

MINUTES
PUBLIC HEARING
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
BROOKFIELD TOWN HALL – ROOM 133
THURSDAY, MAY 11, 2017
7:00 PM

Call to Order: First Selectman Steve Dunn opened the public hearing at 7:00 PM.

Present: First Selectman Steve Dunn; Selectman Sue Slater; Selectman Marty Flynn; Town Attorney Tom Beecher; Video Recording Secretary Nina Mack; members of the public; members of the Charter Revision Commission (Joni Park; Ron Jaffe; Mark Ferry; Loretta Donovan; Dottie Dori); Meeting Recording Secretary Emily Cole Prescott

Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Hearing: Mr. Dunn explained the purpose of this public hearing, which is to gather public comment about the Charter Revision Commission's recommendations to the Board of Selectmen.

The following public hearing notice had been published in *The Penny Saver*:

The legal voters and residents of the Town of Brookfield are hereby notified that the Board of Selectmen will conduct a public hearing in meeting room 133 at the Brookfield Town Hall, 100 Pocono Road, Brookfield, CT, on Thursday, May 11, 2017, at 7:00 PM for the purpose of receiving public comment and opinion concerning the draft report of the Charter Revision Commission proposing revisions to the Town Charter.

Copies of the Charter Revision Commission draft report are on file and available for public inspection in the office of the Town Clerk and the Town's website www.brookfieldct.gov.

Dated at Brookfield, CT, this 1st day of May, 2017.

Stephen C. Dunn
Sue Slater
Martin Flynn

Board of Selectmen

Mr. Dunn opened the floor for public comment, and the following people addressed the Board:

- *Joni Park, Chair of the Charter Revision Commission*
- *Nelson Malwitz, 1 Great Heron Lane*
- *Loretta Donovan, 42 Candlewood Shores*
- *Dottie Dori, 8 Forty Acre Mountain Road*
- *Jeffrey Kass, 5 Silvermine Manor*
- *Howard Lasser, 116 Tower Road*
- *Betsy McIlvaine, 127 Long Meadow Hill Road*
- *George Walker, 24 Lillinonah Drive*
- *Cydonie Fukami, 40 Laurel Hill Road Unit 305*
- *Catherine Malek, 4 Apache Drive*
- *Mark Ferry, 52 Obtuse Road South*
- *Ron Jaffe, 21 White Pine Drive*

- *Howard Lasser, 116 Tower Road*

Mr. Flynn thanked those who made public comments. He also thanked the Charter Revision Commission for their work.

Ms. Slater thanked the Charter Revision Commission and the public for their time. Ms. Slater mentioned that the Board had received letters of public comment, and she encouraged residents who could not attend tonight's hearing to submit their comments in writing to the Board.

Mr. Dunn noted receipt of the following two letters of public comment, which will be available on the website as part of this meeting:

- Email from J. Fisher, 12 Aramon Circle, dated 05/11/17 Re: Charter Revision Meeting May 11th, 2017
- Email from R. Saluga, 32 Great Heron Lane, dated 05/11/17 Re: Public Hearing on CRC Draft

Mr. Dunn asked for further public comment from the audience and Board. There was none.

At 7:38 PM, Mr. Flynn made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Slater seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

Public Comment Letters Received from Jim Fisher and Rich Saluga:

From: James Fisher [mailto:jffisher12@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, May 11, 2017 11:18 AM
To: Ginny Giovanniello <GGiovanniello@brookfieldct.gov>
Cc: James Fisher <jffisher12@gmail.com>
Subject: Fwd: Charter Revision meeting May 11th 2017

Dear Ginny,

RE: Public Hearing-Charter Revision Draft Report & Recommendations

I am not able to attend the meeting tonight but would like to have my comments read and entered into the public meeting minutes.

Please email me back Ginny that you received this, thank you very much, Jim

Dear Board of Selectmen,

My comments have to do with my original charge that any money authorized by the First Selectman over a certain dollar amount, I used \$20,000 as an example, should go to the BOF, an ad-hoc committee, and in the case of money to be spent in support of possible economic development, that it also go before the EDC for review and input.

In Charter Revision Commission Draft Report, I believe Public Charge #10 is my item of concern, see below,

"Public Charge #10

When the BOS authorizes spending of any money set up an ad-hoc committee to discuss it and have public input.

We believe there are already checks in place to cover this."

The commissions answer to my question is that they "believe there are already checks in place to cover this" does not explain to me then how was it that the current First Selectman was able to spend \$281,000 of Grant money received by the Town, on a study he wanted done on underground utilities?

Where were the checks in place in the current charter to protect the town from a selectman, any selectman, to spend money on their own accord without any input from the public or BOF?

If these checks are in place as charter revision committee has told the public, why were they not utilized then to make sure that the current selectman did not spend over \$250,000 of much needed funds for the streetscape project in the first place?

How can just one person have the authority to spend this huge amount of town funds with absolutely no oversight, on his own accord, and the charter doesn't cover it? Funds I might add now have to be made up for with additional borrowing by tax payers of this town.

I believe this to be the most crucial of all the possible changes that could and should be made to the town charter, because if it isn't fixed now, what is to stop more expenditures from a selectman in the future without any public input or oversight?

I believe both the current first selectman, and town attorney for backing him with the excuse that it was in the plan of development, are at fault with this non approved expenditure and they did not act in the best interest fiscally for the town of Brookfield.

Thank you, and I ask you again to reconsider my concerns for how money is spent on town studies in the future, so that the people have a chance to ask questions prior to our tax dollars being spent, and in this case wasted.

Submitted by email
James Fisher
12 Aramon Circle
Brookfield CT 06804

From: richsalu@aol.com [mailto:richsalu@aol.com]
Sent: Thursday, May 11, 2017 12:24 PM
To: Steve Dunn <SDunn@brookfieldct.gov>; Sue Slater <SSlater@brookfieldct.gov>; Marty Flynn <mflynn@brookfieldct.gov>; Marty Flynn <martyflynn@charter.net>
Cc: Joan Locke <JLocke@brookfieldct.gov>; jperkins@newstimes.com
Subject: Public Hearing on CRC Draft

Dear Members of the Board of Selectmen:

I am unable to attend the public hearing tonight, so I respectfully request and trust you will accept the following as my public comment:

Public Charge #4 - There are times when any Board and/or Commission needs to make an immediate replacement. A good example is the recent Board of Assessment Appeals which was left with only two members participating (what to do in case of disagreement?). This CRC recommendation needlessly ties their hands, and there is no reason to make this Charter change. The fact that the CRC only picked out certain Boards/Commissions to be subject to this change should make this recommendation questionable.

BOS Charge #5 - While the Charter, the Code of Ethics, and the Board of Ethics' own procedures certainly need changes to reduce what appears to have been unchecked power of the Board of Ethics (i.e., needless expenditure of \$40,000), this CRC recommendation should be ignored because it does just the opposite. The wording expands the power and authority of this Board with no oversight and opportunity to check it. [One might note that the CRC Chair is a member of the Board of Ethics, and this recommendation raises a question of conflict of interest, if not a self-serving action].

Public Charge #3 - To my knowledge, this recommendation has been overwhelmingly defeated more than once in recent years by Brookfield voters. There is no need to ask them again. The rationale "...for more representation of all the residents..." simply does not hold up to scrutiny. In addition, it increases the tax burden because it automatically adds to the budget unnecessarily, with the cost of additional selectmen stipends.

BOS Charge #3 - This recommendation should be rejected because it limits the authority of an elected Board of Finance; indeed, it allows a small portion of residents to overturn an election by the entire Town population. If residents are not happy with budgetary decisions by the Board of Finance, they can make changes at the ballot box by electing new officials or vote 'no' on a budget referendum. If we allow small groups to change the budget appropriations at whim, it is an open invitation for chaos and confusion.

Public Charge #1 - Though I agree that, in the event of a loss, someone running for First Selectman can bring a needed and necessary skill set to the full Board of Selectmen, I believe this specific CRC recommendation should be brought before the voters.

BOS Charge #6 - I believe that this recommendation should be brought before the voters.

Public Charge #8 - I believe that this recommendation should be brought before the voters.

Public Charge #9 - As noted above in BOS Charge #3, this CRC recommendation should be rejected as it limits the authority of an elected Board of Finance, and skews the process in which a budget is presented to the public. There is no need for this recommendation, and as above, could invite chaos and confusion, as well as throw the Town into needless political turmoil.

BOS Charge #9 - The rationale put forth in support of this recommendation was the fact that alternates have been diligently working, and so should be allowed to be full members. However, if passed, then new alternates would be in the same position. While I don't believe this is a necessary change, I don't have a problem with it being brought to the voters.

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard.

Sincerely,
Rich Saluga
32 Great Heron Lane
Brookfield, CT 06804
(203) 733-0033