

**Town of Ridgefield
Charter Revision Commission
Regular Meeting
July 6, 2010 7:00PM
Town Hall–Large Conference Room**

**Present: John McNicholas, Chairman
Sharon Hyde, Vice Chair
Tiffany Lenz
Charles Primerano
Lisa Carroll**

Not Present: Andrew Kelemen

AGENDA

1. Review minutes from previous meetings and public hearing.
2. Discussion of Board of Selectman recommendations regarding Draft Report of Charter.
3. Review and vote on proposed changes to Draft Report of Charter.
4. Vote on Final Report and determine date of submission of Final Report.
5. Old business.
6. New business.
7. Set next meeting date.
8. Adjournment.

MEETING MINUTES

(These Minutes are intended to be a summary of the Meeting and not a verbatim recording)

Chairman McNicholas called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

Item #1

Motion

Ms. Carroll made a motion that with the correction made to remove ‘set by email vote’ on Page 3, Item #5, Amended Motion to Substitute, the Meeting Minutes for June 1, 2010 are approved.

Mr. Primerano seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Motion

Ms. Carroll made a motion that with the approved changes, the Meeting Minutes of June 8th, 2010 Public Hearing are approved.

Mr. Primerano seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Item #2 & 3

The Board of Selectman reviewed the submitted Charter Revision Draft Report and returned a list of suggested revisions. Ms. Hyde met with the Board and then Chairman McNicholas and Ms. Hyde met with Rudy Marconi, First Selectman to further discuss and clarify the Board's suggestions. The list consisted of 26 suggested changes. The Charter Commission discussed each item with the following results.

1. The reference to Kevin Redmond on Page 7 of the Recommendations Considered Report has been removed.
2. The requested change to remove "Director of Emergency Preparedness" to "Director of Emergency Management" was denied and the wording will revert back to the previous Charter's wording of "Director of Civil Preparedness". The Commission wished for a legal opinion as to what this change would do. So, without this opinion, no wording will be changed.
3. In Article I, the request was made to remove the word "department" from the definition of "town agency". After discussion, the Commission decided to leave "department" in.
4. Clarification of the definition of "town agency". See Item #3 above.
5. The request was made to put back in Section 3-3, Paragraph four. The Committee agreed this was fine but will exclude the wording "including the budget".

Motion

Chair McNicholas made a motion to approve the changes in Items #2, 3, 4 & 5 above.

Mr. Primerano seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

6. In Section 3-5, Andy Bodner, BOS, made a request to increase the % of signatures needed for petition matters that expose the Town to liabilities. The Committee felt that all matters expose the Town and that they have already had a lengthy discussion on this topic hence the percentage will remain the same.
7. The request was made to change Section 3-5 by giving the Board of Selectman discretion regarding petitioned Town meetings. Ms. Hyde commented that this Section had been

- moved to Section 10. Consensus was that this was OK and that it clarifies further the Board of Selectmen's discretionary powers.
8. Under Section 3-6, the first sentence, the word "lease" is amended to read "least" and an "a" is inserted before the words "Town Meeting". Also, the second sentence is amended to reference the Board of Selectman authorizing the notice for a Town Meeting with the First Selectman signing the notice.
 9. Section 3-7, Andy Bodner, BOS, questioned if there are different "Robert's Rules of Orders" for different types of organizations? Ms. Hyde commented and the Charter Commission concurred that there is not, but there are other Parliamentary rules that can be adopted, i.e. "Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure". The Commission concurred that "Robert's Rules of Order" will remain in effect for the Ridgefield Charter.
 10. Under Section 3-8, no amendments can be made to ordinances at Town Meetings. This was discussed and agreed to by the Commission. The wording "No changes other than technical corrections shall be made to the proposed ordinance and shall provide for a yes or no vote" was added to this Section.
 11. Under Section 3-10, it was requested to eliminate the redundancy of "of the Town Meeting". The Commission concurred and removed this wording.
 12. The Board of Selectman questioned whether an ordinance was necessary to join regional authorities as seen in Section 3-14. Without a legal opinion and the fact that this Section is pursuant to the General Statutes, the Commission is leaving this Section as is.
 13. Under Section 4-9, it was brought up that the Tax Collector and Treasurer should be appointed positions with qualifications. The Commission disagreed and is leaving the wording as is but recommending that the next Charter Revision Commission take a second look at this topic.
 14. It was requested that under Section 4-14, to insert "the maintenance of" apparatus and equipment. This was rejected due to the Chief of Police being the one responsible for apparatus and equipment who in turn reports the conditions and status to the Police Commission. It was also requested under this Section to change the word "government" to "administration" but due to this Section being concurrent with the General Statutes, the request was denied.
 15. It was requested to change the word "prepare" to "approve" in Section 4-15(e). This was agreed to by the Commission.
 16. Under Section 5-7.1, Grants Commission, the BOS stated that if one removes all contractual obligations, the Grants budget is only approximately \$25k. With this knowledge, the Commission decided to accept the BOS's recommendation and eliminated the Grants Commission.

Motion

Chair McNicholas made a motion to accept changes in Items # 7, 8, 10, 11 & 15.

Mr. Primerano seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Motion

Chair McNicholas made a motion to eliminate the Grants Commission with the condition that a set of guidelines be considered by the next Charter Revision Commission.

Mr. Primerano seconded the motion.

Motion carried. (4) Approved, (1) Opposed.

Motion

Mr. Primerano made a motion to approve the four items that will be presented as suggestions to look into by the next Charter Revision Commission. These items are:

- I. Appointment of a Town Treasurer with established qualifications and appointment of a Town Tax Collector with established qualifications.**
- II. A Fire Commission.**
- III. A Public Safety Commission.**
- IV. Guidelines for Town grants.**

Ms. Hyde seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

17. The Board of Selectman requested that under Section 5-10.1, in the last sentence, the word “determine” should be changed to “recommended to the Board of Selectman”. The Commission would have liked the Town Council to give an opinion on this matter. Without it, no change to the wording will be made.
18. Under Section 9-7, the change requested was to eliminate Constables. The Commission disagreed and this Section will remain as is but in the first sentence the word “shall” is replaced by the word “may”.

Motion

Chair McNicholas made a motion to accept changes in Item #18 above.

Ms. Carroll seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

19. The Commission agreed to the request to add to the end of the last sentence in Section 9-10, “... and shall act as the Fire Commission”.

20. It was requested to change under Section 9-12, the words “January 1” to “4 years from the date of appointment”. The Commission felt that while the Charter wording doesn’t apply when a person is appointed mid-term, other Town positions use this wording and until all rule wording in the Charter is looked at and changed or kept for consistency, this Section will not be changed.

Motion

Ms. Lenz made a motion to accept the changes in Items #19 and #20 above.

Ms. Carroll seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

21. In Section 10-1(b), Paragraph 3, the Commission agreed to change “revise” to “recommend revisions to” and the Commission agreed to delete the final paragraph for it was found to be redundant. The Commission did not agree to add the word “capital” to accompany the words “operating budget” to form “operating budget and capital” in this Section.

Motion

Ms. Carroll made a motion to accept the change in Item #21 above.

Mr. Primerano seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

22. Under Section 10-1(d), the Commission agreed to add the words “operating” before the word “budget” in this Section. Also, in Paragraph 1, the Commission agreed to delete the words “and such capital items as are recommended by the Board of Finance”. Further, Paragraph 3 of this Section is rewritten as follows: “Capital items rejected at the referendum shall not be reconsidered until the next annual Town Meeting and Budget Meeting or Budget Referendum”.

Motion

Ms. Hyde made a motion to accept the change made in Item #22 above.

Mr. Primerano seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

At this point Ms. Carroll had to leave the Meeting but there was still a quorum.

23. The following changes were made in Section 10-2, Paragraph 1:
- a. Deleted: “...other than the Board of Education...”
 - b. Deleted “seek” and replaced with “obtain”.

Changes in Paragraph #2

- a. Deleted: “In the event that the Board of Education determines that it requires additional appropriation, it shall request of the Board of Finance in writing the sum needed and the reasons therefore”.

Changes in Paragraph #3

- a. Deleted: (b), it became part of Paragraph (a).
- b. Insert: “town” before agency in first sentence.

Changes in Paragraph #4

- a. Deleted: (c), it became part of Paragraph (a).

Changes in Paragraph #5

- a. Deleted: (d), it is now (b)

Changes in Paragraph #7

- a. Insert: “in its discretion” after Board of Selectman in first paragraph.
- b. Insert: “to” after required in last sentence.

Changes in Paragraph #8

- a. Deleted: (e), it is now (c)

Changes in Paragraph #10

- a. Deleted: (f), it is now (d)

Changes in Paragraph #11

- a. Deleted: (g), it is now (e)

Note: Because of renumbering, Mr. Primerano will be checking the entire document for references to these numbers and change the Table of Contents.

24. The Commission denied the request for the addition of the wording “on a schedule to be determined by the Board of Selectman” in Section 10-2.

Motion

Chair McNicholas made a motion to accept the changes in Items #23 & #24 above.

Mr. Primerano seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

25. In Section 10-3, Paragraph 4, the Commission agreed to change the words “budget agencies” to “town agencies”.

Motion

Mr. Primerano made a motion to accept the change in Item #25 above.

Ms. Hyde seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

26. The Commission accepted under Section 10-5, Paragraph 2 to delete the following: “...three (3) years ahead” and replace it with “two (2) years ahead”.

Motion

Chair McNicholas made a motion to accept the change in Item #26 above.

Mr. Primerano seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Item #4

Motion

Ms. Hyde made a motion to submit the Final Report with all changes and technical corrections to the Town Clerk no later than Tuesday, July 13th.

Mr. Primerano seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Item #5

No Old Business to discuss.

Item #6

No New Business to discuss.

Item #7

No next meeting date was set at this time and may never be set. The Town of Ridgefield Charter Revision Commission duties may be complete.

Item #8

Motion

Ms. Lenz made a motion to adjourn.

Chair McNicholas seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lise B. Read

Recording Secretary