

AGENDA FOR THE JANUARY 4 MEETING OF THE WESTON CHARTER  
REVISION COMMISSION

Item 1 – Approval of the Minutes of the December 21 Meeting

Item 2 - Discussion of Article 8. This discussion will include an analysis of the following Sections:

**Section 8.1.** Section 8.1 provides that each agency of the Town must provide to the First Selectman, on or before January 14<sup>th</sup> (February 3<sup>rd</sup> for the Board of Education) a statement of estimated expenses and revenue for the next fiscal year.

**Question:** Are these the appropriate dates or should they be liberalized?

Section 8.1 also provides that the agencies provide the First Selectman with the work accomplished during the current fiscal year.

**Question:** Is this provision in fact followed?

**Section 8.2.** Section 8.2 provides that the First Selectman must provide the Board of Selectmen the First Selectman's proposed budget by February 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Question:** Is this deadline appropriate, or should it be revised?

**Section 8.3.** Section 8.3 provides that the Board of Selectmen must present the proposed budget to the Board of Finance not later than February 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Question:** Is this deadline appropriate, or should it be revised?

**Section 8.4.** Section 8.4 (f), (g) and (h) specify the mechanics of the approval of the budget.

**Question:** Based on the Commission's discussion on December 21, what should the new mechanics of the budget approval process be?

Section 8.4 (i) deals with the situation where the budget has not been approved prior to July 1.

**Question:** Is this provision in compliance with applicable law?

**Section 8.5.** Section 8.5(a) provides that the Board of Selectmen have the power to make additional, non-budgeted appropriations to any Town agency up to \$5,000 in any fiscal year, with a limit of \$50,000 of additional appropriations in the aggregate to all agencies.

**Question:** Are these the appropriate limits, or should they be revised?

Section 8.5 also provides that, with concurrence of the Board of Finance, the Board of Selectmen can make supplemental appropriations, which cannot exceed 2% of the “current tax levy.”

**Question:** Is this limit appropriate, and is the term “current tax levy “ clear?

Section 8.5 then goes on to specify the sources from which the additional and supplemental appropriations may come.

**Question:** Is this list exhaustive, and need it be so restrictive?

**Section 8.6.** Section 8.6 deals with extraordinary appropriations. Section 8.6(a) provides that, if approved, the requested extraordinary appropriation “shall be made in accordance with the provisions of Sections 2.4(b) and 2.5 or Section 8.5,” whichever is applicable.

**Question:** Is it clear how this provision should be interpreted?

Section 8.6 (b) allows an agency of the Town to compel the Board of Selectmen to call a Town Meeting if an extraordinary appropriation has been denied. In such case, if not less than 10% of the eligible voters are present and voting, a Town Meeting (or if a petition has been filed, a machine vote) can approve an extraordinary appropriation.

**Question:** Is this power appropriate? Also, what happens if an agency’s request is granted, but only in part? Finally, isn’t there arguably an easier way for the Selectmen’s decision to be challenged; i.e., by invoking Section 2.6 or 2.7, which only require 5% of the qualified voters to be present and voting?

**Section 8.7.** Section 8.7(a) and (b) set forth a procedure for the First Selectman to approve every voucher, etc. payable by the Town.

**Question:** Is this followed, and is it necessary for de minimis expenditures?

Section 8.7(c) requires, in order to transfer excess funds from one purpose to another within that same agency (other than the Board of Education), the approvals of the First Selectman, the Board of Selectmen and The Board of Finance.

**Question:** Are all these approvals necessary?

Section 8.7(d) requires those same approvals to transfer funds from one agency to another.

**Question:** Same as above, are these approvals necessary?

Section 8.7(e) provides that appropriations for construction or other permanent improvements lapse if three fiscal years have elapsed without any expenditure from that appropriation.

**Question:** Assuming this is the appropriate standard, the last sentence of Section 8.7(e) is confusing, because it requires any UNEXPENDED amounts to lapse, but Section 8.7(e) is only applicable if NO expenditures have been made. Also, it is not clear when appropriations lapse if an appropriation is made mid-year.

**Section 8.9.** Section 8.9 provides that the Town cannot make any contributions without the approval of the First Selectman, the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance.

**Question:** How does this provision work in the case of a budgeted contribution? How has it operated in practice?

Item 3 – Any other business of the Commission.