

**CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION 2020**  
**MINUTES**  
**APRIL 22, 2020**

A meeting of the Charter Revision Commission 2020 was held on Wednesday, April 22, 2020 remotely via Zoom teleconference. The meeting was called to order by Chair Kate Donahue at 7:02 p.m.

**Members Present:** All Commission members were in attendance, including Kate Donahue, Tom Tesoro, Susan Gilson, Nancy Gardiner, J.C. Cinelli, and Martin McCann. In addition to the Commission members were Town Attorney Dan Schopick and Chief Administrative Officer and Commission Clerk Cindy Katske.

**Public Comment:** There was no public comment.

**Prior Minutes:** Moved by Tom Tesoro, seconded by Nancy Gardiner to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2020 Organizational Meeting. The motion carried unanimously. The minutes of the April 15, 2020 Public Hearing will be approved at the next meeting.

**Community Outreach:** The Commission held a public hearing with not a lot of public input, they received input from Mrs. Tesoro, a press release was published in the Trumbull Times and the CT Post, so hopefully the word is getting out there. Clerk Cindy Katske stated that she had emailed the chairs of both political parties, but had not received any responses. She also emailed Jean Rabinow of the League of Women Voters, who indicated that they had a meeting at the same time as the public hearing so they were not able to attend, but they are preparing comments and will submit them. An email requesting input was also sent to all town department heads, several of whom submitted input by email, and others who indicated they would be doing so. Board of Finance Chair Lainie McHugh had some input and would be sending an email or commenting at a meeting.

**Charter Review:** Per the agenda, the Commission looked at the changes that were proposed in 2014. A discussion ensued, with a review of the following topics.

1. Chapter I, Section 4B definition of Days: recommendation to include a specification that business days are those days that the Town Clerk's office is open, and to change all references in Chapter II to calendar days. All agreed that this language looks fine, and the Commission will have to look out for places where days are used later in the charter. Discussion also ensued about how to track changes that are being made. Moved by J.C. Cinelli, seconded by Martin McCann to replace the last sentence of Chapter I, Section 4B with the following language: "Unless otherwise specified, all references in this Charter to "day(s)" are business days. Business days are those days that the Town Clerk's Office is open. All references to "day(s)" in Chapter II of this Charter are calendar days." The motion carried unanimously.

2. Chapter II, Section 5B bullet point 1: recommendation to specify that only non-privileged materials must be posted on the town website prior to meetings. This would bring the charter in line with the Freedom of Information Act. Moved by Martin McCann, seconded by Susan Gilson to insert the word "non-privileged" into Chapter II, Section 5B, first bullet to read as follows: "For all meetings, agendas and all non-privileged supplemental materials will be posted on the town's official web site no less than 48 hours prior to the posted start time of the related meeting." The motion carried unanimously.

3. Chapter II, Section 5B bullet point 2: recommendation to require posting of minutes within seven calendar days, rather than business days, following a meeting. This would bring the charter in line with the Freedom of Information Act Moved by Nancy Gardiner, seconded by J.C. Cinelli to strike the word “business” from Chapter II, Section 5B, second bullet to read as follows: “Minutes of all meetings will be posted on the town’s official web site by the end of the seventh day following the date the meeting ends.” The motion carried unanimously.

4. Chapter II, Section 6, effective date of legislation: recommendation to provide that appointments to boards and commissions become effective immediately upon publication. Discussion ensued regarding the reason for a 15-day delay, as provided under the current charter, and the opportunity for the public to file a petition for a referendum. The members thought it would be better to discuss during a broader discussion of whether to recommend publication in a newspaper or on the town website globally in the charter, and the effective date of other legislation. Moved by Tom Tesoro, seconded by Susan Gilson to table the addition of language regarding the effective date of appointments to boards and commissions by the Town Council in Chapter II, Section 6. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Chapter III, Section 1, regarding the term of office of the First Selectman. The Commission received a message from Brian O’Connor II, no address stated, who stated that the First Selectman should have a four-year term to give the First Selectman time to make the changes they campaigned on. Serving a two-year term does not provide that. Lengthy discussion ensued. Tom Tesoro suggested implementing the four-year First selectman term for the 2023 election. This would take some of the politics out of it. Discussion ensued. Consensus was to begin in 2023. Moved by Susan Gilson, seconded by Martin McCann to add the following language at the end of Chapter III, Section 1: “Commencing with the election occurring in November 2023, a First Selectman shall be elected at the Town election to hold office for a term of four (4) years and until his/her successor shall be elected and qualified.” The motion carried unanimously.

6. Chapter III, Section 3 A & C, regarding succession to the office of First Selectman from the Town Treasurer to the Chairman of the Town Council in case of absence, disability, vacancy, etc. Discussion ensued and the Commission members agreed that there is no reason to change the designation of the Treasurer to serve when the First Selectman is absent for no more than 30 days, which is currently in the charter. Lengthy discussion ensued regarding the provision for holding a special election when the First Selectman dies, retires, becomes ineligible to serve, or removes from the town. Tom Tesoro will draft a provision for the Commission to look at.

7. Chapter III, Section 6D, regarding term of office of the Treasurer. Moved by Martin McCann, seconded by J.C. Cinelli to add language to Chapter III Sections 6D and 7 mirroring the language added regarding a four-year term for the First Selectman to also apply to the Treasurer and Town Clerk beginning at the November 2023 election. The motion carried unanimously.

8. Chapter III, Section 6G(ii), regarding the dollar amount for procuring quotes during the purchasing process. Tabled to a later meeting to receive input from town departments.

9. Chapter IV, Section 3B, regarding the number of votes required for the Town Council to adopt a budget. No action is necessary since the language proposed in 2014 is redundant.

10. Chapter IV, Section 6, regarding funding town and police pension plans. This was passed in a different form as an ordinance, and the consensus of the Commission is that it does not need to be in the charter.

11. Chapter VII, Section 3, regarding the Board of Education composition and term of office. Loretta Chory and Lainie McHugh recommended increasing the number of members from seven to eight, and First Selectman Vicki Tesoro recommended returning to a six-member board. Discussion ensued regarding the term of office and staggered seats. The Commission will wait until a future meeting to discuss this further.

12. Chapter VII, Section 17C and D, regarding the Ethics Commission. Discussion ensued regarding Ethics Commission proceedings. Martin McCann will work on this provision.

Next meeting Wednesday, April 29, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Moved by Tom Tesoro, seconded by Susan Gilson to adjourn at 8:58 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.