

**Minutes of the Charter Revision Commission
June 17, 2009**

Present: Chairman Ernie Petkovich, Eric Remington, Thomas J. Sheridan, Jr., John P. Murphy, Elaine O'Brien. **Absent:** Douglas Viets, Bobbie Kling, Rodney Dillman. Also present was Town Attorney, Ed McAnaney. Mr. Petkovich called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. in the upper level conference room, Town Hall.

Citizen's Comment: Present was Gordon Stagg who did not comment.

Approval of Minutes of June 10, 2009:

Mr. Sheridan made a motion, seconded by Mr. Remington to approve the minutes of June 10, 2009. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Correspondence:

A letter was received by the First Selectman, outlining his thoughts and concerns regarding the proposed Charter changes. He does not see the need to change our current form of government. He felt we can improve our form of government and operations by giving more authority to the First Selectman. He also recommended the removal of all boards and commissions with the exception of the mandated ones from the Charter. This doesn't mean we would abolish any particular board or commission, but rather they would serve at the discretion of the Board of Selectmen and not mandated by the Charter. If they are no longer necessary, the Board of Selectmen will have the authority to disband them.

Town Attorney Opinions on Technical Corrections: Attorney Ed McAnaney was present. He gave CRC his opinion on a few items. Section 802 is the seating of Alternates for the Board of Finance. Attorney McAnaney did not recommend putting a clarification provision in Section 802 of the Charter at all. If this section is unclear, we should amend it to make it clear.

Mr. Petkovich made a motion, seconded by Mr. Remington to move item #73 from the Technical correction list to the Not Recommended List. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Section 503 – Town Administrator: “Any current or former member of the Board of Selectmen or Board of Finance shall not be eligible to be appointed as the T.A. until at least two (2) years have lapsed after the termination or expiration of said person’s term on the Board of selectmen or Board of Finance. Attorney McAnaney said he didn’t know of any statutory restriction on the appointment of a member of the Board of Selectmen or Board of Finance as the Town Administrator as proposed. Hence, the language proposed is acceptable, except that he recommending removing the “(2)” in parentheses after the word “two” and the proper word in that same sentence is “elapsed” not “lapsed.”

Since the Board of Selectmen recommended a stronger description for the T.A., the CRC considered 4 changes which were discussed for the T.A. function.

- 1) **Place the Fire Dept. and Police Dept. employees under the T.A.** Town Counsel said this change would require the elimination of the Fire & Police Commissions. The Commission felt they did not have enough time to get the feedback from these Commissions and possibly recommend this change.
- 2) **Have the T.A. report to the Board of Selectmen.** The Commission decided to keep the T.A. reporting to the First Selectman.
- 3) **The First Selectman's position will be part time.** The Commission decided to leave this as originally submitted.
- 4) **The Director of Finance will report to the Board of Finance and Treasurer and the T.A.** The Commission decided to leave this as originally submitted.

Mr. Petkovich made a motion, seconded by Mr. Murphy, that the CRC change the wording of "any current or former member of the Board of Selectmen or Board of Finance shall not be eligible to be appointed as the Town Administrator until at least two years have elapsed and the termination or expiration of said person's term on the Board of Selectmen or Board of Finance as the case may be." The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Petkovich recapped the proposed CRC's Recommendations:

Section 407 E and 603 F – Clarification that Town Counsel will serve at the pleasure of the BOS and clarify that the use of outside council as directed by the Board of Selectmen. This recommendation will remain as originally submitted

Section 601 to 607 Clarify that the terms for Administrator of Social Services, Superintendent of Public works, Tree Warden and Dog Warden will be four years. This recommendation will remain as originally submitted.

Section 611 (C, D) Director of Finance will report to the T.A. The Director of Finance will report to the T.A.. This recommendation will remain as originally submitted.

Sections 1005 (B) and 1009 (C). Adjust the number voters required to petition for a referendum, and the standardization of the process and number of days to call a referendum. This will be changed from 250 voters to 400 signatures required.

Section 1009 (A, B, C) – Standardization of the process and number of days for call for a referendum. This recommendation will remain as originally submitted.

Add Section 1212 for a definition of the Annual town budget to include WPCA. This recommendation will remain as originally submitted.

Sections 503 and 504 Town Administrator Responsibilities. This recommendation will remain as originally submitted

Conclusion:

Mr. Petkovich thanked everyone for their work over the last 18 months. He will submit the Commission's final recommendations to the Selectmen by July 2nd. He will forward a copy of it to all members for their review.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Mr. Murphy made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Mr. Remington and approved by unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Koren, Recording Secretary