

**March 27, 2010**

**Chair Arthur Russo called a meeting of the Charter Review Advisory Commission to order at 9:00 a.m. Members present were Vice Chair Ken Booth, Linda Butera-Noble, Paul St. Germain, Stanley Wynne, Fausto Anguilla and Maureen F. Smith. Dr. Ron Stewart attended at 9:30a.m. and left at 11:30 a.m.**

**The commission discussed what takes place after the approval of charter changes.**

**Motion to approve minutes of the March 8, 2010 meeting. (LN-SW). Under discussion, the word hire was incorrectly used in the fourth paragraph. The word will be changed to higher.**

**Motion to approve minutes as amended passed unanimously without the vote of Dr. Stewart. (PSG-LN)**

**The commission discussed ArticleV - Town Council**

**§ C5-1. Number; term. The commission recommended putting a period at the end of the first sentence after the word Town. The commission recommended deleting the second through sixth sentences, beginning with the word each and ending with the word thereafter. These changes would be done under housekeeping.**

**Motion to add two at large seats to the town council passed unanimously. (LN-PSG) Chairman Russo did not vote. He advised the commission that as he would be voting on these issues as a town councilor, he would not vote as a commission member unless there was a necessity to break a tie vote.**

**Discussion included a lightening of the workload due to the committees the council serves on. Chairman Russo, a member of the council stated that the workload was not cumbersome. It was clarified that the two at large members would not have any additional powers or duties.**

**Motion to make the town council elections non-partisan. (KB-LN)**

**Ken Booth spoke in favor of a non-partisan council. He feels that by making the council non-partisan it will draw out more candidates. A non-partisan election will help to address the issues in § C5-3 dealing with vacancies on the council.**

**Motion passed with Ken Booth, Ron Stewart and Stanley Wynne voting in the affirmative. Paul St. Germain voting against and Linda Noble abstaining.**

**§ C5-2. Qualifications. There were no recommendations to the section. Changes would be necessary if changes to § C5-1. are approved.**

**§ C5-3. Vacancies.**

**Motion to change language to eliminate party affiliation language and to add language to address district and at large seats if necessary. (PSG-LN) Motion passed unanimously.**

**§ C5-4. Presiding officer.**

**Motion to add language to add election of Vice President and language describing duties of the vice presidents passed unanimously. (PSG-KB)**

**§ C5-5. Compensation. There were no recommendations for change in this section.**

**§ C5-6. Meetings. Fausto will look into this section to see if there are any conflicts with the State's open meetings law.**

**Motion to accept the Town Administrators recommendation for changes to this section passed unanimously. (LN-PSG)**

**§ C5-7. Quorum. There were no recommendations for change to this section.**

**§ C5-8. Powers. There were no recommendations for change to this**

**section.**

**§ C5-9. Procedure of the Council. Section (2) (c)**

**Motion to eliminate the word two and the letter s at the end of the word members in the last sentence of this section passed unanimously. (PSG-KB) This will allow any member of the council to request a roll call vote.**

**§ C5-10. Annual audit.**

**Motion to accept the Town Administrators recommendation for changes to this section passed unanimously. (PSG-LN)**

**§ C5-11. Probate court. There were no recommendations for change in this section.**

**§ C5-12. Town Solicitor.**

**Motion to add language submitted by the Town Solicitor to subsection (1) passed unanimously. (KB-PSG)**

**The language states that “The Town Council may appoint a law firm as Town Solicitor.”**

**Motion to add language submitted by the Town Solicitor to**

**subsection (2) passed unanimously. (KB-SW)**

**The additional language states after The Town Solicitor, and any Assistant Town Solicitor appointed by the Town Council, shall be an attorney-at-law in good standing who has been admitted to the practice of law in this state at least five years prior to his or her appointment.....”**

**Motion to have Fausto change language in subsection (5) to conform to RIGL passed unanimously. (LN-KB)**

**This subsection may conflict with RIGL in regards to public access to records.**

**Dr. Stewart left the meeting at this point. Unanimous votes taken forward will not include Dr. Stewart.**

**The commission discussed Article VI – Town Administrator**

**§ C6-1. Election and term.**

**Motion to change the term served by the administrator from two years to four years to reflect the charter change voted on in 2008 passed unanimously. (PSG-LN)**

**Motion to put in a two consecutive term limit, language that the limits**

**will take effect upon passage and eliminate the election date language passed unanimously.**

**§ C6-2. Qualifications. There were no recommendations for this section.**

**§ C6-3. Compensation. There were no recommendations for this section.**

**§ C6-4. Absence or disability. There were no recommendations for this section.**

**§ C6-5. Vacancy. There were no recommendations for this section.**

**§ C6-6. Powers and duties.**

**Subsection (4) The commission asked Fausto to write language. The commission is looking to clarify and specify language for the subsection. Suggestions are for dollar amounts – not hamstringing the administrator – emergency situation escape clause.**

**§ C6-7. Town Clerk.**

**Subsection (4) Motion to look into this section and eliminate if unnecessary passed unanimously. (LN-KB)**

**Municipal Court. There are no provisions in the Charter for Municipal**

**Court. It was suggested that the Municipal Court be added to the Charter. The commission feels that keeping this section out of the Charter will keep it more flexible. The recommendation is to keep the Municipal Court out of the Charter.**

## **Article VII – Department of Finance**

### **§ C7-1. Organization.**

**Motion to add language to address possible long-term vacancy of the finance director passed unanimously. (KB-PSG)**

**§ C7-2. Director of Finance. There were no recommended changes for this section.**

**§ C7-3. Qualifications of Director of Finance. There were no recommended changes for this section.**

**§ C7-4. Salary of Director of Finance. There were no recommended changes for this section.**

**§ C7-5. Duties and Powers of Director of Finance. The commission recommended tabling this section to ask the finance director if he has any recommendations.**

**§ C7-6. Competitive bidding. There were no recommended changes**

**for this section.**

**§ C7-7. Tax Assessor.**

**Motion to eliminate qualified elector language as it conflicts with State law and to change the word “shall” to “may” passed unanimously. (PSG-LN)**

**Motion to change language to reflect change in the appointment date from “ December of each even numbered year” to “January of each odd numbered year” passed unanimously. (LN-PSG)**

**Subsection (2) Board would like an opinion from the Town Administrator and Finance Director as to whether subsections (g) and (h) is still necessary.**

**§ C7-8. Review of Assessments.**

**Subsection (3) Motion to incorporate recommended changes and amendments, submitted by the Town Administrator, to simplify language and to conform to state law.**

**The commission discussed the meeting set for March 29, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. The commission decided to discuss all the remaining sections of the Charter, except for The Water Commission and Personnel Board.**

**The commission scheduled the next two meetings for April 12, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. and April 27, 2010 at 6:30 p.m.**

**Meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.**

**Maureen F. Smith**