

EXHIBIT C

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS ON THE QUORUM ISSUE

The issue of the budget approval process, including the treatment of the ATBM, has been occupying two Charter Revision Commissions for now over two years.

There are many divergent views on the ATBM; if there were a compellingly logical answer to these questions, they would have been resolved long ago. Instead, the ATBM, and the issues it raises, have been debated, and different approaches tried, for at least 40 years, and probably well before that.

Less than one year ago, after extensive hearings, interviews with many of our public officials, and significant input from the community, the Charter Revision Commission unanimously recommended, and the voters overwhelmingly approved, a comprehensive and nuanced approach to the budget approval process, which contained several elements. All of this activity was in response to a generally shared view that the existing system needed to be revised. The changes included, among other things:

- a) Requiring a referendum on the budget each year;
- b) Giving the power to the Board of Finance to revise, upward or downward, a proposed budget that had been rejected by the voters;
- c) Requiring that a quorum of 2% of eligible voters be present at the ATBM in order for the budget to be reduced; and
- d) Liberalizing provisions that allow for a secret ballot at the ATBM.

We are now being asked to eliminate, or seriously alter, one of the main provisions of this comprehensive approach. Further, we are being asked to do this in an environment where:

- a) We have not requested testimony from public officials, and we have received little input from the public itself; and
- b) We must finish our substantive work in the next two or perhaps three weeks, to meet the deadlines imposed by the Selectmen and Connecticut law.

As I stated from the start of this process, in this environment it is difficult to make major changes to approaches that were comprehensively debated, agreed to, and approved by voters last time around. This includes other changes that have been suggested, such as eliminating the required annual referendum or requiring quorums at Town Meetings where additional Town expenditures (such as the purchase of a building) are being considered.

While I have significant substantive disagreement with all of the above proposals, including the proposal to reduce or eliminate the quorum requirement, and am

prepared to have a lengthy debate on each of the arguments presented in support of lowering the quorum, the bigger point is that we should give the voter-approved Charter a chance to operate as it was designed before making major changes.

As a great American once said, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." I happen to believe that the Charter is basically operating as it was intended, although I recognize and respect the fact that not everyone agrees with that assessment. In any event, I think we need more than one (admittedly unusual) year's experience before we can agree that the system is "broken" and debate, with significant input from our public officials and the community, what fixes are necessary.

Ken Edgar