

CITY OF STAMFORD 17TH CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

Members

JOSH FEDELI

VINCENT J. FRECCIA, III

CLARENCE R. GREBEY III

JOANNA M. GWOZDZIOWSKI

MICHAEL C. JACHIMCZYK

BRIAN S. KRIFTCHER

DAVID LUCAS

Vincent J. Freccia, III, Co-Chair

Jay H. Sandak, Co-Chair

Susan A. Nabel, Clerk

Members

ROSANNE MCMANUS

SUSAN A. NABEL

GAIL S. OKUN

ROBERT S. ROBINS

RICH ROSEMAN

JAY H. SANDAK

DONALD B. SHERER

DUDLEY N. WILLIAMS, JR.

MINUTES

Wednesday, November 16, 2011

7:00 p.m. – Republican Caucus Room

4th Floor, Government Center

888 Washington Boulevard, Stamford, CT 06904-2152

The 17th Charter Revision Commission of the City of Stamford met as indicated above. Present were Commission Co-Chair Freccia and Commissioners Gwozdziowski, Grebey, Jachimczyk, Lucas, McManus, Nabel, Okun, Robins, Roseman and Williams. Excused were Commission Co-Chair Sandak and Commissioners Fedeli, Kriftcher and Sherer. Also present were Barbara Decker, Bert Ballin and Cathy Catrini of the Health Commission; Fred Flynn, Director of Administration; David Martin, Former BOR President; Winnie Hamilton, Acting Superintendent, Board of Education; Michael Larobina, Director of Legal Affairs; Denis Patterson, Economic Development Commission; Anne Fountain, Health Director and several members of the public.

1. Co-Chair Freccia called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.
2. President of the BOR Randall M. Skigen administered the oath of office to Dudley Williams, who had not been present at the organizational meeting.
3. Chair Freccia stated that the Commission would be receiving input regarding suggested changes to the Charter from City Directors and Department Heads at this meeting.

Barbara. Decker, the chair of the Health Commission submitted several proposed changes to Charter §C6-100-2 relating to the duties of the Health Commission and also a change to Charter §C5 -40-4 relating to the powers and duties of the Director of Health. Copies of the proposed changes, as well as supporting materials, are [attached](#)

David Martin stated that he has asked to return to address the Commission about specific changes to the Charter, but was here this evening to discuss the strategic directions that the Commission can choose.

- The Commission can make aggressive changes or incremental refinements, but he does not believe there is anything in between

- Past commissions which made aggressive changes had a difficult time getting the changes implemented
- Examples of aggressive changes the Commission might consider would include changing to a City Manager form of government, eliminating the Board of Finance or changing the size of the Board of Representatives
- In order to implement aggressive changes, the Commission would need to appeal directly to voters, bypassing the Board of Representatives, which would require increased effort by the Commission
- If the Commission chooses to make incremental changes, there are 100s of these
- The Commission should make a decision as to its approach up front

Fred Flynn, the Director of Administration recommended various changes, as detailed on the [attached](#) handout.

- Most of his proposed changes are structural
- His recommendation that the Mayor become a voting member of the Board of Education is based on his view that the mayor as the CEO of a \$500 million business, who has no influence over ½ of the City and should therefore be a voting member of the Board of Education with authority to review the Board of Education's budget
- The Board of Education should be functionally responsible to the Director of Administration.

Dr. Winnie Hamilton, the interim Superintendent of Schools spoke to the Commission about the need for human capital and the frustration caused by the current budget timeline

- Most college students looking for teaching jobs attend job fairs in February and have been placed by April
- Stamford's budget decisions aren't made until May, therefore the Board of Education has a very short window in which to make offers
- The City often does not get its first or second choices because of this timing
- The Board of Education would like to have its budget as early as possible, at least by early March, in order to increase the size of the candidate pool.

Mr. Jachimczyk asked when better candidates get their offers. Dr. Hamilton stated that they attend job fairs in February, March and April and know where they are going by June.

Ms. Okun stated that she knows from experience that Greenwich and New Canaan can hire top students away from Stamford because they can hire earlier.

Michael Larobina provided the Commission with the [attached handout](#), detailing 5 items he would like the Charter Commission to review.

Ms. McManus asked Mr. Larobina about the cross authority of elective and appointive boards and commissions. He stated that many of the boards and commissions duplicate the functions of the Board of Representatives. For example:

- The Parks Commission sets fees, which ultimately must be approved by the Board of Representatives
- The Board of Representatives ultimately decides issues before the Personnel Commission

Denis Patterson of the Economic Development Commission stated that he did not need to be on the agenda, as the issue of the abolishment of the Economic Development Commission is before the Board of Representatives, not the Charter Commission.

4. Scheduling of Meeting Dates
 - a. First Public Hearing – The Commission will hold its first public hearing on Monday, November 21, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the Legislative Chambers, 4th Floor, Government Center
 - b. The next regular full Commission Meeting will be Wednesday, November 30, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the Republican Caucus Room.
 - c. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously to change the December 7, 2011 meeting to December 8, 2011 in order to avoid conflicting with the Board of Representatives annual holiday party.
5. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Commission voted 10-0-1 to approve the minutes of the Approval of minutes of 11/03/11 Meeting, with Mr. Williams abstaining.
6. Mr. Grebey suggested that the Commission work to get the media more involved in the Commission's activities so that the public will be informed. He recommended that this be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

(Copies of the following forms were provided to all members at the beginning of the meeting:

- Two forms ([Form 1](#) and [Form 2](#)) submitted by Parks & Recreation Commission Chair McGuinness;
- Two forms ([Form 1](#) and [Form 2](#)) submitted by URC Department Head Rachel Goldberg, Esq.
- [Form](#) submitted by BOR Member Andy Sklover)

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