

**CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION
TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
11 RYE STREET
EAST WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT 06088**

These minutes are not official until approved at the subsequent meeting.

Minutes of Regular Meeting

Thursday, January 16, 2014 at 6:30 p.m.

Members Present: Richard LeBoriosis, Karla Schultz, Leonard Norton,
Richard Pippin, Jr., Charles Riggott, Karla Schult (arrived
at 6:35 p.m.) and Lois Noble (arrived at 6:40 p.m.)

Members Absent: Alan Baker

Others: Kathy Pippin, Jack Mannette, Steve Dearborn and Jim
Barton

Press: None

I. Call to Order

Chairman Richard LeBoriosis called the Regular Hearing to Order at 6:34 p.m. in the East Windsor Town Hall.

Mr. LeBoriosis noted for the record that Ms. Noble was absent from the meeting, but will be arriving late.

II. Approval of Minutes

• Special Meeting Minutes of December 5, 2013

It was **MOVED** (Pippin) and **SECONDED** (Riggott) and **PASSED** (4-0) (In Favor – R. LeBoriosis, L. Norton, R. Pippin, and C. Riggott; Opposed - None) that the Charter Revision Commission approves the Special Meeting Minutes of December 5, 2013 as presented.

III. Public Comments

None.

(Karla Schultz entered the meeting at 6:35 p.m.)

IV. New Business

Mr. LeBoriosis reported to the Committee that he has sent a request to CCM to have speakers make a presentation to the Committee in regards to Professional Administrators at a future meeting.

Secondly, Mr. LeBoriosis asked the Board Members if they had objection for the Committee to request the First Selectman to send a letter to all Boards and Commissions along with Department Heads of the Town requesting if they have any concerns with the Charter, they can send their concerns to this Committee for review at a future meeting. No objection was heard.

V. Old Business

• General Overview of Charter

Mr. LeBoriosis indicated the next Chapter to be discussed is Chapter VIII Finance. Ms. Schultz initially commented that this section is too lengthy and needs to be condensed. Mr. LeBoriosis commented that at the public hearing, the 2% default budget was discussed by many. Mr. Pippin remarked that the 2% default budget has been defined by in a legal opinion acquired by the Board of Selectmen from the Town Attorney. He indicated the opinion cites that the increase is not line by line but an increase to the general line. Mr. Pippin and Mr. Norton mentioned Section 8(3) regarding Capital Improvement Budget and the deadline in getting the recommendations to the Board of Selectmen. It now reads November 1st but it should be pushed to December 1st.

Ms. Lois Noble entered the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

Mr. Pippin mentioned that on Page 40, Section 8(4)2(2) says “in” the Town Clerk’s office, but it should be filed with the Town Clerk’s office. It was noted that “in” already had a line through the draft. Mr. Norton began discussing two separate budget proposals for the Town; one for the Board of Education and one for the Town. He hears many conversations in the Town about how this would help the average voter during budget season. He remarked he remembers many budgets where the Board of Education got an increase and the Town did not. Mr. Pippin indicates that the reason the budget is one budget and the three referendums were put into place is because there is a deadline at which budgets have to be put into place, so tax rates and tax bills can be commuted and sent out in the beginning of the fiscal year. Ms. Noble inquired as to which Towns have budgets

which are separated, she would like a list of those Towns and would like to know how it works and what has been the success rate of same. She continued that the Town of East Windsor which constantly defeats budgets and only allows 2% increases are losing people who are either leaving the Town or not moving into Town at all because the Town does not invest in itself or the school systems. Mr. Pippin said in fairness to the Board of Education, the magnet schools are picking the best kids and they are going to those schools versus going to the Town schools. Mr. Norton believes the schools in Town are good. Ms. Schultz commented that everyone needs to keep in mind that the families use the educational system in Town and the State mandates services and costs of those services are expensive. She began explaining special education costs and how those costs are very high and there is no control of those costs. Other costs that cannot be controlled are insurance costs, those costs cannot be absorbed into the budget, and only having a 2% increase every year, the Town will not be able to sustain.

Mr. LeBoriosis commented that it is the job of the Board of Finance to be able to allocate the monies when during the budget process. He remarked that it is almost impossible to keep up with the rate of inflation at certain times. The discussion continued regarding the default percentage and what to base it upon and how it is unfair to base it upon Social Security increases because those increases are not realistic. It is the general concern about the Town of East Windsor's infrastructure and trying to keep it up. Surrounding Towns are keeping up with their infrastructure while the Town of East Windsor is not due to budget constraints and the Town not investing in itself. A suggestion that the default 2% budget maybe should also coincide with the Grand List. The discussion continued regarding costs of services, such as garbage constantly rise year after year and the Town is unable to absorb those costs in the current budgets which are being passed in the Town.

The Committee began discussing referendums. Currently, three referendums are held before the default budget comes into play. A suggestion of one or two referendums rather than three, in an effort of saving money. It was the opinion of Mr. LeBoriosis that he doesn't like referendums and is a fan of having the governmental body vote on a budget and if the townspeople do not like the budget, they can vote those they elected into office, out of office. Many people do not vote in referendums, the turnout may be 5%. Only 5% of the townspeople are dictating the budget. Town Meetings too do

not have the participation of the townspeople during the budget. It is the same people who attend the meetings. After the discussion, it was the general consensus that there should be only two referendums, and if the second one fails, then a default budget would then go into place. It was decided that the percentage of default would be discussed further at a later time. It was also the general consensus that the language will be reviewed so this section can be condensed.

Mr. LeBoriosis inquired about a Charter provision allowing the Board of Education and Board of Selectmen to enter into regionalizing services in order to save on costs for services. A discussion regarding regionalizing services, such as police and safety services. They discussed having services regionalizing towns within counties as they do in the mid-west.

Chapter IX – Town Employees was the next chapter discussed. It was suggested that it should be changed that the police chief report to the First Selectman/Administrator rather than reporting to the Police Commission, as other towns do. It was also suggested that all town contracts extended to four to five years rather than three years as it is now. This would also save money due to the costs of negotiating salaries, including legal expenses. It was agreed that most contracts are never negotiated within the three year period and by the time they are settled, the Town must pay retro-salary.

A discussion about Chapter X wherein it recommends that Town Meeting are to be held at 7:30 p.m. and it was mentioned this is noted in the state statutes. A discussion regarding the Town Meetings and how they are mentioned in two sections of the Charter and how they are used. It was mentioned that the budget can be passed at a Town Meeting, unless a petition is presented to force the budget to go to referendum. It was questioned about how many people would have to sign the petition in order to force a referendum. The Charter currently dictates 200 people.

A brief discussion was held.

Mr. LeBoriosis indicated all Committee Members need to think about all of these options for further discussions at future meetings. He will begin to draft language in regards to changes which have been discussed for the Committee to review at the next meeting. He will also follow-up on speakers from CCM and concerns from

Boards, Commissions and Department Heads for the next meeting
which is scheduled for the first Thursday in February at 6:30 p.m.

VI. Adjournment

It was **MOVED** (Norton) and **SECONDED** (Pippin) and **PASSED** (5-0) (In Favor - K. Schultz, L. Norton, R. Pippin, C. Riggott, and L. Noble; Opposed - None) that the Charter Revision Commission adjourns the January 16, 2014 Regular Meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise M. Piotrowicz
Recording Secretary