

Brookfield Charter Revision Committee
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
Thursday February 16, 2012, 7:00 p.m.
Selectman's Conference Room (2nd Floor), Brookfield Town Hall

Present: Chairman L. Miller, Vice Chairman J. Park, Secretary D. Miles, G. Dembowski, R. Jaffe, M. Labadia, S. Martone, D. Propper, P. Scalzo

Absent: None.

Also Present: First Selectman B. Davidson, Recording Secretary D. Cioffi

2.0 Correspondence.

Chairman Miller submitted the following two pieces of correspondence: "Howard Lasser Newsletter" and email from C. Kukk to L. Miller, dated February 11, 2012, 12:01 p.m. with attached PowerPoint Presentation entitled, "Town Managers and the Effect on Voter Turnout A Student Report". Copies are attached hereto.

3.0 Review and Accept February 2, 2012 Meeting Minutes.

Chairman Miller noted that the following sentence should be added to Page 1, under Public Comment, at the end of the paragraph, just prior to the motion in the next paragraph: "As recommended by the Chairman of the EDC, the CRC agrees to propose that the total number of members of the EDC will be eleven."

Commissioner Scalzo moved to approve the Minutes with the correction listed above. Vice Chairman Park seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

1.0 Public Comments (15 minutes).

First Selectmen B. Davidson was present. He discussed some of the comments expressed at the January 26, 2012 Public Hearing. Chairman Miller noted that the comments of Planning Commission Chairman Van Hise were taken into consideration by the CRC, in that it deemed there was no longer a compelling reason to merge the Planning and Zoning Commissions. Chairman Miller discussed EDC Chair H. Kurfeh's comments at the last meeting regarding the increase in that Commission's membership. Chairman Miller also advised that a response was sent to M. Grimes with the data collected by G. Dembowski and P. Scalzo. He also noted Student Intern D. Salvato's research, which concluded there has been an overall decline in voter turnout since 2007, regardless of form of government.

There was discussion regarding the next Board of Selectmen meeting, which will be held March 5, 2012. The First Selectman indicated that the BOS would allow the CRC as much time as it needs at that meeting to make its presentation. From that point, the BOS will respond with any questions and recommended changes. The CRC will be disbanded by April 15, 2012.

4.0 Review Final Draft Charter Revisions (Greg Dembowski and Ron Jaffe).

Vice Chairman Park submitted “Brookfield Town Charter: Table of Contents”. The change on this document is the inclusion of page numbers, and a summary of the items included under each Article. This change will be listed under the Technical questions when the Charter questions are presented on a ballot.

Chairman Miller inquired if the comments made by Town Counsel at the last meeting, as noted in the Minutes, were considered in the Final Draft. With regard to term limits, the Commission advised it wished to keep that Section the same. With regard to Section C4-11b, the Commission wishes to keep the requirement of having a supermajority; to suspend by “an affirmative vote of three members” and to remove by “an affirmative vote of all members”. It was noted that the changes to Section C5-3 became Section 4-12C in the final draft.

With regard to Section C6-10C, Attorney Grogins had suggested that “should” be changed to “may”, and this change was incorporated into the 2-8-12 draft. This is another technical change, related to the appointment of the Town Attorney.

Section C8-2, adds “Town Manager” with regard to the preparation of the Town Budget. With regard to Section 8-8B, Commissioners noted the need to be very clear on the exact dollar amounts being considered. It was noted that the Commission did not agree with Attorney Grogins’ recommendations regarding Section 9-1B, related to the advisory questions.

The Commission’s next meeting will be on March 1, 2012, which will be prior to the presentation to the BOS.

5.0 Review Draft Ballot Questions (Joni Park, Dottie Miles and Susan Martone).

The proposed draft ballot questions were reviewed (attached). After some discussion, it was decided that for ballot questions # 1 and #2, the following words will be added, “and all related definitions and responsibilities.” Question #3 will stay as it is. With regard to question #4, the words, “and to eliminate alternates” will be added at the end of the question. It was suggested that the six changes for percentages and dollar values in question #5 be listed with bullet points, and it was noted that this is not a technical change. It was also noted that there will be no change in Section C4-9C, C4-10A, and C9-3B. It was pointed out that the “Town Budget” does not include the education budget.

Discussion regarding Section C8-5A of the Charter, concerning special appropriations and transfer of appropriations, was continued. The ballot question for this will be, “Shall the Town of Brookfield amend the Town Charter, Section 8-5A, to read, “The Board of Selectmen, when requested by any town department, or after approval by the Board of Finance, may make special appropriations from cash surplus, borrowing as limited by § C8-8 of this Charter or any approved

contingency fund in amounts not to exceed in the aggregate in any one (1) fiscal year up to half a percent (0.5%) of the amount appropriated or ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), whichever is greater, in any fiscal year, for such department in the current Town budget, provided that the aggregate sum so appropriated for all agencies in any fiscal year does not exceed one percent (1%) of the total annual Town budget. The Board of Selectmen when requested by any Town department may also transfer unexpended balances from one appropriation to another within the same department in accordance with the CT General Statutes.”

Sections 8-8B and 8-8C will remain the same.

In Section 8-7, the words, “Town Manager” will be added after “Board of Selectmen”

It was noted that at the back of the Charter, it is clarified that the language is gender-neutral.

Commissioner Martone noted technical questions in the following areas: vacancy appointments not lapse between terms; BOS oath of office procedures changed to keep with current practice; changes in title of Sections to clarify. Commissioner Propper noted that the deletion of the Section (C4-13) relating to compensation for the Selectmen is not just a technical change. He suggested that it be put with Question #2. Commissioner Martone indicated that the topic is discussed in Section C5-5. Commissioner Propper proposed that it read, “Shall the Town of Brookfield amend the Charter to have a five member Board of Selectmen, and all related definitions and responsibilities, and eliminate all references to compensation for the Board of Selectmen.”

Commissioner Dembowski inquired regarding the success of the technical questions at the last Charter Revision, and it was noted that they passed. Commissioner Scalzo suggested that the Commission get direction from Town Counsel with wording the technical changes. It was suggested that the changes be incorporated, emailed to Commission members for additional review, and then sent to Town Counsel.

Commissioner Propper inquired if the compensation subject should be separated from the number of Selectmen, and the Commission members suggested that it be separated.

Commissioner Martone reviewed some renumbering and clarification of certain sections.

It was suggested that after a review of this final draft, the outstanding issues can be solved at the next meeting. Commissioner Propper will document the technical changes. Commissioner Martone will document the rewording and typographical errors. Secretary Miles will draft an explanation of the rationale for changes, and send it to the other members for review. It was suggested that she expand on Chairman Miller’s PowerPoint presentation from the public hearing.

The draft of the ballot questions will be revised, a redraft of the charter, and a chart of changes by category will be sent and reviewed prior to the next meeting.

The Commission members indicated they did not believe that Attorney Grogins would need to see the draft of the Charter prior to presenting to the BOS. The BOS will get it in the format of: the current Charter, the change that was made, and why the change was made.

6.0 Review Presentation Materials to the BOS (Larry Miller).

Chairman Miller will send these materials via emails to CRC members. It was reiterated that the next meeting will be held on March 1, 2012.

Commissioner Propper will get the technical questions into ballot form.

Commissioner Jaffe noted that the Charter Revision accomplishes bringing the Charter up-to-date and meeting the expectations of the current Town population with an efficient form of government that retains the Town Meeting. It was stressed that changes were made only in areas where the CRC found there was a compelling reason to make the change.

First Selectman Davidson suggested that the layout of the ballots be discussed with Town Clerk J. Locke. Vice Chairman Park will speak with Ms. Locke to determine if there are specific requirements.

7.0 Public Comments (15 minutes).

None.

8.0 Adjourn.

Vice Chairman Park moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 p.m. Commissioner Propper seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

*****Next regular meeting to be held on March 1, 2012*****