

CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

Minutes of Regular Meeting

Tuesday, August 5, 2014

Commissioners present:	Chairman Joseph Calsetta, Norman Boucher, Bill Hamel, Shirley King, Sara LeMaster, Brian Levy, Doug Glazier and Carl Schiessl
Commissioners absent:	George Austin, Elizabeth Gannuscio, Dave Ragon, Dave Vaicunas, and Lucinda Van Gieson

1) **Call to Order** – Chairman Calsetta called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

2) **Pledge of Allegiance** – The Pledge of Allegiance was observed.

3) **Public Input** –

Peter Juszczynski – 34 Andover – Mr. Juszczynski, our current Tax Collector, feels the position should stay as an elected position. He feels it should stay independent of the other offices and an election every couple of years is a motivator to do a good job. He believes it should be the townspeople who decide who fills this position, and there is no compelling reason to change.

First Selectman Wawruck – 18 Burnap Street – Mr. Wawruck agrees with Mr. Juszczynski. He likes the accountability to the people every two years and feels our Town has a wealth of candidates that rise to the occasion for both the Tax Collector and Town Clerk positions.

Paul Harrington – 10 Meg Way – Mr. Harrington believes “if it isn’t broke, why fix it.” He feels that if it were a position of hire and they weren’t pulling their weight, then we could be stuck for years. Public employees have layers of statutory protection which makes it difficult to discipline or fire someone if they are no longer being productive. He too believes it should be a voter’s choice.

4) **Approval of the minutes for the Meeting of June 17, 2014 and July 1, 2014.**

At this point in the meeting, there were not enough Commissioners present to have a quorum. The approval of the minutes is tabled until the September meeting.

5) **Correspondence** – None.

6) **New Business** –

a) **Consider making Town Clerk and Tax Collector positions Civil Service** – Chairman Calsetta stated that the consensus of the Public in attendance is that “If it isn’t broke, don’t fix it.” After a lengthy discussion and opinions voiced by all members of the Commission, it was agreed that this topic needs further discussion. Some of the main points brought forward are:

- It was determined that they need to explore the differences between the three options that could be applied. Should the positions be 1) elected, 2) appointed, or 3) hired as a Town employee. It was believed that they could learn the differences by contacting other Towns that have chosen to appoint these positions.
- Commissioner Schiessl stated that the nature of the position should also be considered, i.e. whether it is administrative, executive, and how much discretion the Officer has. The amount of training and experience necessary to be effective in each position should also be explored.
- It was agreed by most Commissioners that the accountability feature of an elected position is very important. It was emphasized by Commissioner Glazier that it is very difficult to terminate a hired employee that is doing a poor job.
- Commissioner Glazier added that they needed to look carefully at the State Statutes to see if the Statute dictates how these positions needed to be filled and whether there was any flexibility in the Statute.

- Commissioner Hamel (also the present Town Clerk) feels that the position of Town Clerk has become very complex over the last 20 years. He feels the person that fills this position needs to have a lot of training and experience to fulfill the requirements of the job effectively. The Town Clerk currently is assigned 700 duties under the State Statute and certification for the position takes a minimum of four years to complete. He feels that changing the position to a hired employee gives the Town the opportunity to require that the candidate have the certification and experience needed and it also opens up a larger pool of candidates since it does not restrict the pool to Windsor Locks residents only.
- It was determined that they also need to explore how much political influence there is with the Tax Collector position and how it would be different if it were an appointed or elected position.
- Chairman Calsetta stated that he can see good arguments for all the options. He agrees that a hired position opens up the candidacy pool to a larger group and he also believes that the election process can sometimes cause us to lose good, productive and qualified individuals to another who receives the vote for popularity rather than for their ability to do the job. He added that we owe it to the charge of the Charter to look at this issue from all sides before making any decisions for change.

- b) Discuss Ordinances (Blight) – Consider requiring a governing body to review Ordinances within a designated timeframe – Chairman Calsetta explained that the question to be answered is whether or not the Board of Selectmen should appoint a governing body to review Ordinances on a regular basis for their effectiveness, relevance, and whether or not they are up to date. Commissioner Levy asked who enforces the Ordinances. Selectman Wawruck answered that the Ordinances themselves usually state who will, or shall, enforce the Ordinances. Commissioner Glazier added that it is usually the First Selectman and the Police that enforce most Ordinances. He also added that the Ordinances should be reviewed to make sure that our Ordinances don't conflict with current State Statutes.

Selectman Wawruck and Commissioner Hamel added that there is a Codification of the Ordinances already in place, and that a review would be the next step. The third step would be to make the revisions that are deemed necessary.

7) **Old Business –**

- a) **Review/Revise list for discussion** – Chairman Calsetta stated that beginning with the September meeting (9/2/14), we will start reviewing the Charter section by section. He told the Commission that we would have two meetings in September and October, one in November and December, and two a month after that.

8) **Public Input (Agenda Items Only) - None**

- 9) **Commissioners Comments** – Chairman Calsetta asked the Commissioners to be prepared to discuss Chapters 1-5 of the Charter for the September meeting. He specifically asked that they decide which sections they feel need to be changed and/or reviewed further. He also asked that any emails or correspondence received by the Commissioners from the Public in the future be forwarded to the Secretary so that she can include them under Correspondence on the Agendas going forward.

10) **Adjournment –**

MOTION: To adjourn at 7:55 pm.
Brian Levy
Motion Passed Unanimously

Seconded by Norman Boucher

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Pfaffenbichler

Recording Secretary

Charter Revision Commission Meeting Agenda's and Minutes are available on the town website for downloading.