioners discussed the positives and negatives of the current process, but did not reach a consensus with regard to changing the process.

Section 6 Budget-

Mr. Lee was asked by the Commissioners to describe the current budget process.

Mr. Lee described the dates and deadlines for the budget process, most of which are working fine. Mr. Lee also pointed out that there is a provision that allows for an advisory question on the budget, which has been used in the past. He stated that the third vote is somewhat meaningless because the Council cannot change the budget regardless of the result. He recommended that this Charter Revision Commission look at changing it.

Mr. Lee also stated that the public hearing before the vote is also somewhat meaningless because the Town Council cannot make any adjustment after the public hearing. The public hearing could be scheduled earlier in the month so that the Council can make changes after hearing from the public.

A discussion followed on the interrelation between the Town Budget and State revenue. The Commission also discussed how the mill rate is set.

A discussion followed on budgeting, budget transfers and the fund balance.

Mr. Lee also pointed out, after questioning from the Commissioners, that the BOE budget is a line item within the Town budget. However, they can be voted on separately, and, if they are voted separately they both must pass to go into effect.

There was further discussion regarding budget adjustments and deficits at all levels of government.

The Commission decided that the next meeting's agenda they will review Chapters 3,4,5,6, all of the tabled items, and the changes to the budget process as suggested by the Charter Study Committee. The Commission asked staff to provide information on the Farmington and Glastonbury models.

3. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Mr. Michalic

Second by: Mr. Gasparini

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Submitted by:

Dan Grasso, Intern

RECEIVED

FEB 24 2012

Caren Skelley
TOWN CLERK