

## MINUTES

### CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

January 17, 2012

Town Hall Meeting Room

A meeting of the Charter Revision Commission was held on January 17, 2012 in the Weston Town Hall Meeting Room. Present were Woody Bliss, Richard A. Bochinski, Nina Daniel, Arne de Keijzer and Kenneth C. Edgar, Jr. Susan Moch and Dennis H. Tracey, III were absent.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30PM.

The Commission decided to defer consideration of the draft minutes of its January 4, 2012 meeting.

The Commission then addressed the following matters:

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?

No changes proposed.

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

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

No changes proposed.

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. Finally, the provision doesn't specify that this three-year period be consecutive years.

The sense of the Commission was that Section 8.7(e) should be clarified. For example, the reference to three years should be three **consecutive** years. In

addition, the last sentence of the Section should be conformed to the rest of the Section.

**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?

The sense of the Commission was that this provision should be amended to exempt budgeted amounts from the approval process in Section 8.9.

**Section 8.7(a) and (c).** Section 8.7(a) currently provides that all purchases by the Library (other than for books and periodicals), must be made through the First Selectman. Section 8.7(c) provides that no Town agency, other than the Board of Education, may transfer funds set aside in the budget for one purpose to another purpose. In discussions with the Commission, the Chair of the Library Board has expressed the view that Connecticut State Law provides the Library Board with the autonomy to make any purchase or reallocate funds from one purpose to another without input or approval from the First Selectman.

**Question:** Does State Law mandate that the Charter be amended to broaden the Library Board's authority?

This discussion was deferred.

**Section 7.1.** Section 7.1 provides that the Board of Selectmen must make appointments to the Town's appointed boards within 30 days after the Tuesday next following the date of its election.

**Question:** Since it is very difficult to make all the necessary appointments within the 30-day period, should that period be expanded, and if so, how far?

The Commission's sense was that the deadline for appointments should be moved to December 31.

**Section 10.1.** Section 10.1 provides that, by January 1, each Board or Commission must elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

**Question:** If the 30-day appointment period is extended, does it follow that the January 1 deadline should be extended as well, to avoid disenfranchising new members of appointed boards?

The sense of the Commission was that the period for electing Board and Commission officers should be moved to the January following the appointment deadline.

The Commission then revisited the question of whether voters at the annual budget referendum should be afforded the ability to indicate whether they vote "yes," "no,

the budget is too high” or “no, the budget is too low.” The Commission supports this approach generally, but will consider further whether these options should be mandatory or whether the Board of Selectmen should be provided with flexibility as to whether to provide these voting options, as opposed to a simple “yes” or “no” vote.

The Commission then discussed the Charter Revision process going forward. The next phase is drafting the revised Charter and the Report of the Commission. This will occur during February. Additional meetings may be required, and although the public will be invited, the drafting meetings will not be televised.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Bochinski to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bliss and was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 PM.

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Kenneth C. Edgar, Jr., Co-Chair