



Draft Minutes
Charter Revision Commission
Brookfield Town Hall – Room 209
December 7, 2016
7:00 PM

Call to Order: Chair Park called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM with the following in attendance:

Present: Chair Park; Commissioner Ferry; Commissioner Jaffe; Vice Chair Friedrich; Commissioner Dori; Commissioner Donovan

Also Present: Alice Dew, Chair of the Conservation Commission & Land Use Manager; Recording Secretary Emily Cole Prescott

Public Comment: None.

Approval Minutes of Monday, November 21, 2016: Commissioner Jaffe made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 21st meeting. Commissioner Dori seconded the motion. There was no vote on the motion. *This item will be added to the next meeting agenda.*

Request from Conservation Commission Chair, Alice Dew to attend: Members of the CRC introduced themselves to Alice Dew of the Conservation Commission. A. Dew explained that the duties of the Conservation Commission have grown substantially so that the duties cannot be handled solely by the Conservation Commission's volunteers. Chair Dew explained some of the Conservation Commission's tasks which include: overseeing and subcontracting tree trimming; leasing the fields to farmers; maintaining and renting houses on Brookfield's open spaces; community gardens; trail guides; oversight of the Gurski Homestead; management of volunteers. A. Dew indicated that the Conservation Commission has recommended that there be a staff person to work out of the Land Use Office to assist with the oversight and coordination of its tasks. Chair Dew also explained how the conservation role has evolved since her time volunteering on the Conservation Commission over the past twenty years. A. Dew explained that she sees these responsibilities falling into a part-time role, along with the work of the Wetlands Enforcement Officer, as many towns currently have a combined Wetlands Enforcement and Conservation Officer.

Commissioner Jaffe indicated that the CRC should consider the implementation of a part-time role to work as the Conservation Commission Director, and decision and implementation of such role should be the Board of Selectmen's responsibility. Vice Chair Friedrich asked about the possibility of reorganizing some responsibilities of other Departments throughout the Town to complete the work proposed for a part-time conservation director's role. A. Dew replied that the Departments currently collaborate to complete various work throughout the open spaces. A. Dew also clarified that the Plan of Conservation and Development calls for completion of certain

action items, and the proposal would be to have coordination of some of these items done by a part-time conservation director.

Grammatical Revision: A. Dew indicated that there is an extra “l” in the spelling of Fire Marshal throughout the Charter, and recommended that the spelling be corrected.

Suggestion: Erosion & Sediment Control Officer Position – A. Dew also stated that the Charter shows inclusion of an erosion and sedimentation control officer, and to her knowledge, there has been no one assigned to this position during the seven years of her time working for the Land Use Office. She noted the difficulty of assigning the position to one person, as the one role requires collaboration among many officers throughout the Town. Therefore, she recommended removal of the erosion and sediment control officer position from the Charter. A. Dew also indicated that based on her discussions with others in the Land Use Office, there had been suggestions to combine the Planning and Zoning Commission into one Commission.

Suggestion: Gurski Homestead Committee: Commissioner Dori also suggested removal of the Gurski Homestead Committee from the current Charter document, as the committee has been disbanded.

Chair Park motioned to move item 5.c. to item a, the next item on the agenda. Vice Chair Friedrich seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

Calendar: Commissioner Jaffe shared the calendar document he had compiled. The goal is to have the final recommendation to the Board of Selectmen by or before March 31st. There was further discussion about timeline.

The CRC agreed to meet on Saturday, February 11th at 10:00 AM and on Saturday, January 14th at 10:00 AM.

Below are the CRC’s meeting dates, until March 31, 2017:

- December 19th – 7:00 PM
- January 4th – 7:00 PM
- 14th – 10:00
- 23rd – 7:00
- 1st – 7:00
- 11th – 10 AM
- 27th – 7:00 PM
- March 1st – 7:00 PM (Proposed public hearing date)
- March 20th – 7:00 PM (Proposed final meeting to review change to recommendations)
- March 31st – Final report to the BOS

The Commission moved back to the regular order of the agenda. Commissioner Jaffe left the meeting room at 8:02 PM.

Individual Research from Commission Members:

Loretta and Mark Presentation: Commissioner Ferry presented “Brookfield CRC Research”, based on review of other town charters and Connecticut General Statutes.

- Charge #2: *Consider a Charter change to allow for a capital referendum to be done in conjunction with the annual budget referendum without the 45-day wait. This would only apply for the annual budget referendum.* Commissioner Ferry’s recommendation is to not make a revision.
- Charge #3: *Clarification on what items can be petitioned to a town meeting:* Commissioner Ferry shared his research on this topic. His research-based recommendation is to follow the CT General Statutes for language of the petition, to specifically reference applicable state statutes. The CT General Statutes specify what may be petitioned. Commissioner Jaffe noted the importance to clarify a Scribner’s error in this document. Chair Park will further clarify this matter with Town Atty. Beecher.
- Charge #6: *Review budget transfers allowed to be made by the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance. Consider raising or eliminating the dollar amount the BOS and BOF would reallocate in a budget at any time before going to a town meeting for approval. Clarify the reallocation process – one part of the Charter gives them the right to reallocate unexpected funds but the other parts require a town meeting.* Commissioner Ferry shared his research of several different towns about this matter. The Commission also discussed the possibility of adding a cost of living adjustment to the amount of \$40,000 or a percentage rate to naturally adjust the proposed transfer rate. The suggestion is to allow transfer of up to a certain amount with a cost of living adjustment as well as a minimum number of days to make the transfer. Chair Park assigned this research topic to Vice Chair Friedrich, who will draft the primary points for the CRC about this topic. The primary points will then be sent to Atty. Beecher so he may recommend appropriate language for the Charter.
- Charge #13: *Separate votes for First Selectman and from Selectmen –* Vice Chair Friedrich presented a chart showing populations of Selectmen-forms of government. Chair Park explained the current process of voting for the First Selectman and other Selectmen. If this change were to be made, there would potentially be more people running for the positions. Commissioner Ferry also shared his research on the topic of staggering Selectmen’s terms. There was discussion of the Selectmen-form of government.

Salaries of second and third selectmen: The CRC discussed how the second and third selectmen’s positions are paid. The recommendation was to make the salaries of these positions part of the annual budget process.

Commissioner Ferry left the meeting room at 8:41 PM.

Election/Appointment of the Town Clerk’s Position: The Town Clerk’s position is currently a four-year term. Vice Chair Friedrich indicated that the Town Clerk needs a substantial amount of knowledge for the position.

Todd on Ethics: Chair Park suggested that Commissioner Hand and she review the presentation and re-written language and return to the Commission with revised language. Commissioner Hand noted that the General Statutes should be directly referenced in the ethics language. Chair Park stated that her understanding was to remove the term “conflict of interest” from the Charter. Chair Park indicated that when Alice Carolan had attended a previous meeting, her concern was to ensure that the Ethics Board uses the Charter document and references the Code of Ethics found in the Town’s Ordinances. Chair Park stated that the Town has a personnel handbook which includes the statements on ethical conduct and the requirement of ethical conduct. There was brief discussion of what items would be sent to the Board of Ethics and what items would be

sent to the Town's Human Resources Department. Chair Park and Commissioner Hand will draft revised language and return to the Commission with the recommendation.

Jerry to research other Towns on separation of First Selectman vote from other Selectmen Report from Atty. Beecher on what can be petitioned, as well as ethics questions: *This item was discussed above, during charge #13.*

Commissioner Hand recommended informal votes on the charges which the Commission had discussed, especially relative to election of selectmen separately from the First Selectman and the number of Library Board members.

Chair Park will confirm draft language for ethics with Town Attorney Beecher.

Other Business: None.

Public Comment: There were no members of the public present at this meeting.

Adjournment: Commissioner Hand made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 PM. Vice Chair Friedrich seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.