

# CITY OF STAMFORD 19<sup>TH</sup> CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION CITY DEPARTMENTS COMMITTEE

Clemon Williams, Chair

Members

Frances Lane

Thomas Lombardo

JR McMullen

Anthony Pramberger

## Minutes

**Tuesday, November 15, 2022**

**7:00pm**

The meeting was held remotely.

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm
2. Roll Call – All members of the Committee were present
3. Discussion with Matthew Quinones

Charge #6a – Do you believe that there should be a restructuring of Departments within Operations? In this regards we are aware there has been a recent change, can you provide us with an organization chart to see what Departments exist within Operations? On this we are looking at Charter Sections C5-10-1 and C5-30-1 – C5-30-1 provides:

**Sec. C5-30-1 - Duties.**

The Director of Operations shall be the head of the Office of Operations and shall be responsible for the administration, supervision and performance of all municipal functions related to, but not necessarily limited to, **public works, traffic, parks and recreation, planning, zoning and environmental protection.**

(Referendum 11-7-1995)

Can you briefly go over these Departments and what they do?

Where does the WPCA fit into this provision?

Is it realistic to assume that one person can handle all of these areas?

Mr. Quinones shared his screen to show a visual to give us an understanding of his Departments. We now have an Operations Administrator Position. This is a new position within the Operation's Department. This is a four-person shop. We asked for the information that was supplied to the Personnel Commission. The Deputy Position was sent to the Personnel Commission. We asked Mr. Quinones to send information why the position was created and how.

The Commissioners talked about the various departments and what they do for the City. In addition, there was a brief discussion of the Golf Commission and WPCA. There was a discussion of the Zoning Department and its relationship to the Land Use Department. While some of the activities are inter-related, this is not the case on all issues. The reason that it is structured this way is to allow for flexibility.

There was a brief discussion of how housing relates to the Operations Department. Housing is an important issue, and some Commissioners were concerned about how and why this was done.

Some of the Commissioners wanted to know about the relationship between Land Use and the WPCA. There were also some questions about the impact of more housing on the WPCA plant. Mr. Quinones indicated that with changes in technology we do not have a problem now with capacity and do not anticipate problems in the near term. The Operations Department has looked at various matrix to determine if we can make some expansion on the existing footprint of the plant. According to Mr. Quinones in the future, we will have to look at various State mandates and their impact on the WPCA.

The ultimate takeaway is that if there is a significant expansion of dwelling units then we would have to look at expanding the footprint over to the site of the current Animal Shelter.

The discussion then started to focus on the powers of the Land Use and what impact upon the direction of the City. Mr. Quinones was asked, when the Land Use Bureau Chief proposes changes to Zoning regulations, if Mr. Quinones or the Mayor review these in advance of them being submitted to the Planning or Zoning Boards. Mr. Quinones answered that neither he nor the Mayor review such proposed changes before they are presented by the Land Use Bureau Chief to these Boards. Commissioner Pramberger noted that, in his opinion, this gives immense power to the Land Use Bureau Chief.

The Commission then turned to the future of building inspections by the City. Currently, the City's Building Department is getting together recommendations for addressing these issues. This is a work in progress and there may be a need for additional staffing.

Given the scope of the responsibilities for Operations the discussion turned to looking at splitting the various departments. The discussion focused on how we could get more synergies if Operations was split. According to Mr. Quinones he believes that the synergies are there now. In fact, the Operations Administration can create these synergies. Rather than create another cabinet position the Operations Administration can be accountable and create synergies.

With that said there is still room to coordinate various items within Operations. If the Operations Administration is fully functioning, then the Director of Operations does not need to be directly involved in the day-to-day operations of all the departments within Operations.

The discussion continued and the Commissioners wanted to know how we deal with housing and how the City should handle the issues.

Currently, there is not any coordination between the various departments. Additionally, the Fleet Maintenance Department will be tasked with scheduling the investment in equipment. Operations is trying to get the age of the equipment down.

The question came up about the air quality in the area where we have noxious businesses in close proximity to existing housing units. As a resident Mr. Quinones believes that this is an area where the City could do a better job. We will have to do more air testing.

Charge 6b. We have been asked to consider whether it would be a good idea to create an Office of Emergency Management with a full-time Bureau Chief.

The Operations Department should take some direction from the Office of Emergency Management. These are interesting questions; however, we have not focused on the areas at this time. There are State statutes which address these issues. All we need to do is focus on the State Statute. Now the Fire Department is getting the job done. We need to look to the State Statute and as long as we do that, we should be fine.

Do you believe that the Director of Operations should live either in Stamford, or no more than fifteen miles from City Hall? This is a position which is instrumental in any emergency, as such does the individual in this position need to be readily available.

Mr. Quinones would be in favor of some type of residency requirement of a mileage requirement on this issue. However, we need to be mindful of waving this requirement too often.

### **Sec. C5-30-5. Park and Recreation Functions.**

Within the Office of Operations, there shall be a Superintendent of Parks and Recreation appointed by the Mayor according to the provisions of this Charter, who, under the advice, instruction and direction of the Director of Operations, shall be responsible for the following park and recreation functions:

- (1) The establishment, construction, maintenance and operation of all parks, public recreation areas, public beaches and any structures and monuments thereon;
- (2) Providing areas and facilities for passive recreation;
- (3) Supervising all public recreation programs for the City;
- (4) The control, direction and supervision of all public activities at parks and public recreation areas, and whenever the Board of Education consents thereto, school playgrounds, stadia, and school buildings and grounds;
- (5) Providing for the care and control of all trees and shrubs within the limits of any public road;
- (6) Organizing operating divisions with supervisors and necessary assistants within the appropriation therefor to administer and enforce City policies, rules and regulations;
- (7) Performing any other duties imposed by law, ordinance, or the Parks and Recreation Commission;
- (8) The maintenance and operation of the E. Gaynor Brennan Sr. Municipal Golf Course and any other golf course under the jurisdiction of the Golf Commission.
- (9) The maintenance and operation of the Terry Conners Rink.

Given the recent change in position for Kevin Murray how do you see this working as set forth?

Mr. Quinones felt that this should be removed from the Charter and the person who is managing this function can do the job. This is not really under the purview of this individual. Some consideration should be removed. Currently, most of the items listed about are in the job description.

4. New Business

Currently, the Town Clerk has no budget, and the question was asked how the Town Clerk's budget is established. There was a brief discussion.

Get a list of all the Directors in the City and the number of reports. Talk to Al Cava to get this information. This is to show the span of control. Also get a list of all the positions that report to the Mayor.

There was a brief discussion on how we are going to deal with the attorney.

Should the Committee ask Michael Toma to draft a residency requirement and then we will forward everything to outside attorney?

5. The meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm.

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