

## **Town of Ridgefield Charter Revision Commission (CRC)**

### **Minutes**

**March 16, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.**

### **Town Hall Annex Conference Room #2**

These minutes are a general summary of the meeting and are not intended to be a verbatim transcription. A video of the meeting is available on the Town's website.

Members Present: Bob Cascella, Laurie Christiansen, Mike Lordi, Rebecca Mucchetti, Michael Rettger, Derick Schirm, Kim Welton, and Todd Zagorec

Member Absent: Tom Lansen

#### **1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Mucchetti at 6:30 p.m.

#### **2. Public Comment**

Andrea Beebe of 378 Main Street expressed appreciation for the CRC work process. Ms. Beebe asked if commissions and boards share information on how they manage grants.

Debra Franceschini of 72 Spire View Rd discussed her submissions to the CRC.

#### **3. Initial discussion of submission to CRC**

The CRC reviewed with Ms. Cernone her recommendation that the Town Charter be amended to make the position of Town Treasurer and Tax Collector appointed rather than elective offices. (Tracker: Tab A Item 2 and 3)\*

The CRC reviewed with Ms. Berendsen-Hill, Town Tax Collector, the recommendation that the Town Charter be amended to make the position of Tax Collector appointed rather than elective. (Tracker: Tab A Item 3)

The CRC reviewed with Ms. McGeehin, Town Treasurer, the recommendation that the Town Charter be amended to make the position of Town Treasurer appointed rather than elective. (Tracker: Tab A Item 2)

Mr. Cascella moved, and Mr. Rettger seconded a motion to table the discussion of the recommendation that the Ridgefield Affordable Housing Committee report to the Planning

and Zoning Commission instead of the Board of Selectman until a later meeting. Motion carried 8-0. (Tracker: Tab A Item 1)

#### **4. Subsequent discussion of submission to CRC**

Mr. Cascella moved, and Mr. Lordi seconded a motion to recommend revising Section 4-15 of the Charter to incorporate the changes received from the Board of Finance as revised. Motion carried 7-0. Mr. Rettger abstained. (Tracker: Tab B Items 1-3)

Mr. Cascella moved, and Ms. Christiansen seconded a motion to recommend revising Section 10 of the Charter to incorporate the changes received from the Board of Finance. Motion carried 7-0. Mr. Rettger abstained. (Tracker: Tab B Items 4-7)

Mr. Lordi moved, and Mr. Cascella seconded a motion to table the discussion of Mr. Lordi's recommended change to Section 10.1 (c) of the Charter until a later meeting. Motion carried 8-0. (Tracker: Tab F Item 1)

Mr. Cascella moved, and Ms. Welton seconded a motion to decline to recommend Mr. Wehking's change to Section 10.1 (d) of the Charter regarding the annual budget referendum. Motion carried 8-0. (Tracker: Tab F Item 2)

Mr. Rettger moved, and Mr. Schirm seconded a motion to table the discussion of Ms. Broderick's recommendation that the name Board of Selectman be changed to a more inclusive and gender-neutral group until a later meeting. Motion carried 7-1. Mr. Cascella opposed. (Tracker: Tab A Item 7)

Mr. Cascella moved, and Mr. Lordi seconded a motion to decline to recommend Ms. Nunes's change to how voting is conducted for Town Meetings matters. Motion carried 8-0. (Tracker: Tab A Item 8)

Mr. Lordi moved, and Mr. Schirm seconded a motion to decline to recommended changes to Section 4-6 of the Charter. Motion carried 7-1. Ms. Welton opposed. (Tracker: Tab A Item 30)

Mr. Rettger moved, and Ms. Christiansen seconded a motion to decline to recommend Ms. Franceschini's change to Section 4-8 of the Charter. Motion carried 7-1. Mr. Schirm opposed. (Tracker: Tab A Item 31)

Mr. Cascella moved, and Ms. Christiansen seconded a motion to decline to act on Ms. Franceschini's comment regarding town committees not following FOIA meeting guidelines. Motion carried 8-0. (Tracker: Tab A Item 33)

Mr. Rettger moved, and Ms. Christiansen seconded a motion to decline to act on Ms. Franceschini's question regarding how someone unaffiliated with a political party would run for office. Motion carried 8-0. (Tracker: Tab A Item 34)

Mr. Rettger moved, and Mr. Schirm seconded a motion to recommend revising Section 5-3 of the Charter to incorporate the changes received from the Commission on Aging. Motion carried 8-0. (Tracker: Tab D Items 1)

Mr. Lordi moved, and Mr. Rettger seconded a motion to recommend revising Section 5-14 of the Charter to incorporate the change regarding adding two alternate members received from the Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA). Motion carried 8-0. (Tracker: Tab K Item 1)

Ms. Welton moved, and Mr. Lordi seconded a motion to table the discussion of the WPCA's request for CRC review of Board of Selectman membership on the WPCA until a later meeting. Motion carried 8-0. (Tracker: Tab K Item 2)

Mr. Cascella moved, and Ms. Christiansen seconded a motion to decline to recommend changing the word "organic" in Section 1.1 of the Charter. Motion carried 8-0. (Tracker: Tab A Items 9 and 10)

Mr. Lordi moved, and Mr. Schirm seconded a motion to decline to recommend Mr. Tartaglia's change to Section 1.1 regarding "Home Rule." Motion carried 8-0. (Tracker: Tab A Items 12)

Mr. Cascella moved, and Mr. Rettger seconded a motion to decline to recommend Mr. Tartaglia's change to Section 2.1 of the Charter. Motion carried 8-0. (Tracker: Tab A Items 5)

Mr. Rettger moved, and Mr. Schirm seconded a motion to decline to recommend Mr. Tartaglia's change to Section 2.3 of the Charter. Motion carried 8-0. (Tracker: Tab A Items 6)

## **5. Communications**

The CRC reviewed potential dates for the Town Charter presentation at the League of Women Voter's "Get to Know Your Town" series.

## **6. Review of Tracker Items**

The CRC reviewed the tracker.

## **7. Review of Action Item**

The CRC reviewed the action item list.

## **8. Old Business**

The CRC reviewed a document submitted by Mr. Rettger, which reviews and recommends changes to how the terms board, commission, agency, and department are used in the Charter. (Tracker: Tab I Items 3)

Mr. Rettger moved, and Mr. Lordi seconded a motion to recommend Mr. Lansen's and Mr. Schirm's proposed creation of an Information Technology Commission with language as amended. Motion carried 8-0. (Tracker: Tab G Item 2)

The CRC agreed to defer the discussion of Mr. Zagorec's review of Connecticut General Statutes references until a later meeting.

The CRC reviewed a document submitted by Mr. Rettger with suggested changes to Article XI of the Charter. (Tracker: Tab A Items 4)

## **9. Correspondence**

Ms. Mucchetti reviewed the correspondence the CRC received.

- a) Wendy Lionetti - referral re: Non-Resident Trustee Voting in Referendum
- b) Debra Franceschini - referral re: Affordable Housing Committee
- c) Christine More - referral re: Affordable Housing Committee
- d) Christine More – referral re: Minority Representation
- e) Christine More - referral re: Broadcast Meetings
- f) Christofer Christiansen - Ridgefield Pension Commission referrals
- g) John Tartaglia – referral re: Affordable Housing Committee reporting structure.
- h) Rudy Marconi - Board of Selectmen referrals
- i) Rudy Marconi - Affordable Housing Committee status within the Charter.

## **10. Planning future CRC agendas/calendar**

Items for discussion and possible vote on March 23, 2023, will include: a proposal from Dan O'Brien to create overview for appointed Committees/Commissions, the recommended change to Section 5-7 from the Commission for Accessibility submitted by Don Ciota, a proposal to change reporting of Affordable Housing Committee from the Board of Selectman to the Planning and Zoning Commission, various referrals regarding the Planning and Zoning Commission, referrals from the Board of Selectman submitted by Rudy Marconi, and open tracker items.

## **11. Minutes – review and approval**

Motion to approve as amended the minutes of the March 9, 2023, meeting by Mr. Schirm, seconded by Mr. Rettger as revised. Motion carries 8 to 0 in favor.

## **12. Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn at 10:20 p.m. by Ms. Welton, seconded by Mr. Schirm. Motion carries 8 to 0 in favor.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mike Lordi, Recording Secretary

\* Tracker: The Change Request Tracker is a document that lists recommended changes received by the CRC.