

# Charter Revision Commission Minutes

Special Meeting on September 9, 2019

TOWN OF ...

2019 SEP 18 AM 10:56

6:34PM - Call to order by Chairman Granfield

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: John Brunetti present, Victoria Clifford present, Monique Bolt absent, Rohan Smith present, Silvana Apicella present, John Carrano present, Iris Diaz present, David Riccio absent, Edward Granfield present

Comments from the Chairman, appreciative to see both bodies come together to discuss the revised charter proposals. To finalize charter changes by the 29<sup>th</sup> of September.

Motion to accept correspondence by City Council in its entirety as a matter of record and for discussion by Iris Diaz. Seconded by Rohan Smith.

Q&A session and discussion with members of City Council on recommendations made by the council.

Corporation Counsel's Lee Tiernan and Craig Sullivan present in the audience.

August 21 – Item 1 on Correspondence:

Quagliani: Wished to include Department Head of Board of Education as other department heads were included.

Sullivan: Suggests to include language along the lines of "Unless the statutes state otherwise" to be able to include Board of Ed.

August 21 – Item 2 on Correspondence:

City Council believed the change included fair language that would work well and worried about double-dipping.

Tiernan: May be administratively difficult, through the charter, to allow retired officials to come back and suspend their pension.

August 21 – Item 3 on Correspondence:

City Council feels it is self-explanatory but the recommendation was done to make sure members rotate in a timely fashion.

August 21 – Item 4 on Correspondence:

City Council believes that requiring a Master's Degree is too restricting and this can be done in contracts, not necessarily in the revised charter. Recommends to broaden the requirement to include other degrees such as from law school or medical school, for example.

August 21 – Item 5 on Correspondence:

City Council believes the change will make sure that appointments for the Economic Development Commission are not done differently than other boards and commissions.

Carrano: States that the city manager would select members as the manager would be the CEO authority.

Corp Counsel affirm CEO authority would be the city manager, not the mayor.

August 21 – Item 6 on Correspondence:

City Council recommends to change the language to ensure the council is the fiduciary.

August 21 – Item 7 on Correspondence:

City Council feels that the city must have a Board of Finance, one of the most important boards to have and retain.

Open floor discussion for council for any item covered thus far.

Seeing none, discussion closes for August 21 items 1-7.

August 28 – Item 2 on Correspondence:

City Council believes that having accurate dates would be better to avoid boxing things in. Also believes two years is very ambitious for redistricting, would be better to have five years instead.

August 28 – Item 3 on Correspondence:

City Council feels that educating the public is important and that language should be present to allow time for transition between forms of government.

Sullivan: Suggests that it may be clearer to have a miscellaneous provision at the end of the charter to assist council with transition, perhaps regarding the need for a sub-committee for outreach and education.

August 28 – Item 4 on Correspondence:

City Council suggests keeping stipend for council members. Otherwise, it feels that there would be a lack of effort, professionalism, and time invested into the job.

August 28 – Item 5 on Correspondence:

City Council believes that the suggested change to an eight vote simple majority would be better for mayor and council.

August 28 – Item 9 on Correspondence:

City Council feels that it is good to hold people accountable but fears that this provision may allow for abuse of function. There must be conditions of removal in writing to avoid unwarranted removal of a board member or commissioner.

Meeting breaks into recess at 7:47PM.

Returns to session at 7:51PM.

August 28 – Item 1 on Correspondence:

City Council believes that if a person is hired for an important position and paid by the city, they should live in the city and be readily available. It is favorable to be part of the community in which they work.

Charter Revision Commission recommends the council should require this through a hiring contract, not as a provision in the charter as there may be legality issues here.

City Council recommends to include in Item 1 language the allowance for the council to request city residence in a contract.

August 28 – Item 6 on Correspondence:

City Council is concerned that the Mayor, under this provision, would be head of council and replace the chairperson. Recommends striking word mayor and for the commission to think about the checks and balances here.

Commission has researched many governmental systems and believes this format to be best suited for the City of West Haven.

Quagliani: States that the proposer and approver of agenda cannot be the same person. This proposed provision implies that the mayor will be both proposer and approver. Must ensure that if the term "mayor" is used, the provision must be modified to be clearer.

Open floor discussion for City Council and the Charter Revision Commission.

DePalma: Inquires on who would want to run for a part-time position, in reference to change from full-time to part-time proposed in charter regarding the position of Mayor.

Granfield: Intent is to take away forty to fifty percent of work with the establishment of a city manager and let mayor work on legislative side.

Massaro: Believes stipend is necessary for members to dedicate their heart into the work.

Bias: Inquires if it is possible to suggest other things for the commission to evaluate.

Granfield: Must keep to the recommendations made in the correspondence.

Hoskie: Inquires if having the mayor as a councilperson-at-large may work better.

Gallignano: Believes that the mayor could be ceremonial.

Hamilton: Believes stipends should remain, especially under longer terms. Requests the commission to reevaluate the corresponding provision in the charter.

Quagliani: Believes one of the most important changes that should be made is the inclusion of contracts being subject to review by City Council.

City Council requests consideration from the commission for tweaks suggested by the council.

Closing remarks by each member. Each body is appreciative of the joint work seen tonight and all the work done leading up to this point.

No discussion for Charter Revision Commission.

No New Business.

Motion to adjourn by Rohan Smith.  
Seconded by Silvana Apicella.

Meeting adjourned at 9:23PM.