

TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

Special Meeting
Monday, July 23, 2018
Scout Hall, 28 Abbe Road, East Windsor, CT.

Committee Members

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

MEETING MINUTES

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

TIME AND PLACE OF SPECIAL MEETING:

Co-Chairman Matthews called the Meeting to Order at 7:04 p.m. in large Meeting Room, Scout Hall, 28 Abbe Road, East Windsor, CT.

ATTENDANCE:

Present: John Matthews, Co-Chairman; Keith Yagaloff, Co-Chairman; Don Arcari, Cher Balch, Betsy Burns; William Loos, John Mazza, Charlie Szymanski, Bonnie Yosky

Absent: Rachel Safford;

Press: Anthony Branciforte, Journal Inquirer.

AGENDA APPROVAL:

MOTION: To ADD CORRESPONDENCE to this Agenda.

Loos moved/Yosky seconded/**DISCUSSION:** None.

VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous (Matthews/Yagaloff/Arcari/Balch/Burns/Loos/Mazza/Szymanski/Yosky)

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

A. Minutes of June 25, 2018:

MOTION: To ACCEPT the Minutes of the Charter Revision Commission dated June 25, 2018, as amended:

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**Page 1, Roll Call: Present: include Cher Balch
Cher moved/Loos seconded/DISCUSSION: None.
VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous (Matthews/Yagaloff/Arcari/Balch/Burns/
Loos/Mazza/Szymanski/Yosky)**

B. Minutes of July 9, 2018:

**MOTION: To ACCEPT the July 9th Minutes of the Charter Revision
Commission.**

**Yosky moved/Arcari seconded/DISCUSSION: None.
VOTE: In Favor: Matthews/Yagaloff/Arcari/Burns/Loos/
Mazza/Szymanski//Yosky
Opposed: No one
Abstained: Balch**

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: The public is encouraged to provide their thoughts as succinct as possible. CRC 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.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Continued discussion of Supplemental Appropriation Process:

1. Review of June 25, 2017 and July 9, 2018 meeting minutes for clarification of proposed changes:

The Commission revisited the discussion of obtaining bids in advance of project proposals. It was noted that it's difficult to acquire bids in the early stages of investigation of project costs. The Commission felt that there should be cost comparisons from other towns. Discussion continued regarding the current funding process.

a. Obtain substantiated cost estimates before advancing project proposal; b. All requests to go through BOS first:

The Commission reviewed various chapters within the Charter relative to the Supplemental Appropriation process and the Capital Improvement process. Discussion continued regarding the use of the Supplemental Appropriation process when funding is available via the General Fund balance. The Board also reviewed the timing, and the process, of selecting Capital Improvement Projects. Review of the CIP project list by the Board of

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Selectmen on November 1st creates disparity in an election year. The date should be advanced two months to allow a new Board of Selectmen to review the projects. Often projects forwarded for Supplemental Appropriations are projects which ranked lower on the CIP selection list but, from time to time, can be funded through Supplemental Appropriations due to a healthy Fund Balance. .

The Commission felt the path through the CIP process and the Supplemental Appropriation process should be similar. At this point the Commission considered the following steps for review and approval:

- a. Propose to obtain substantiated cost estimates before advancing project proposal
- b. All request to go through BOS first – BOS to reject proposals not accompanied with cost/benefit analysis.
- c. BOF and CFO to advise and consent on affordability (not on policy or merit). (Can be overruled).
- d. BOS to hold hearing before Town Meeting, or Referendum.
- e. Town Meeting to require quorum or go to Referendum if above threshold \$\$\$.
- f. Excess funds to be returned to General Fund.

The Charter should clarify the Board of Selectmen, or a petition, (only) sends items to Town Meetings.

e. Town Meeting to require quorum or go to Referendum if threshold \$\$\$:

The concept of requiring a quorum for approval of large value projects, such as projects carrying a proposed value of \$100,000, was initiated. Instead of approval of a project by a low number of voters a quorum based on a percentage of the registered voters would be the option. The recent approval of over \$800,000 in Supplemental Appropriations by approximately 50 people was reviewed as an example. There are currently 8,000 registered voters. If a quorum of 1% were required 80 registered voters would be required to approve a proposed project. If the quorum was not met then the Town Meeting would be adjourned until the next Town Meeting, or Referendum.

The Commission discussed setting tiers for consideration of projects to keep the number of Referendums manageable. As an example, projects valued at \$100,000 to \$500,000 would be one tier; projects valued at \$500,000 or more would be another tier. The Commission also discussed the benefit of approving the projects via referendums, which run from early morning to mid-evening and give voters a better opportunity to vote as lifestyles vary. Concern was cited, however, that the Town Meeting form of government gives people the opportunity to debate an issue, while referendums lack the ability for debate. To mitigate this concern, a Town Hearing would be held before Referendums.

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Discussion continued acknowledging the benefits of both the Town Meeting and a referendum. The consensus of the Commission is to look for ways to improve the checks and balances in government, and improve the process.

f. Excess funds to be returned to General Fund:

The Commission felt a CFO should monitor the projects to ensure the project scope is maintained. Excess funds not expended on the approved project should be returned to the General Fund.

OLD BUSINESS:

B. Continue discussion of pros and cons for Town Administrator position:

The Commission preferred, at this point, the CFO position. They felt a Town Administrator is perceived to be controlling rather than being a facilitator. They felt a CFO, with a strong business background, would also be adept with the union negotiations, and would work with the BOF and other boards to clarify expenditures.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Review CFO position and list of responsibilities:

See discussion under **CORRESPONDENCE** regarding town comparisons of the Treasurer vs. the CFO position. Also see discussion above under **OLD BUSINESS, Item B**, regarding additional comments on the CFO position. The result of a straw vote found the majority of the Commission favored the CFO over the Town Administrator position. Some of the members felt there was confusion regarding the job title in relation to the duties performed; perhaps the Administrator position should be retitled as administrative support for the CFO and others. The Commission reiterated their intent to provide the people with the opportunity to vote on proposals, whether the proposals involve budgets, supplemental appropriations, project approvals, or other large purchases.

B. Review Ordinance originations/change process:

No discussion this evening.

C. Review Annual Budget process and proposal for Line Item Referendum Vote:

No discussion this evening.

D. Review/Discuss Charge from Board of Selectmen:

No discussion this evening.

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E. Correspondence:

Input from First Selectman Maynard regarding comparisons of towns employing a Treasurer vs. a Finance Director. From First Selectman Maynard's chart, East Windsor is the only town employing only a Treasurer, although the Treasurer is supported by two Assistant Treasurers. Co-Chairman Matthews will follow up with town's employing the dual positions to discuss job descriptions.

2ND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

No one from the public was present.

SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING AGENDA:

Continue to work on current agenda items.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: To ADJOURN this Meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Loos moved/Yosky seconded/

**VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous (Matthews/Yagaloff/Arcari/Balch/Burns/
Loos/Mazza/Szymanski/Yosky)**

Respectfully submitted,

Peg Hoffman, Recording Secretary for the 2018 Charter Revision Commission