

PUBLIC HEARING AND REGULAR MEETING

Wednesday, February 3, 2010

DRAFT

THESE MINUTES ARE INTENDED TO BE A SUMMARY OF THE MEETING AND NOT A VERBATIM RECORDING.

Present: Sharon Hyde, Andrew Kelemen, John McNicholas, Charles Primerano

Not present: Lisa Carroll, Andrew Berger, Tiffany Lenz, Ed Tyrrell

Regular Meeting

AGENDA:

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

1. Review of minutes from previous meeting.
2. Discussion of Quarterly Report to Board of Selectmen
3. Old Business- Review of Proposed Changes to Article 1, Article II, Article IV, Article VII, Article VIII, Article IX, Article X-Sharon Hyde
4. Review of Fire/Police Commission vs. Public Safety. Andrew Kelemen
5. Discussion re: Elected v. Appointed-Andrew Kelemen
6. Discussion Town Manager/First Selectman.-Andrew Keleman
7. Change of Meeting Date as Required by Members
8. Need for Recording Secretary.
9. Future Sections to be Reviewed
10. Adjournment

The meeting was called to order by Chair John McNicholas at 7:36 PM.

Item 1.

Reviewed December minutes. Ms. Hyde motioned that the minutes be approved as submitted. Mr. Primerano seconded. The December minutes were approved unanimously.

Mr. McNicholas stated that he would provide Mr. Primerano with his notes from the January 6 meeting so that minutes from that meeting could be drafted. Mr. Kelemen added they he would provide Mr. Primerano with his notes from the November 4 so that minutes from that meeting could be drafted.

Item 2.

Mr. McNicholas explained that he was misquoted in a Ridgefield Press article that gave the incorrect impression that he and other members of the CRC leaning towards recommending a Public Safety Commission. He added that this misinformation harmed his January appearance before the Board of Selectmen and unnecessarily put him on the defensive. He stressed that the CRC needs to make sure that the public receives accurate information about its activities.

Item 3.

Ms. Hyde presented proposed changes to the charter (see attached file: Ridgefield CRC - Approved Revisions 20100203 -draft.pdf)

1. Motion to approve draft of Section 1-1 as presented by Ms. Hyde was made by Mr. Primerano and seconded by Mr. McNicholas. 4 (Yes), 0 (No), 0 (Abstain)
2. Motion to approve drafts of Sections 3-3, 3-7, 3-10, 3-11, and the deletion of 3-15 as presented by Ms. Hyde was made by Mr. Primerano and seconded by Mr. Kelemen. 4 (Yes), 0 (No), 0 (Abstain)
3. Motion to approve draft of Section 4-15 as presented by Ms. Hyde was made by Mr. Primerano and seconded by Mr. McNicholas. 4 (Yes), 0 (No), 0 (Abstain)
4. Motion to approve draft of Sections 7-2, 7-3a, and 7-3g as presented by Ms. Hyde was made by Mr. Primerano and seconded by Mr. McNicholas. 4 (Yes), 0 (No), 0 (Abstain)
5. Motion to approve draft of Sections 8-2, 8-3b, and 8-31 as presented by Ms. Hyde was made by Mr. Primerano and seconded by Mr. McNicholas. 4 (Yes), 0 (No), 0 (Abstain)

6. Motion to approve draft of Section 9-15 as presented by Ms. Hyde was made by Mr. Primerano and seconded by Mr. McNicholas. 4 (Yes), 0 (No), 0 (Abstain)
7. Motion to approve draft of Sections 10-1a, 10-1b, 10-1c, 10-1e, 10-2a, 10-2b, 10-2c, 10-2e, 10-2f, 10-2g, 10-3, 10-5, and 10-5 as presented by Ms. Hyde was made by Mr. Primerano and seconded by Mr. Kelemen. 4 (Yes), 0 (No), 0 (Abstain)

Item 4.

Mr. Kelemen noted that he had been reviewing other town charters and that he observed that many towns that are comparable to Ridgefield in size do have both a police and a fire commission or a public safety commission. Mr. Kelemen stated that he would have some specific language as to how a fire commission could be established in the charter. Mr. McNicholas responded that he would invite both the Chief of Police and the Fire Chief to the March CRC meeting to obtain their positions on any potential enhancements to public safety oversight.

Item 5.

Mr. Kelemen, based on his review of other town charters, questioned whether it continued to make sense for Town Treasurer, Town Clerk, and Town Tax Collector to be elective offices. He contended that the CRC should review whether to recommend those roles be instead filled by appointment. He suggested that those currently holding those seats would finish their existing terms, and they would certainly be eligible for appointment when those elective offices had been sunsetted.

Item 6.

Mr. Kelemen explained that many towns comparable to Ridgefield have a Town Manager rather than a First Selectman. He added that a Town Manager is typically a full-time employee of a town rather than an elected official. He also stated that a Town Manager is typically an appointed position filled by an individual with specific background, training, education, and experience in public management. He recommended that the CRC explore this option for Ridgefield.

Item 7.

Mr. McNicholas noted that, based on feedback from members, the first Wednesday of the month was no longer practical for all CRC members and that the first Tuesday of the month would be better. Motion to change regular meeting dates of remaining 2010 Charter Revision Commission meetings to: March 2, April 6, May 4, June 1, July 6, and August 3, was made by Mr. McNicholas and seconded by Ms. Hyde. 4 (Yes), 0 (No), 0 (Abstain)

Item 8.

Mr. McNicholas observed that it was too much of a burden for any CRC member to have to take notes and still participate fully in a meeting. He added that he had checked with the First Selectman's office and that there was a budget for a recording secretary, and that beginning with the March CRC meeting. Mr. Primerano stated that he would complete and submit any outstanding minutes and votes up to and including the February meeting.

Item 9.

Mr. McNicholas indicated that he is reviewing the sections of the charter related to ethics and competitive bidding and that he would be presenting his findings and proposed revisions on those matters at the March meeting. Mr. Kelemen stated that he was researching public safety commissions of other localities and would present his findings at the March meeting. Mr. Jan Rifkinson was in attendance and asked if he could offer some recommendation. Mr. McNicholas suggested that Mr. Rifkinson supply those recommendations in writing so they could be included in the record.

Item 10.

There being no further business, Mr. Primerano motioned for adjournment. Mr. Kelemen seconded. Vote unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 9:17 PM

Charles Primerano
Recording Secretary