

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION  
July 2, 2015**

**Present:** Bob Brooks, Jeff Kew, Brian Fitzgerald, Charles Watras, Bobbie Kling, Bob Parks and Brian Dudack. Chairman Brooks called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes from June 25, 2015 Regular Meeting**

Mr. Parks made a motion to accept the minutes of the June 25, 2015 Regular Meeting of the Charter Revision Commission (CRC) as presented. Ms. Kling seconded the motion.  
**Vote 7-0 in favor .**

**Public Comment:** *Bruce Rietberg of 12 Devine Road* noted that the Board of Selectmen (BoS) rejected all of the CRC recommendations from the 2009 effort and said that the idea of a Town Manager wasn't pursued during this CRC effort. He asked how a Town Manager could ever be sent to the electorate. Mr. Brooks noted that the town would need to elect a BOS who supports a Town Manager form of government. Mr. Fitzgerald said that the State Statutes allow a path for residents to call for a CRC effort.

Joe Sangiovanni 150 South Stone and acting chairman of the Board of Finance commented that last week's vote to add language to section 501 gives the First Selectman too broad executive authority with respect to day to day operations. He believes that the language was too brief and too general. He was concerned that the First Selectman could use his/her authority to override commission decisions. Mr. Sangiovanni was invited to join the conversation when the item came up on the agenda.

**Correspondence Received:** *None*

**Approval of Technical corrections**

Chairman Brooks suggested that the CRC approve the technical changes that were defined in the 2008/2009 CRC diligent effort. The typographical changes from 2008/2009 have been approved by the Town Attorney and will be made to the 2002 version. **Mr. Fitzgerald made the motion to approve the technical changes that were defined in the 2008/2009 CRC effort. Ms. Kling seconded the motion. Vote 7-0 in favor.**

Mr. Kew suggested that the Charter Index and Comparative Table section be removed. Chairman Brooks noted that he thought that would be the scrivener's role to update the index after the results of the referendum. Mr. Fitzgerald said the Town Clerk probably creates it but it is not the CRC responsibility.

**Discussion on previous change to section 501.**

*Approved language:*

*The First Selectman shall have executive authority over Town employees for day to day operations.*

Ms. Kling asked how this language would change the organization. Chairman Brooks said the First Selectman is answering questions on a day to day basis from employees in the absence of their commissions. He noted that he has been challenged on this with some commissions. Mr. Kew began a discussion about adding an exception to exclude Board of Education (BoE) employees. Additional discussion took place about the idea that if a Town Manager was appointed all town employees would report to him/her. Mr. Brooks said why would we so easily give the power to a Town Manager but not to an elected First Selectman. Mr. Watras explained that a Town Manager would report to a Town Council. A Town Administrator model could be an individual experienced in public policy and would have operational oversight of town employees and would report to a First Selectman for day to day guidance. The First Selectman would report to the BoS. He noted that the First Selectman position acts as the Chief Elected Officer, the Chief Administrative Officer and sets policy with the BoS. Mr. Fitzgerald believed that the group was trying to put too many regulations in the Charter. He thought this should be a policy and not detailed in the Charter. The Director of Finance position was discussed and since it will continue to report to both the BoS and Board of Finance it should be excluded from this language. Mr. Brooks offered some possible language: On matters requiring consistency of coordination across town departments\* and their employees, the First Selectman shall have executive authority, in consultation with any respective board of commission over Town employees for such matters.

\* = with the exception of the Board of Education, WPCA and Director of Finance.

Mr. Brooks said that he believes the First Selectman is looking for consistency among the departments. Mr. Kew suggested that the language should reside in Section 502 F rather than 501.

**Mr. Parks made a motion to reconsider the language approved last week in section 501. The motion was seconded by Mr. Fitzgerald. Vote 7-0 in favor.**

**Mr. Brooks made the motion to add section 502F On matters requiring consistency of coordination across town departments\* and their employees, the First Selectman shall have executive authority, in consultation with any respective board of commission over Town employees for such matters.**

**\* = with the exception of the Board of Education, WPCA and Director of Finance.**

**The motion was seconded by Mr. Fitzgerald and vote 7-0 in favor.**

### **Discussion and possible vote on including a reference to Ethics Code**

*Current language*

#### ***Section 1102 Code of Ethics***

*Within one year of the Town's acceptance of this Charter, the Board of Selectmen shall recommend to the legislative body of the Town a proposed ordinance comprising a Code of Ethics to govern the conduct of elected and appointed officers, employees, and board and commission members of the Town.*

Mr. Parks noted that section 1102 is outdated and there is no reference to a requirement

to follow the code of ethics. The Code of Ethics has been created and all elected and appointed officers, employees, and board and commission members of the Town receive the document and sign an acknowledgement that they received it.

Mr. Fitzgerald noted that the BoS has never received a disclosure from anyone with a financial interest. He suggested that the requirement to notify the BoS if you have a financial conflict of interest should be added to commission bylaws and the Code of Ethics. Chairman Brooks noted that there is no training for commission members when they are appointed. **Mr. Brooks moved that Section 1102 be written as follows: The Town Code of Ethics shall govern the conduct of elected and appointed officers, employees, and board and commission members of the Town. The motion was seconded by Mr. Parks. Vote 7-0 in favor.**

Mr. Watras reported on his research about surveys in other municipalities. He noted that there are towns who conduct community surveys on a wide range of topics including Canton, Columbia and Windsor. Windsor sends out 4,000 questionnaires bi-annually. The town devises the questions many are consistent year after year and there are some open ended questions. They budget \$5,000 to print the survey, mail it and provide return postage. Mr. Watras didn't have statistics on the return rate of the surveys.

Mr. Parks moved to adjourn. Mr. Fitzgerald seconded. After a unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Next Meeting will be the Public Hearing to be held on July 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Lower Level Conference room.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa Trase  
Recording Secretary