

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
CHARTER REVISION STUDY COMMITTEE**

**Special Meeting
Monday, March 12, 2018
Scout Hall, 28 Abbe Road, East Windsor, CT.**

Committee Members

Co-Chairman: John Matthews, Keith Yagaloff
Regular Members: Don Arcari, Cher Balch, Betsy Burns, William Loos,
John Mazza, Charlie Szymanski
Alternate Members: Rachel Safford, Bonnie Yosky

MEETING MINUTES

**** These Minutes are not official until approved at a subsequent meeting****

CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL:

Co-Chairman Matthews called the Meeting to Order at 7:02 p.m. in the large Meeting Room, Scout Hall, 28 Abbe Road, East Windsor, CT.

Roll Call: **Present:** John Matthews, Co-Chairman; Keith Yagaloff, Co-Chairman; Don Arcari,; Betsy Burns; William Loos,; John Mazza; Charlie Szymanski, Bonnie Yosky
 Absent: Cher Balch, Jack Mannette, Rachel Safford;

Press: Anthony Branciforte, Journal Inquirer.

ADD AGENDA ITEMS, VOTE TO ADD/CHANGE IF NECESSARY:

MOTION: To ADD discussion of Facebook comments.

Loos moved/Yosky seconded/VOTE: **In Favor:** **Unanimous**

PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES, COMMENTS AND ACCEPTANCE VOTE:

MOTION: To ACCEPT the previous Minutes of the Charter Revision Study Committee dated February 26, 2018 as presented.

**Burns moved/Yosky seconded/
VOTE:** **In Favor:** **Matthews/Arcari/Burns/Loos/Mazza/Szymanski/Yosky**

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Opposed: No one
Abstained: Yagaloff

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: The public is encouraged to provide their thoughts as succinct as possible. CSC members will not comment on the merits of an idea at this meeting, but may ask questions to clarify the proposal. A time limit may be imposed.

No one from the public was present.

NEW BUSINESS/c. Comments from Facebook:

Co-Chairman Yagaloff referenced recent Facebook comments which suggest that the Charter Revision Study Committee is bringing nothing new to their discussions, and those topics which are being discussed will be costly to the taxpayer.

Co-Chairman Yagaloff cited the purpose of this Committee is to propose to strengthen the legislative body – the Town Meeting of East Windsor; recommendations that will be made to the Board of Selectmen (BOS) at the end of this Committee’s tenure will propose ways to achieve that goal. The implication of the Facebook posts is that changes being considered will cost the Town money. It’s important for the public to know the Committee is not doing anything to affect the taxpayers negatively.

Discussion followed. Various members noted the purpose of a charter revision is to update the document to address current economic conditions; the changes being considered by this Committee are being reviewed in comparison to other Towns to see what can be applied to East Windsor, and changes are being proposed to update our charter to be reflective of East Windsor’s current fiscal environment. Co-Chairman Matthews noted that while there have been other Charter revisions proposed since the 2009 passage of the Charter it’s been nearly ten years since the public has had an opportunity to vote on proposed changes. This Committee is precursor of the Charter Revision Commission; in a few months this Committee will pass on recommendations to the Board of Selectmen and the Charter Revision Commission, which will undertake the work of the actual Charter revision.

NEW BUSINESS/c. Other Town Charters of interest:

Co-Chairman Matthews provided the Committee with a synopsis of the Charter for the Town of **Suffield**. Highlights include:

1. They, like East Windsor, function under the Selectmen/Town Meeting form of government.
2. Define the Town Meeting as the legislative body.
3. BOS pass ordinances, process to make changes occurs prior to going to Town Meeting, when ordinance is presented at Town Meeting it’s the final document so the public is clear what they’re voting on – no further changes can be made at the Town Meeting.

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Discussion followed, the Committee liked the interim forum for public input. Changes considered would not change the principal purpose of the ordinance but could amend associated processes. The Committee proposed publishing the ordinance online and via flyer to educate/inform the public prior to a vote.

4. If the Board of Selectmen have done something the people oppose they can petition, with signatures of 10% of the population, to go to vote to affect a change.
5. 5 member Board of Selectman, including a First Selectman.
6. Terms of all Selectmen are 2 years; East Windsor is the only town with a 4 year term for the First Selectmen.

The Committee generally favored the 4 year term for the First Selectman position to enable familiarization with municipal processes.

7. Have a Director of Finance and First Selectmen who are obligated to work together.
Discussion followed regarding the addition of an unaffiliated person who could assist the First Selectman and the Board of Selectmen to collect information and conduct research. The Committee considered the appropriate position for East Windsor, a Chief Financial Officer or a Town Administrator. They reviewed the job functions of each position, the and interaction between this position and the Board of Selectmen and other Town agencies. At this point the Committee felt a CFO with a strong financial background could assist to coordinate long term planning and spending objectively, while a Town Administrator could assist on a more administrative basis.

Somers:

1. Board of Selectmen/Town Meeting form of government.
2. BOS can pass ordinances which stand until someone petitions to go to Town Meeting to reverse an ordinance.

NEW BUSINESS/d. Further review of January 16th Brainstorm List:

i. Further consolidate/Prioritize list:

Co-Chairman Yagaloff suggested the Committee review the Charter by chapter during future meetings rather than focusing specifically on the brainstorming lists.

REVISED Priority list

- A. Reduce number of failed budget referendums to two from current three.
- B. Define how to allocate default budget money.
- C. After the last budget vote, what is the default percentage.
- D. Address ambiguities in the Charter
 - a. Put Charter into Municode to improve searches.
 - b. Identify state statutes where applicable
 - c. Specify state statutes for establishment of boards and commissions.

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- E. Define requirements for departments and boards to provide narratives for budget requests.
- F. Consider Charter provision for CFO position.
- G. Consider Charter provision for Town Administrator position.
- H. Clarify role of Police Commission.
- I. Define/clarify Town Attorney selection process/term
- J. Consider cost sharing Commission in Charter.
- K. Reduce number of petitioners to force referendum
- L. Charter to require Procurement/purchasing procedures

ii: Research assignments:

Review and compare Charters for the following Towns; comparative towns must function under Board of Selectmen/Town Meeting form of government:

- Canton
- Farmington
- Avon
- Simsbury
- Granby

BRAINSTORM FOR ADDITIONAL ITEMS:

No discussion this evening.

2ND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

No one from the public was present.

SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING AGENDA:

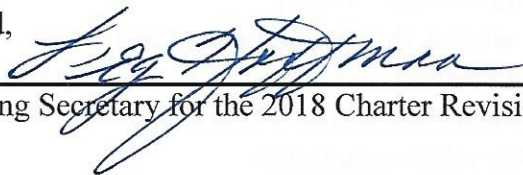
Review revised priorities list.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: To ADJOURN this Meeting at 9:06 p.m.

Loos moved/Yagaloff seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,



Peg Hoffman, Recording Secretary for the 2018 Charter Revision Study Committee

2018 East Windsor Charter Study Commission

Review of current Suffield Charter ~ ^{March 12,} ~~February 26,~~ 2018

Highlights:

1. Form of Government ~ Selectman /Town Meeting
 - a. Town Meeting is legislative body. (See Chapter 10)
 - b. Town Meeting approves Annual budget.
 - c. Electors can petition for Referendum to override Town meeting decisions. (10%, 6%)
 - d. Ordinances are approved at Town Meeting
 - i. There must be a public hearing on Ordinances before voting at Town Meeting.
2. BOS ~ First Selectman and four Selectmen. All are two year terms.
 - a. First Selectman is CEO and Chief Administrative Officer, and contract officer with approval of the BOS
3. Other Elected positions, all four year terms (not a complete list)
 - a. Board of police Commissioners, since 1945. See Special Act.
Police Chief reports to Board of Police Commissioners.
 - b. Treasurer
 - c. Tax Collector
 - d. Town Clerk
 - e. Board of Fire Commissioners ~ 6 members
 - f. BOE ~ 9 members
 - g. BOF ~ 6 members
 - h. P&Z ~ 7 members
4. Appointed Positions.(A truncated list)
 - a. Director of Finance appointed to a four year term by a combined BOS and BOF vote. Director is responsible to BOF and BOS
 - i. Assist in preparation of operating and capital budget
 - ii. The Director of Finance, the Treasurer, and the First selectman shall work closely together to serve the best interest of the Town.

5. Positions appointed by BOS
 - a. Building Inspector
 - b. Town Counsel
 - c. Assessor
 - d. Administrator of Social Services
6. Board of Finance is responsible for preparing, managing, and monitoring the Annual Town Budget. They will submit a proposed Annual Budget to the Annual Town Meeting in May.
7. Annual Budget is voted by Town Meeting, and if failed, (or passed) a petition for a referendum may be filed. A petition requires 10% of the electors of the Town within 10 days of the past vote.
8. Other Town Meeting votes can be sent to referendum with a petition signed by 6% of the electors signed within 21 days.
9. Other
 - a. Suffield's Charter lists 20 Connecticut General Assembly Special Acts from 1869 thru 1967 that enabled certain actions by the town. The Charter was adopted in 1985. The charter and its amendments can and do rescind some of these Special Acts that are inconsistent with the latest Charter as amended.
 - b. The Charter also has a 13 page Index.
 - c.
 - i. (All the forgoing is my interpretation of the most recent Suffield Charter, Respectively submitted, John Matthews, Co-chairman of Charter Revision Study Commission March 2018)