

MINUTES  
CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION  
July 27, 2016

PRESENT: Vice Chairman Karen Marsden, Commissioners Dennis Donovan, Brad Sullivan, Lynn Hidek, Eric Bergman and Gary Bousquet

Absent: Peter Nye, Art Kuever and James Staunton

Guests: Carol Walter, Aman Singh, Bruce Farmer

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

Correspondence: None

Minutes: A motion was made by G. Bousquet, seconded by D. Donovan to approve the minutes of July 13, 2016 as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.

Old Business:

Fire Commission: C. Walter and A. Singh were in attendance to present this charter change

They are proposing to add in Chapter III, Elective Officers, Section 3-15 Board of Fire Commissioners. Under this heading it would read, "The Commission shall consist of five (5) members and two (2) alternate members, each of whom shall be appointed for a term of five years. The members shall serve overlapping terms."

C. Walter explained that the firemen are all volunteers and have the additional duty of representing themselves at town meetings. It would be the responsibility of the commission to speak and/or present the needs and wants of the department at town meetings and before boards/committees. The commission would also provide some continuity to the department as the Fire Department currently votes on a new chief every year. The duties of the Fire Commission would be included in the Town Code of Ordinances.

The Ordinances, which were developed and have been endorsed by the Fire Department, were presented to the Charter Revision Commissioners for their review and input. The next step is to send them to the town's attorney and then to the Board of Selectmen for their approval. Some topics discussed were as follows:

- The EMS division is part of the Fire Department and would be included under the prevue of the Fire Commission
- Commissioners' first term would be staggered: 1 year, 2 years, 3 years, 4 years and 5 years. At the end of their first term they would be voted into a 5 year term. Alternates would also have a 5 year term.
- Commissioners can run again if they desire
- Meetings should be defined in the ordinance, meeting at least quarterly with possible emergency meetings
- The Fire Marshal is also under the jurisdiction of the Fire Commission
- The Board of Selectmen cannot overrule the decision of the Fire Department membership for the position of chief
- To advocate for new equipment, the Fire Commission would sell the concept to the Boards of Selectmen and Finance taking the burden off the volunteer fire members
- Some tasks the Fire Commission would undertake or oversee would be
  - The LOSAP program
  - Management over equipment and future needs
  - Eligible firemen's benefits
  - Work with department
  - Provide service to town
- There was concern expressed regarding the appointment of the Fire Marshal. On page 3, letter B the word "Appoint" should be changed to "Recommend" in the Ordinances as presented at this meeting

C. Walter and other involved parties for the Fire Commission charter change may be invited back to another meeting.

A motion was made by B. Sullivan, seconded by G. Bousquet to approve the concept of the Board of Fire Commissioners. The motion carried unanimously.

EDC Letter: No one from the Economic Development Commission was in attendance to discuss their charter revision request. No action was taken.

New Business:

The commissioners need to prepare for the public hearing scheduled for September 7, 2016 to hear comments and discuss a Town Manager form of government. Comments, questions and thoughts can be emailed to [charterrevision@clintonct.org](mailto:charterrevision@clintonct.org). This will be discussed further at the next meeting.

Changing the Board of Finance alternate term of office from 6 years to 4 years was discussed. A motion was made by D. Donovan, seconded by G. Bousquet to change the Board of Finance alternates' term of service from 6 years to 4 years to match the other Board of Finance members' term of service. The motion carried with a vote of 5 in favor and 1 opposed (B. Sullivan).

Discussed why the Board of Finance has an even numbered board (6 members) as opposed to an odd number. A motion was made by L. Hidek, seconded by D. Donovan to increase the Board of Finance from 6 members to 7 members. This motion was discussed further and it was suggested possibly a 5 member board would be more advantageous. L. Hidek withdrew her motion and D. Donovan withdrew his second. This motion was null and void.

A motion was made by L. Hidek, seconded by D. Donovan to change the Board of Finance to a 5 member board. The majority rule was discussed and the possibility of then increasing the alternates to 3 instead of the current 2 members. L. Hidek withdrew her motion and D. Donovan withdrew his second. This motion was null and void.

A motion was made by G. Bousquet, seconded by L. Hidek to table the charter revision regarding the number of members the Board of Finance has to give them time to gather more information. The motion carried unanimously.

L. Hidek left the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Commissioners wanted to tackle the charter revision: "Suggest that there should be a change to prevent any one person from holding a seat on more than one of the BoS, BoF and/or BoE". No action was taken.

Commissioners briefly discussed a term limit of 4 years for the First Selectman. Discussed a 2 year term vs a 4 year term questioning, is a 4 year term too long or a 2 year term not long enough.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy McDermott  
Clerk