

**CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION  
Town of Wallingford**

**Regular Meeting  
November 10, 2008**

A Regular Meeting of the Wallingford Charter Revision Commission was held on Monday, November 10, 2008, 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, Ray Lilley, Ray Rys, Robert Applegate, Vincent Cervoni, Hank Toman and Recording Secretary Sonja Vining

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

**1. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Bob Gross, Long Hill Road, feels that a person should only be allowed to serve on one board at a time. He would like to see the smaller boards in town have alternates or have the number of members be increased to five. If a sitting member of a board has poor attendance, less than 50% of the meetings, Mr. Gross feels that member should be removed and a new appointment should be made to fill that position.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

October 27, 2008 - Regular Meeting

Ms. Wright made a motion to approve the Minutes of the October 27, 2008 – Regular Meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rys and passed.

**3. REPORT BACK ON LEGAL QUESTIONS:**

Chairman Knickerbocker referred to a memorandum from Town Attorney Janis Small dated November 10, 2008. (Attachment I)

There was some discussion regarding the mention of justices of the peace in Chapter II, Section 1. At an earlier meeting the Commission decided to delete the term “justices of the peace” and that is the way it will be left at this time.

There was discussion about Chapter III, Section 11. Attorney Small will report back at the next meeting with proper language for revision of that section.

The Commission talked about the hiring process for department heads. There was talk about the Town Clerk position that is currently appointed by the Town Council and could change each time the Council changes and also about the current "first 50 application" system used in the Personnel Department.

There was brief discussion regarding the Town Clerk position in Chapter IV, Section 1. Attorney Small will draft language for the Commission to consider making the Town Clerk more of a department head with the protection of the classified service rather than a political appointed position. There was also discussion of who would appoint the position and who would supervise it. There was a question about when the Mayor or the Council supervises do they evaluate these department heads and appointees on an annual basis and do they submit that in writing? Attorney Small will look into the issue of merit review and report back to the Commission.

#### **4. REPORT BACK FROM KATE WALL REGARDING GENERAL CODE:**

Ms. Wall discussed the fact that there is general code and municipal code. To access this information the town has to have paid to publish their code on the website.

**WRIGHT:**     **MOTION TO REVISE CHAPTER III, SECTION 6, LINES 103 THROUGH 105 TO READ "PROCEDURES. EVERY ORDINANCE, AFTER PASSAGE, SHALL BE RECORDED BY THE TOWN CLERK IN ACCORDANCE WITH STATE STATUTE AND POSTED ON THE TOWN WEB PAGE EXCEPT FOR BONDING ORDINANCES."**

**WALL:**       **SECOND**

**VOTE:**       **UNANIMOUS**

#### **5. SELECTION OF TOWN COUNCILORS:**

The Commission discussed the possibility of changing the councilors from at large to district representation or some hybrid type of representation. Each member expressed his/her point of view.

Phil Wright, 160 Cedar Street, would like to see the current system remain in place. He feels it is working fine and should not be changed at this time.

**RYS:**           **MOTION TO HAVE THE COUNCIL SYSTEM REMAIN AS IT CURRENTLY IS: NINE COUNCILORS AT LARGE WITH MINORITY REPRESENTATION.**

**APPLEGATE:**   **SECOND**

**VOTE:**       **TOMAN – NO, LILLEY – YES, CERVONI – ABSTAIN, APPLEGATE – YES, KNICKERBOCKER – YES, WRIGHT – YES, RYS – YES.**

**GROSS – NO, WALL – YES. THE COUNCIL SYSTEM WILL REMAIN AS IT IS.**

There was discussion of possible term limits for the Town Council Members as well as other positions. Each member discussed his/her point of view.

**TOMAN: MOTION THAT THE CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION RECOMMEND THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL CONSIDER TERM LIMITS.**

**GROSS: SECOND**

**VOTE: TOMAN – YES, LILLEY – YES, CERVONI – NO, APPLGATE – NO, WRIGHT – NO, RYS – NO, GROSS – YES, WALL – NO, KNICKERBOCKER – NO. TERM LIMITS WILL NOT BE RECOMMENDED TO THE TOWN COUNCIL FOR CONSIDERATION.**

**6. MAYORAL VETO:**

The Commission discussed two thirds vs. seven for voting in the Town Council.

**KNICKERBOCKER: MOTION TO REVISE CHAPTER III, SECTION 7, LINE 116 TO READ “ORDINANCE BY AT LEAST TWO THIRDS (2/3) AFFIRMATIVE VOTES OF THE ELECTED BODY OF THE TOWN COUNCIL WITHIN TEN (10) DAYS AFTER” (DELETING – “SEVEN (7)”)**

**GROSS: SECOND**

Not all Members felt comfortable voting on this issue at this time.

**WRIGHT: MOTION THAT ACTION ON THIS ITEM BE POSTONED TO THE NEXT MEETING.**

**WALL: SECOND**

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS**

**7. ADDITIONAL PAGES, TIME PERMITTING:**

Chairman Knickerbocker read into the record a letter dated November 6, 2008 from Linda Mercuri, Recreation Chairperson. (Attachment II) The Commission discussed getting input from all department heads.

## **CHAPTER IV APPOINTIVE OFFICERS**

### **Section 2. Planning and Zoning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals**

It was pointed out that alternates are not mentioned in this section but they are mentioned in the State Statute. Attorney Small will draft language for this section for the Commission to consider. There was also some discussion about some public comments suggesting that these positions be elected and not appointed.

### **Section 3. Board of Tax Review**

**WALL: MOTION THAT CHAPTER IV, SECTION 3 BE RETITLED “BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS”. (DELETING – “BOARD OF TAX REVIEW”)**

**LILLEY: SECOND**

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS**

There was some discussion about the possibility of increasing the size of this board.

### **Section 4. Constables**

Attorney Small will do some research and report back to the Commission on the practicality of constables.

### **Section 5. Inland Wetlands Commission**

There was some discussion about who appoints the Environmental Planner and who supervises that position. Attorney Small will look into the ordinance regarding the Inland Wetlands Commission and report back for the next meeting.

## **8. ADJOURNMENT:**

Mr. Toman made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wall and passed. Meeting adjourned at approximately 10:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sonja Vining  
Recording Secretary  
Town of Wallingford  
Charter Revision Commission  
November 10, 2008