

Charter Review Commission:

Present: Patricia Adams, Anthony Arico, Jeffrey Brenner, John Cregan, Mary Alyce Gasbarro, James Jackson, Joan Warren and Town Clerk Meredith DeSisto

Absent: Paul Dulchinos, Joel Hellmann, Allan Klepper and Tim Sweetser

Also Present: Town Manager Peter DeAngelis and Fire Chief Gerald Bessette

Chair Brenner called the Charter Review Commission meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH 10, 2014

Motion by Mr. Arico and seconded by Mr. Jackson to accept the minutes of the meeting on March 10, 2014. The motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION WITH THE TOWN MANAGER AND FIRE CHIEF REGARDING THE EXISTING TOWN CHARTER AND PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE TOWN CHARTER

Fire Chief Gerald Bessette requested that Title 10 – Chapter 2 FIRE DEPARTMENT - 10-2-1 ORGANIZATION be revised by deleting the first two sentences or edit it to have language parallel to Title 10 – Chapter 1 – POLICE DEPARTMENT - 10-1-1 ORGANIZATION. He also requested that Title 10 – Chapter 2 FIRE DEPARTMENT – 10-2-9 CONSTRUAL OF PROVISIONS be deleted completely. Chief Bessette requested that the name of the department from the FIRE DEPARTMENT change to FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT.

Chair Brenner stated if Title 10 – Chapter 2 FIRE DEPARTMENT – 10-2-9 CONSTRUAL OF PROVISIONS were removed from the Town Charter, the Town Council could still discontinue a permanent fire department and utilize alternative means.

Discussion ensued regarding the Volunteer Fire Department. Mr. Brenner commented that the Volunteer Fire Department has been dwindling over the years. Chief Bessette stated the demographics of the Town do not lend itself to a Volunteer Fire Department. Although the Fire Department has provided training to the Volunteer Fire Department for many years, there is presently a leadership void within the Volunteer Fire Department that may impact the future viability of the organization.

Ms. Gasbarro stated in the 1990's the Town talked about consolidating fire services with nearby towns but it never happened.

Chair Brenner stated response time is critical and emergency medical services are extremely important when reviewing any possible reorganization.

Mr. Cregan is in favor of removing Title 10 – Chapter 2 FIRE DEPARTMENT – 10-2-9 CONSTRUAL OF PROVISIONS.

Mr. DeAngelis stated that the Town has a strong Fire Department which has a great partnership with the Town.

Mr. DeAngelis stated he has concerns with Title 16 – Miscellaneous Provisions Chapter 1 Cemeteries and Public Library because he is unable to oversee, direct or discipline employees because of State law.

Chair Brenner stated he spoke with Town Solicitor Michael Ursillo who told him that State law inhibits potential changes to the Charter concerning the Library. Mr. Ursillo will send additional information to the Charter Review Commission.

DISCUSSION OF WORDING OF EXISTING TOWN CHARTER

Mr. Jackson suggested Title 8 – Public Works Chapter 1 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS 8-1-2 POWERS AND DUTIES (“...for weights and measures, and for such other functions as may be delegated to the department by the Town Manager.”) be removed and placed under Title 8 – Public Works Chapter 2 Building Inspector

DISCUSSION OF FUTURE DAY/DATE/TIME OF MEETINGS

The date of Monday, April 28, 2014 at 7:00 pm has been scheduled for the next meeting of the Charter Review Commission.

DISCUSS AND ACT ON AGENDA TOPICS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Chair Brenner requested members submit revisions of the Charter. Chair Brenner will compile the information into a “redline draft”, capturing all comments and suggestions which will be discussed at the next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURN

Motion by Mr. Cregan and seconded by Ms. Adams to adjourn the Charter Review Commission meeting at 8:24 P.M. The motion passed unanimously.

Meredith J. DeSisto, Town Clerk