

EXHIBIT B

Fellow Charter Revision Commission Members,

Below are my comments to the Second Charter Revision Commission in the hopes that, with a little give and take on all sides, we can arrive at a much desired unanimous consensus on our final recommendations to the BOS and to the public, as was accomplished last year by the original Charter Revision Commission.

After reviewing a number of items needing revision at its recent meeting of June 27th, the members of the Second Charter Revision Commission were not successful in reaching unanimity on one item in particular. In fact, it appears that deep differences of opinion exist with regard to the need for a quorum at the ATBM, and if needed, its implementation.

For further discussion, I want to express my views on this topic by breaking down the issue into the following components:

Need for a Quorum – The supposed purpose of a quorum is to prevent a small group of people at an ATBM from making significant cuts in any or all of the 40+ line items. Although this has never occurred in Weston, our Commission seems to be spending a lot of time considering it as a hypothetical. In addition, should a small group “highjack” the ATBM, the referendum offers a second chance for residents to correct the decision that the small group made at the ATBM.

On the other hand, a quorum offers an unfortunate opportunity for, and may even encourage, manipulation of voter participation, whereby special interests discourage voter turnout with the intent to prevent a valid vote. People have already observed this happening at the Weston ATBM. It is not conducive to the democratic process.

It is significant to me that four members of the prior Commission, in strong bipartisan fashion, have presented testimony or expressed views questioning the wisdom and need for a quorum. They are Dick Bochinski, Susan Moch, Nina Daniel and me.

Size of a Quorum - If a quorum is recommended, what size should it be? – As we study the recent historical record of ATBM attendance, we see that the average participation in the last 10 years has been under 2.3% and declining. In the past two years, it has been 1.4%. I conclude that the current recommendation of 2% is too high given the second opportunity to vote now afforded at the referendum and the traditionally low voter turnout at the ATBM itself. In addition, my view is that attendance at the ATBM correlates directly with budget and mill rate increases. Moreover, if we consider that Wilton has no quorum for their ATBM and only a quorum of 50 for other Town Meetings, I draw a similar conclusion that 2% is too high.

I like Dick Bochinski’s suggestion, as modified by John Stripp, that a fixed number of 75, or perhaps 50, be chosen for the quorum. A fixed number, rather than a percentage of eligible voters greatly simplifies the work of the registrars, who have enough other tasks at the ATBM to keep them busy.

Calling a Quorum - If a quorum is recommended, when should it be called? I like Ken Edgar’s suggestion that a quorum be called once at the start of the meeting, after the Moderator

completes the introductory remarks. This varies from Roberts Rules of Order Revised (Section 64) which allows a call for a quorum at any time during a meeting.

Another glaring issue, which was not discussed at our last two meetings, was the lack of attendance of the Town Attorney at the 2013 ATBM to give advice, in this case, on when to call a quorum. I think that we should note in our report that the Town Attorney's attendance at the ATBM is imperative.

Finally, while the Commission agreed that other topics for review, such as when to hold BOE officer elections, could be remedied as a simple matter of clarification and editing, the topic of the quorum at the ATBM begs for more substantive review and, ideally, reconciliation of divergent viewpoints which are held not only by the members of the Commission but, importantly, also by the public at large.

Woody Bliss