

# Charter Revision Commission Minutes

Regular Meeting on January 31, 2019

6:30PM - Call to order by Vice-Chairwoman Diaz

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: John Brunetti absent, Victoria Clifford present, Monique Bolt absent, Rohan Smith present, Silvana Apicella present, John Carrano present, Iris Diaz present, David Riccio absent, Edward Granfield present

Motion to accept meeting minutes from January 3rd, 2019 meeting by Rohan Smith.  
Seconded by John Carrano. Passed.

No Q&A session.

Floor opens for discussion.

Carrano: In regards to the section on the vacancy of the mayor, inquires when compensation begins for the person who replaces the mayor.

Granfield: States that when sworn in, they should then begin receiving compensation.

The Commission reviews their edits of the City Council section language in the Charter. No further edits made.

The Commission reviews their edits of the City Clerk section language in the Charter. Residency requirement removed, citing that this should be decided upon in an employee contract by City Council rather than the charter.

The Commission reviews their edits of the Department of Police section language in the Charter. Reinforced language regarding residency for the Police Chief. Also added language stating that should any of the language of this section conflict with state statute, state statute takes precedence.

The Commission reviews their edits of the Organization of Civil Preparedness section language in the Charter. No further edits made.

The Commission reviews their edits of the Emergency Response System section language in the Charter. Solidified language acknowledging the system's existence as well as stating it reports to the city manager.

City Council Chairman Ronald Quagliani joins the audience.

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OF WEST HAVEN

Granfield: Inquires if language is needed to allow for regional integration of fire and police departments.

Quagliani: Language can be added, so long as it uses "may" rather than "shall."

The Commission reviews their edits of the Planning and Zoning section language in the Charter.

Granfield: States that the changes the department may need stem from a functional standpoint rather than a structural standpoint. As such, the charter is not able to improve the department's efficiency and effectiveness as it changes structure, less so function.

The Commission reviews their edits of the Board of Ethics and Compliance section language in the Charter. No further edits made.

The Commission reviews their edits of the Water Pollution Control section language in the Charter. No further edits made.

The Commission reviews their edits of the Village Improvement section language in the Charter.

Carrano: States that the number of libraries are not listed in the charter, but should be acknowledged that there can be a varying number of libraries.

Quagliani: Respectfully provided personal opinion that the city council should be taken out of this section and allow for competitive bidding for libraries.

Commission entertains the idea that the Village Improvement Association should be removed but allow for future latitude in the language.

Carrano: Changing the word "shall" to "may" in the section language could give the City Council more flexibility.

The Commission reviews their edits of the Probate Court section language in the Charter. No further edits made.

Commission as a whole reconsiders term limits and length of terms for elected officials. Though not final, current majority of the commission suggests a limit of three terms, each four years long.

Quagliani: Inquires if these conditions would be retroactive.

Granfield: States that these conditions will be legally vetted first but does not see the conditions being retroactive.

The Commission reviews their edits of the Budget and Bonding section language in the Charter.

Commission suggests Treasurer Michael Last should review this section as well and provide some insight.

Carrano: Inquires on when departmental budgeting happens. Also inquires if there should be a supermajority for changing line items in the budget.

Granfield: Mentions that the Commission has managed to include many of the recommendations made by the Mayor Rossi, Chairman Quagliani, and Treasurer Last. Suggests that a trigger be placed in the language to discourage large hikes in tax rates.

Quagliani: States that this idea must be taken in stride and to be careful with including this in the charter. This language would also need teeth to it in order to ensure it is enforced.

Granfield: Reconsiders the suggestion due to the current financial climate in West Haven.

Discussion concludes.

New Business:

Granfield: Suggests having school kids design a cover and a back cover for the final version of charter. Will talk to Superintendent Neil Cavallaro to pitch the idea.

Carrano: Will begin working on reorganizing sections in the charter to promote fluidity and flow. Will also continue working on a PowerPoint presentation to summarize the changes made by the Commission.

Granfield: Aims to use February to make last-minute changes and to approve changes by motioning. Aims to have legal review conducted during the month of March, then public hearing in April.

New Business concludes.

Motion to adjourn by Iris Diaz.

Seconded by Silvana Apicella.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15PM.