

**CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION**  
**Town of Wallingford**

**Regular Meeting**  
**January 26, 2009**

A Regular Meeting of the Wallingford Charter Revision Commission was held on Monday, January 26, 2009, at the Wallingford Town Hall, Room 315, Wallingford, Connecticut.

Seated from the Commission was Jeffrey Knickerbocker – Chairman, Suzanne Wright – Vice Chair, Debbie Gross, Kate Wall, Hank Toman, Ray Lilley, Robert Applegate, Vincent Cervoni, and Recording Secretary Sonja Vining  
Absent: Ray Rys

Chairman Knickerbocker called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**1. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Geno Zandri**, 9 Balsam Ridge Circle, discussed the procedure of the Charter Revision Commission. He doesn't feel it is right that this Committee puts its personal opinion before the request of the public. Mr. Zandri feels that the recommendation that the P&Z and ZBA be elected should be put forward for the public to decide.

**Robert Sheehan**, 11 Cooper Ave., feels that there are mixed messages regarding the Town Clerk. There is talk about the Mayor having too much power yet it is being recommended that he name the Town Clerk with the power of hiring and firing. He does not agree with the 2/3 change regarding the veto power.

**Rosemary Riscati**, 482 North Main Street, does not feel that the P&Z should be elected. She stated that it is a thankless job and she feels people would be discouraged from running. Ms. Riscati is against electing the Town Council by district. She would like to see it left as it is.

**Craig Fishbein**, 179 Grieb Road, discussed State Statute 9.167A regarding minority representation, which he stated, does not apply to the Town Council. He doesn't see any reason why the P&Z or ZBA should be elected.

**Jason Zandri**, 35 Lincoln Drive, stressed that the Commission needs to look closely at the language discussing minority representation in the Charter. With regard to term limits he stated that the current language in the Charter should be reviewed. The Commission must be sure to connect related items. Mr. Zandri feels that any change, as far as terms, that is made to the Council should also be made to the Mayor. He indicated again that if people have spoken out on both sides of an issue then the public should have the opportunity to vote on it.

**Bob Gross**, Longhill Road, stated that many towns elect more boards than Wallingford does. He doesn't feel that because people are elected there is more chance for fraud. If someone is dishonest they are dishonest whether they are elected or appointed.

## **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

January 12, 2008 - Regular Meeting

Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the Minutes of the January 12, 2008 – Regular Meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lilley and passed.

## **3. LAND USE COMMISSIONS:**

**Should they be appointed?**

**Should they be for five years?**

**MS. GROSS:** **MOTION THAT PLANNING & ZONING AND ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS BE ELECTED.**

**MR. TOMAN:** **SECOND**

The Commission discussed public comment.

**VOTE:** **MR. TOMAN – NO, MR. CERVONI – RECUSE, MR. APPELEGATE – NO, MS. WRIGHT – NO, MR. LILLEY – NO, MS. WALL – NO, MS. GROSS – YES, MR. KNICKERBOCKER – RECUSE.**

## **4. SELECTION OF TOWN COUNCIL AND TERM LENGTH:**

Chairman Knickerbocker reviewed the discussion of the Commission at the last meeting.

**MS. GROSS:** **MOTION THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL HAVE NINE DISTRICT AND FOUR AT LARGE MEMBERS TO SERVE A TERM OF TWO YEARS.**

**MR. TOMAN:** **SECOND**

The Commission discussed the motion.

**VOTE:** **MR. TOMAN – YES, MR. CERVONI – NO, MR. APPELEGATE – NO, MS. WRIGHT – NO, MR. LILLEY – NO, MS. WALL – NO, MS. GROSS – YES, MR. KNICKERBOCKER – NO.**

## 5. REPORT BACK LEGAL QUESTIONS:

Attorney Small handed out a memo dated January 26, 2009 addressed to Jeffrey Knickerbocker, Chairman. (Attachment I)

### **Board of Assessment Appeals – change of number of members as an ordinance**

Attorney Small recommended adding a sentence to the section. After discussion the Commission decided to make no change at this time.

### **Statutory Guidance on Annual Report (Katie Wall also to assist)**

Attorney Small referred to her memo dated January 26, 2009. (Attachment I) Ms. Wall reported on the Town of Berlin and East Haven who still do the annual report. In Wallingford there is an annual audit that is done and that is what the Mayor considers the financial report.

**MR. APPLGATE:**                    **MOTION TO REVISE CHAPTER V, SECTION 2, DELETING LINE 17 STARTING WITH “SHALL PREPARE AND CAUSE TO BE PUBLISHED, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER THE CLOSE OF THE FISCAL YEAR AN ANNUAL TOWN REPORT”.**

**MR. CERVONI:**                    **SECOND**

**VOTE:**                                **MR. TOMAN – YES, MR. CERVONI – YES, MR. APPLGATE – YES, MS. WRIGHT – NO, MR. LILLEY – YES, MS. WALL – NO, MS. GROSS – YES, MR. KNICKERBOCKER – YES.**

### **Town Development Units Section in Charter**

Attorney Small put together a basic outline for a new section that was included in her memo. (Attachment I) After some discussion it was determined that Attorney Small would go ahead and rework the draft for the Commission to consider.

### **Removal of Dept. of Public Welfare Section**

Attorney Small indicated that the Department of Public Welfare does not need to be included in the Charter.

**MS. WALL:**                        **MOTION TO DELETE CHAPTER XI, SECTION 3 FROM THE CHARTER.**

**MR. APPLGATE:**                    **SECOND**

**VOTE:**                                **UNANIMOUS**



**MS. WRIGHT:** **AMENDED HER MOTION TO HAVE THE BOARD OF EDUCATION SELECTED THROUGH THE PETITION PROCESS FOR AN UNDETERMINED TERM.**

**MR. CERVONI:** **SECOND**

**VOTE:** **MR. TOMAN – YES, MR. CERVONI – NO, MR. APPLGATE – NO, MS. WRIGHT – YES, MR. LILLEY – NO, MS. WALL – YES, MS. GROSS – YES, MR. KNICKERBOCKER – NO.**

There was discussion about the BOE terms possibly being extended to three or four years.

**MR. CERVONI:** **MOTION THAT THE BOARD OF EDUCATION HAVE A TERM OF THREE YEARS, NOT STAGGERED. CHAPTER II, SECTION 2, LINE 18 DELETING TWO YEARS AND REPLACING IT WITH THREE YEARS.**

**MS. WRIGHT:** **SECOND**

The Commission discussed three versus four years and staggered versus not staggered.

**VOTE:** **MR. TOMAN – YES, MR. CERVONI – YES, MR. APPLGATE – NO, MS. WRIGHT – YES, MR. LILLEY – YES, MS. WALL – YES, MS. GROSS – YES, MR. KNICKERBOCKER – YES.**

Chairman Knickerbocker pointed out that the Welfare Dept. was deleted from the Charter but not from the title of Chapter XI.

**MR. APPLGATE:** **MOTION TO DELETE WELFARE FROM THE TITLE OF CHAPTER XI MAKING IT EDUCATION AND HEALTH.**

**MS. WRIGHT:** **SECOND**

**VOTE:** **UNANIMOUS**

The Commission discussed Chapter XI, Section 2, Department of Health. Attorney Small will be working on a draft to submit to the Commission to clean up this section.

### **Chapter XII, Department of Parks and Recreation**

No changes were made at this time.

The Commission went back to the Board of Education and discussed the issue of using one year's funds to purchase next years supplies.

**MS. WALL:** **MOTION TO DELETE LINES 27 AND 28 FROM CHAPTER XI, SECTION 1.**

**MS. WRIGHT:**                      **SECOND**

**VOTE:**                                      **UNANIMOUS**

The Commission moved on to discuss Chapter XIII, Personnel and Pensions. There was a question if there is a job description for the Personnel Director. If that is the case there is not need to list all of the items included in Section I, Chapter XIII. Attorney Small will look into it and report back at the next meeting.

The Commission discussed the Personnel and Pension Appeals Board and the Pension Commission.

**MR. APPLGATE:**                      **MOTION THAT CHAPTER XIII, SECTION 5 BE DELETED FROM THE CHARTER.**

**MR. WALL:**                              **SECOND**

**VOTE:**                                      **UNANIMOUS**

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Applegate made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lilley and passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sonja Vining  
Recording Secretary  
Town of Wallingford  
Charter Revision Commission  
January 26, 2009