

CITY OF STAMFORD 19TH CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

Members

JEANETTE BILICZNIANSKI

CYNTHIA BOWSER

KAREN CAMPOREALE

SUE HALPERN

FRANCES LANE

MICHAEL LAROBINA

Members

STEVEN LOEB

ALEX MARTINEZ

J.R. MCMULLEN

SHELLEY MICHELSON

ANTHONY PRAMBERGER, JR.

CLEMON WILLIAMS

Steven Kolenberg, Co-Chair
Thomas Lombardo, Co-Chair
Jackie Pioli, Clerk

MEETING REPORT Wednesday June 8, 2022 7:00 p.m.

This meeting was held remotely. In attendance were Commission Co-Chairs Kolenberg and Lombardo; Clerk Pioli; and Commission Members Bilicznianski, Camporeale, Halpern, Lane, Larobina, Martinez, McMullen, Michelson, Pramberger, and Williams. Excused were Commissioners Bowser and Loeb.

1. Co-Chair Lombardo called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.
2. Clerk Pioli confirmed that 13 members were present and two were excused.
3. Commissioner McMullen led the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Communications and Correspondence:

Co-Chair Kolenberg discussed a possible live social event for the Commission members to get to know one another. Commissioner Loeb has offered his residence for an outdoor gathering on June 18th. It was asked if everyone can email the Co-Chairs to respond with their availability. Commission work will not be discussed as this will be a social event.

Commissioner McMullen requested that hard copies of the Charter be sent to everyone. Some members stated they already have hard copies. Co-Chair Lombardo stated he would contact Central Services to get 15 bound copies.

15. Update on Outside Counsel Search:

Commissioner Larobina led the discussion on this item.

Commissioner Larobina, at the request of the Co-Chairs, sent a letter to the Purchasing Agent requesting to begin the process of an RFP. The Purchasing Agent is taking direction of Corporation Counsel, who is saying he has the authority to select the outside counsel without an RFP process, although he is not opposed to following the RFP process.

¹ Video Time Stamp: 00:08:00

Speaking for himself and not the entire Commission, Commissioner Larobina disagrees with Corporation Counsel selecting the outside counsel because the Charter explains that would be necessary with action, a case or a proceeding. The Charter Commission charge is none of these.

Commissioner Larobina explained that if Corporation Counsel selects the outside counsel, it could be perceived that this person would give advice more favorable to what the Mayor wants, instead of an independently selected counsel.

The purchasing process should be followed to make this selection as transparent as possible.

Corporation Counsel stated he would get back to Commissioner Larobina early next week (the week of June 13th).

There was then discussion with the full Commission.

This is a highly specialized need and would require someone who has experience in Charter Revision in Connecticut.

If Sec. 23-18.1 of the Charter is read piece by piece one could see how it says Corporation Counsel should select the outside counsel, but you have to go further to read beyond that first section.

The Commission agreed that the “department” stated in the purchasing ordinance refers to the Commission.

The Commission will give it a little more time for Corporation Counsel to review this matter and wait to hear back from him.

A motion to create a resolution affirming the common desire to employ outside counsel, pursuant to the highly specialized nature of law the Commission is undertaking, and empower Commissioner Larobina to speak on behalf of this Commission was made.

A motion to amend to the original motion to include language that reflects the necessity to have an open, competitive RFP process for transparency was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 13-0-0 (Commissioners Kolenberg, Lombardo, Pioli, Bilicznianski, Camporeale, Halpern, Lane, Larobina, Martinez, McMullen, Michelson, Pramberger, and Williams in favor).

Chair Kolenberg explained his intention of this motion is to get a commitment from the Commission that it wants an RFP, but to first wait to hear back from Corporation Counsel the week of June 13th.

A motion to clarify the previous motion to empower Commissioner Larobina to speak on behalf of the Commission to Corporation Counsel on this matter, and that the Commission supports an open and transparent RFP process, was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 13-0-0 (Commissioners Kolenberg, Lombardo, Pioli, Bilicznianski, Camporeale, Halpern, Lane, Larobina, Martinez, McMullen, Michelson, Pramberger, and Williams in favor).

A motion to create a committee to work on the RFP with both Co-Chairs, Commissioners Larobina and Williams was made, and seconded.

Co-Chair Kolenberg stated this was already voted on in a previous meeting. After a brief discussion, a motion to create a committee to work on the RFP, consisting of Co-Chairs Kolenberg and Lombardo, and Commissioners Larobina, Loeb, Martinez, and Williams was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 13-0-0 (Commissioners Kolenberg, Lombardo, Pioli, Bilicznianski, Camporeale, Halpern, Lane, Larobina, Martinez, McMullen, Michelson, Pramberger, and Williams in favor).

²6. Review on the Charge and spreadsheet on Charter sections

A motion to hold this item until the next meeting was made, seconded, and approved by vote of 12-1-0 (Commissioners Kolenberg, Lombardo, Pioli, Bilicznianski, Camporeale, Halpern, Lane, Larobina, Martinez, Michelson, Pramberger, and Williams in favor; Commissioner McMullen opposed).

³7. Committee assignments and additional committee discussion

Co-Chair Lombardo stated that he and Co-Chair Kolenberg reviewed the Commissioners' Committee preferences and the suggestions received by the Commissioners, the public, and others. They did not receive many responses to the Committee preferences. The Government Services Committee has been broken down into three smaller committees. The Committees will now be:

- Finance
- Land Use
- Appointed Boards and Commissions
- City Departments and Agencies
- Elected Officials

Co-Chair Lombardo asked if everyone can look at the new list of Committees and get back to the Co-Chairs by Friday, June 10th.

All Commission members will be able to participate in any meeting, but non-Committee members will not be able to vote in Committee meetings.

The Commission and/or Committees need to decide what issues will be taken up and what issues will not.

It was requested that the BOR office be asked to split up the Charge according to the five Committees, so it would be easier for the Committee members to go through.

Co-Chair Kolenberg pointed out that one of the documents the Commissioners received has the charges organized by the three original Committees (before Government Services was broken down further).

8. A motion to approve the May 11, 2022 and May 12, 2022 minutes was made, seconded, and approved by unanimous vote with Commissioners Michelson and Williams abstaining from the May 11th minutes, and Commissioner Williams abstaining from the May 12th minutes.

9. Co-Chair Lombardo adjourned the meeting at 9:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Co-Chairs Lombardo and Kolenberg

This meeting is on [video](#).

² Video Time Stamp: 01:16:00

³ Video Time Stamp: 01:21:21