

CITY OF STAMFORD 19TH CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION CITY DEPARTMENTS COMMITTEE

Clemon Williams, Chair
Members
Frances Lane
Thomas Lombardo
JR McMullen
Anthony Pramberger

MINUTES

Wednesday, August 31, 2022

The meeting was held remotely via Zoom.

1. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order at 7:01pm and all members were present.
2. Roll Call
3. Review of Charges for Committee (See [Attachment](#))

Charter issues numbers 28 and 31 - Review of years of experience for the Corporation Counsel and form of oath elected office for elected officials are moved to the Elective Officials Committee without objection. As part of this, the Elected Officials Committee will also address other employees in the City, including fire and police officials will also be concerned.

Charter issue 19 – Mayor’s power to administer oath – We will leave this with the Elected Officials Committee.

Charter issue 118 – Preserving the volunteer fire department – members of the Subcommittee unanimously agreed that there will be no change in the language.

Charter issue 85 - Make use of City Engineer and Municipal Engineer consistent. After discussion the Committee agreed that we would reach out to the City Engineer and see if there was a reason for the use of both terms in the Charter.

Charter issues 85 -90 - all deal with making the Charter compliant with the ADA. The Committee discussed whom we should hear from on this issue. The Committee decided that we would ask to hear from Vikki Cooper on this issue and wait until we get the attorney on board to see if this is all that we need to consider on these issues.

Charter issue number 13 - Allow citizen petitions to be received, reviewed, and adjudicated by Board of Representatives. The Subcommittee agree that we will wait and get more clarification on this issue when the Elected Officials Committee has individuals from the Board of Representatives present.

Charter issue number 15 - Modernize and look into digitizing City records to expand public access to these records, including (but not limited to) the voting records of elected officials. This is an issue that we will have to wait on an attorney to discuss. Moreover, there are many items which are already on-line.

Consequently, we will have the Board of Representatives clarify this at the Elected Officials Committee meeting.

Charter issue 7 - Clarify the ordinance process to require that draft ordinances must be published, and a public hearing be held by Committee prior to approval by Committee and clarify when a second public hearing must be held if a draft ordinance is revised.

Without objection, the Subcommittee agree to wait until we have an attorney to decide if we have the authority and/or mandate to address this issue.

Charter issue 10 - Require that all annual reports be posted to City's website. There was a discussion of how this is done. The Subcommittee will wait on this issue and when the Finance Committee has the Director of Administration come in, we can ask her this question. If she answers in the affirmative, we can take this issue off of our list.

Charter issue 21 - Add language that requires a Town Clerk upon election to appoint a Deputy Town Clerk. Without objection, the Subcommittee decided to wait until we have an attorney on board before we consider this issue because it could be covered by the State Statute.

Charter issue 22 - Add record management and archival functions to the duties of the Town Clerk. After much discussion the Subcommittee decided that we want Valerie Rosenson to give us her opinion on this issue.

Charter issue 24 - Look into restructuring all departments under the Operations Department including potential additional director level positions or cabinet level positions. The Subcommittee discussed the issue and wanted to hear from the Director of Operations to see how we deal with this issue. However, there was finally an agreement that on issues 24, 25 (Create an Office of Emergency Management with a full time Bureau Chief), 26 (Separate Public Safety and Health and Welfare on cabinet level into a Director of Public Safety and a Director of Health and Welfare) and 27 (Create a cabinet level position, Director of Facilities Management, Construction and Energy for all Municipal buildings and schools) that we wait for the attorney to decide if specific positions should be mentioned in the Charter.

We also decided that we will ask the Mayor about these issues.

Charter issue 29 - Review whether the Board of Representatives, Board of Education and Board of Finance should have their own legal counsel. The Subcommittee discussed the issue and why this change is needed. We decided to hold this issue until we have an attorney to advise us on whether or not the Subcommittee should address the issue. The group has decided to keep this issue on our list and discuss how we move forward on this issue.

Charter issue 30 - Review whether the City should have a dedicated tax attorney, to represent the city's interests for appeals of tax bills. The Finance Committee will have the Corporation Counsel come in and when he is before the Committee we ask the Corporation Counsel how he feels on this issue. Some members of the Subcommittee came in and expressed adding this position to the Charter. The Subcommittee said that we put a pin in this issue and wait to see what comes out in the meeting with the Corporation Counsel. However, for not we all agree that we simply leave this as it currently stands.

Charter issue 32 - Clarify residency requirement. The Subcommittee discussed the issue, particularly with respect to the higher salary positions. The Subcommittee wants to keep this issue on the list and have Michael Toma come before the Subcommittee and go over the issue again.

Charter issue 33 - Clarify and clean up C5-30-5(4) (Parks & Recreation); have one person fill this role. We agree to keep this on our list.

Charter issue 34 - Clarify the role of Director of Emergency Management and potentially remove Director of Emergency Management from under Director of Public Safety. The Committee discussed the issue. The Subcommittee will live this on our list and discuss with the attorney when one is selected.

Charter issue 35 - Correction of scrivener's error - "their" should be "there". We will leave on our list and address.

However, there was an agreement that scrivener's errors are not under our purview.

Charter issue 106 - Consider adding "failure to adhere to the City's Charter and/or Code of Ordinances". We will keep on our list.

Charter issue 107 - focusing on creating more proactive citizen engagement earlier in the process. This is something that we will leave on the list and talk about how we can address the issue. Not only related to budget and land use. This is also related to Charter issue #2.

Charter issue 121 - public safety executives must live within city boundaries (police chief, fire chief, and Director of Public Safety). Already in the Charter. Make it enforceable. The Subcommittee has agreed to keep this issue on the list and the outcome will be affected by the information that we receive from Michael Toma and our outside attorney.

Charter issue – 123 - remove requirement for Superintendent of Parks and Recreation from C5-30-5. Consistent with the current administration's vision. The Subcommittee decided to keep this issue on the list and decide if it should be removed to give the Departments more flexibility in staffing.

Charter issue – 120 – Board of Representatives cannot pass legislation impacting the duties of the other elected boards without a majority of that board in concurrence. The Subcommittee discussed the issue. We agree that we keep on the list, but we will need guidance from the outside attorney.

Charter issue 113 - Require conspicuous link on City website homepage for FOIA requests and appoint a FOIA officer on a centralized basis and within each department to respond to FOIA requests within one business day. The group discussed the issue and talked about the problems with this issue. Most of issue of FOIA are in State Statute and its unreasonable regarding time restraints of one day. It was agreed by the Subcommittee that this is something that we have considered but we will not move forward on this issue.

Charter issue – 114 - Remove requirement that Leadership submit resolution for hiring of independent counsel for Board of Representatives in C5-20-3. This is on our issues list. We will discuss at a later meeting.

4. Discuss and establish meeting calendar for the remainder of the year
Suggested Dates and suggested times:

- September 20
- October 4, 18
- November 1, 15, 29
- December 13, 21

The dates were agreed on and passed on unanimously,

5. Discuss possible interviewees for Committee and order of interviews: Discuss how best to coordinate with other Committees to avoid overlap and link with topics for City Departments Committee

Possible suggestions:

- Director of Operations: Matt Quinones
- Deputy Corporation Counsel – City ADA Officer – Vikki Cooper
- Stamford ADA Advisory Council Secretary – Alicia Bingham
- Assistant Corporation Counsel – Michael Toma – regarding residency requirement
- Other suggestions

We discussed the issue and decided that on the ADA issues we will have Vikki Cooper on ADA issues and Michael Toma on residence issue. From Toma, we will focus on for certain positions we will require residency. During the discussion we talked about other cities that have residency requirement.

We discussed the need to have someone from the WPCA come before the Subcommittee. We agreed that someone from the WPCA come before our Subcommittee. On this issue we need clarification the the overlap between the City and WPCA. We discussed how we should move forward on this issue. There was a decision to have Bill Brink Come before this Subcommittee. Here we will also want to talk to Matt Quinones.

6. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 8.56 pm.

This meeting is available on [video](#).