

Town of Ridgefield Charter Revision Commission (CRC)

Minutes

March 30, 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.

Members Present: Bob Cascella, Laurie Christiansen, Tom Lansen, Mike Lordi, Rebecca Mucchetti, Michael Rettger (from 6:30-6:50 and 8:55-9:50), Derick Schirm, Kim Welton, and Todd Zagorec

1. Call to Order

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

2. Public Comment

No public comments.

3. Discussion and a possible vote on open tracker items

Mr. Cascella moved, and Mr. Lordi seconded a motion to recommend that the Tax Collector position be appointed and not elected, thereby allowing the Town to hire the most qualified candidate. Motion carried 8-0. Mr. Rettger was absent. (Tracker Item A-3, L-2)

Mr. Schirm moved, and Mr. Lansen seconded a motion to recommend that the Town Treasure position be appointed and not elected, thereby allowing the Town to hire the most qualified candidate. Motion carried 8-0. Mr. Rettger was absent. (Tracker Item A-2, L-2)

Mr. Lordi moved, and Mr. Lansen seconded a motion to recommend that the Town Clerk position be appointed and not elected, thereby allowing the Town to hire the most qualified candidate. Motion carried 7-1 with Mr. Cascella opposing. Mr. Rettger was absent. (Tracker Item L-2)

Mr. Cascella moved, and Mr. Schirm seconded a motion to decline to recommend changing the Affordable Housing Committee's reporting line from the Board of Selectman to the Planning and Zoning Commission as it is not a Charter issue. Motion carried 8-0. Mr. Rettger was absent. (Tracker Item A-1)

Ms. Christiansen moved, and Mr. Schirm seconded a motion to recommend revising Section 3-2 of the Charter addressing nonresident-trustee voting status as received from the Town Counsel. Motion carried 8-0. Mr. Rettger was absent. (Tracker Item J-1)

The CRC reviewed the current draft of proposed revisions to Article XI, Standards of Conduct in the Charter. A revised draft will be prepared and forwarded to the Board of Selectman, the Board of Ethics, Mr. Steinman, and Ms. Burns.

Mr. Zagorec moved, and Mr. Cascella seconded a motion to recommend revising the various references in the Charter to Connecticut General Statutes as drafted by Mr. Zagorec. Motion carried 8-0. Mr. Rettger was absent. (Tracker Item I-2)

Mr. Lordi moved, and Mr. Lansen seconded a motion to decline to recommend the suggestion submitted by Mr. O'Brien that committees that are permanent in nature be enumerated in the Charter. Motion carried 8-0. Mr. Rettger was absent. (Tracker Item H-1)

Mr. Cascella moved, and Ms. Christiansen seconded a motion to recommend revising Section 5-7 of the Charter to incorporate the changes received from the Commission for Accessibility as revised. Motion carried 8-0. Mr. Rettger was absent. (Tracker Item C-1)

Mr. Schirm moved, and Mr. Lordi seconded a motion to recommend that the "Director of Civil Preparedness" title be changed to "Director of Emergency Management." Motion carried 8-0. Mr. Rettger was absent. (Tracker Item I-1)

Mr. Lordi moved, and Mr. Cascella seconded a motion to decline to recommend changing Section 5.14 of the Charter to have a member of the Board of Selectman be a voting member of the Water Pollution Control Authority. Motion carried 8-0. Mr. Rettger was absent. (Tracker Item K-2)

Mr. Cascella moved, and Mr. Lansen seconded a motion to recommend revising Section 5-8 of the Charter to incorporate the changes received from the Economic and Community Development Commission. Motion carried 8-0. Mr. Rettger was absent. (Tracker: Tab E-1)

Mr. Lansen moved, and Mr. Schirm seconded a motion to recommend revising Section 5-13 of the Charter to incorporate the changes received from the Pension Commission. Motion carried 6-0-1. Ms. Christiansen abstained. Mr. Cascella and Mr. Rettger were absent. (Tracker Item M-1)

Mr. Lansen moved, and Mr. Schirm seconded a motion to decline to recommend changing the Town Charter to incorporate the maintenance of bathrooms and facilities associated with the town baseball fields, as suggested by Ms. Adams, since it is not a Charter issue. Motion carried 8-0. Mr. Rettger was absent. (Tracker Item A-48)

Mr. Cascella moved, and Mr. Zagorec seconded a motion to decline to recommend extending the Charter Revision from the current four years to five years and recommended changing the Town Charter to recognize that State Statute authorizes the Board of

Selectman to establish a Charter Revision Commission at any time. Motion carried 8-0. Mr. Rettger was absent. (Tracker Item L-4)

Mr. Lordi moved, and Mr. Schirm seconded a motion to decline the Board of Selectman's change to increase the verified signatures from 2% to 4% for matters not involving expenditures, per Article III, Section 3-5 (c). Motion carried 5-3 with Ms. Christiansen, Mr. Lansen, and Mr. Zagorec opposing. Mr. Rettger was absent. (Tracker Item L-1a)

Mr. Schirm moved, and Mr. Cascella seconded a motion to decline the Board of Selectman's change to increase the verified signatures from 2% to 4% for expenditures up to \$250K, as per Article III, Section 3-5 (a). Motion carried 5-3 with Ms. Christiansen, Mr. Lansen, and Mr. Zagorec opposing. Mr. Rettger was absent. (Tracker Item L-1b)

Mr. Lordi moved, and Mr. Lansen seconded a motion to accept the Board of Selectman's change to increase the verified signatures from 5% to 7% for expenditures over \$250K, as per Article III, Section 3-5 (b). Motion carried 9-0. (Tracker Item L-1c)

Mr. Lordi moved, and Mr. Lansen seconded a motion to accept the Board of Selectman's change to Article X Section 10-1. Motion carried 6-2-1. Mr. Rettger abstained, with Mr. Cascella and Ms. Welton opposing. (Tracker Item L-3)

Mr. Cascella moved, and Mr. Lansen seconded a motion to decline to review the creation of the Town Manager/Administrator position. Motion carried 9-0. (Tracker Item L-5).

4. Communications

The CRC reviewed communication strategies.

5. Review of Action Item

The CRC reviewed action items.

6. Old Business

Distribution of –

- a) Board of Selectman Meeting Minutes– reappointment of Affordable Housing Committee
- b) Mr. Goldenberg's statement from the 3-23-23 meeting.
- c) Revisions to Article XI, Standards of Conduct
- d) A review of how other towns address elected vs. appointed for the positions of Town Treasure, Town Clerk, and Tax Collector
- e) The legal opinion from Town Council on the referendum due date
- f) Letter from Town Council addressing the nonresident-trustee voting status

7. Correspondence

- a) Bob Jewell – various referrals
- b) Melissa Adams - referral re: bathroom at baseball fields

c) Debra Franceschini – withdrawal of Affordable Housing Committee referral

8. Planning future CRC agendas/calendar

The April 6, 2023, meeting agenda will include the discussion, deliberation, and voting on referrals to the CRC.

9. Minutes – review and approval

Motion to approve as amended the minutes of the March 23, 2023, meeting by Mr. Cascella, seconded by Mr. Schirm as revised. Motion carries 9 to 0.

10. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn at 9:50 p.m. by Mr. Schirm, seconded by Mr. Lansen. Motion carries 9 to 0.

Respectfully submitted,
Mike Lordi, Recording Secretary

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