

CHARTER COMMISSION

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Robert Russell
Chairman

Michael Kaelin
Vice Chairman

TOWN HALL
238 Danbury Road
Wilton, CT 06897

CHARTER COMMISSION MEETING
June 19, 2009
Wilton Town Hall, Room B

PRESENT: Robert Russell, Mike Kaelin, Alice Ayers, Paul Burnham, Marilyn Gould, Louise Herot, Toni Lee, Doug Levene, Chris Weldon

Chairman Russell called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

Acceptance of Minutes: Upon motion by Ms. Herot, the minutes of the 6/15/09 meeting were unanimously carried. (Mr. Levene abstained as he had not been present on 6/15. Mr. Weldon had not yet arrived)

Consideration of adjustments to Draft

As per a motion by Mr. Weldon, approved by a majority of the Charter Commission on 6/15/09, Mr. Burnham drafted language to include the "hypothetical" scenario of a change in law to allow the Board of Finance to take action on line items in the Board of Education budget.

Regarding the BOE Budget Request, the following was added: "to the extent the law permits the Board of Finance to review and revise, independently, specific Aspects of the Board of Education's Proposed Appropriation, the Board of Education shall define, for its purposes and those of the Board of Finance, the scope of each such Aspect and the amount the Board of Education determines is needed during such fiscal year..." In other sections outlining the Board of Finance's responsibilities during the budget process, was added "if allowed by law" after any reference to Board of Education line items.

Ms. Lee feels that these sections of the Charter are now more complicated. Ms. Herot feels this addition is necessary to have an enabling clause in the event there is a change of law in the future. Mr. Kaelin feels it is more than just looking to the future because there could be items in the Board of Education budget now where the Board of Finance could exercise line item authority, and we should give them the power to do so. Mr. Burnham does not believe that these provisions should be complicated unnecessarily by providing for something that is unlikely to happen.

There was a lengthy discussion of language rewrites in Sections C-30 and C-31. In referrals to line items where the law does not permit independent review, was added – “Board of Education’s Proposed Unrevisable Line Item Appropriation”.

Mr. Russell advised that he has heard of concern by some that the bonding procedure, as re-written, is unintelligible. The other members do not agree.

Ms. Lee moved to accept the First Draft of the Charter, dated 6/19/09, with amendments as of the this meeting, and to send to the Town Clerk and Board of Selectmen. Motion seconded and unanimously carried.

Ms. Lee moved to authorize Chairman Russell to correct any typos. Motion seconded and unanimously carried.

Ms. Herot prepared a lengthy summary of the recommendations being made by this Charter Commission.

Ms. Gould moved to approve the Summary of Recommendations, as prepared by Ms. Herot, and to submit with the Draft Charter. Motion seconded and unanimously carried.

Ms. Gould moved to approve the Comments on BOS Recommendations, as prepared by Ms. Herot, and to submit with the Draft Charter, as required by State Statutes. Motion seconded and unanimously carried.

Mr. Russell advised that the BOS plans to call a special meeting before holding a public hearing on the Draft Charter. After the hearing, the BOS will give their recommendations back to the Charter Commission. This commission then has until 8/17/09 to resubmit to the BOS, to be placed on the November ballot, if they so decide.

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Jan Andras
Recording Clerk
Minutes taken from audio-recording