

# CITY OF STAMFORD 17<sup>TH</sup> CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

Members

*JOSH FEDELI*

*VINCENT J. FRECCIA, III*

*CLARENCE R. GREBEY III*

*JOANNA M. GWOZDZIOWSKI*

*MICHAEL C. JACHIMCZYK*

*DAVID LUCAS*

*ROSANNE MCMANUS*

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Vincent J. Freccia, III, Co-Chair

Jay H. Sandak, Co-Chair

Susan A. Nabel, Clerk

Members

*SUSAN A. NABEL*

*GAIL S. OKUN*

*ROBERT S. ROBINS*

*RICH ROSEMAN*

*JAY H. SANDAK*

*GEORGE SESSA*

*DONALD B. SHERER*

*DUDLEY N. WILLIAMS, JR.*

## MINUTES OF MEETING

Wednesday, March 14, 2012

7:00 p.m. – Republican Caucus Room

4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Government Center

888 Washington Boulevard, Stamford, CT 06904-2152

Present were Co-Chairs Sandak and Freccia and Commissioners Fedeli, Grebey, Gwozdzowski, Grebey, Jachimczyk, Lucas, McManus, Nabel, Okun, Robins, Sessa and Sherer. Excused Was Commissioner Roseman.

Co-Chair Sandak called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

### Public Comment -

- Ms. Cynthia Reeder spoke regarding the Historic Preservation Commission/Board/Council, etc. Ms. Reeder felt that Stamford needs a commission of this type. Co-Chair Sandak indicated that if the Commission decided to go forward and consider this item, Ms. Reeder will be invited back to discuss this matter with the Commission.
- Mr. Bill Gretchker (sp?) regarding the Old Long Ridge Road Historic District. Mr. Gretchker stated that they have started the process to create a national historic district.

Rep. Sherer gave some history of the Old Long Ridge Road Historic District, noting that it was created by ordinance by the BOR. Co-Chair Freccia asked if this would be another land use board. Mr. Jachimczyk stated that the existing districts in Bridgeport (Brooklawn, Park Street) prevent exterior changes without the permission of the neighborhood historic commissions.

The Commission agreed to add the creation of a historic preservation commission as a new charge within the Government Committee.

Co-Chair Sandak reminded everyone that an item would be brought up for discussion at one meeting, and it will not be voted on until a subsequent meeting.

## Committee Reports

1. Communications Committee. Mr. Sandak stated that any commissioner that has an opportunity to speak to any groups regarding the charter revision process should coordinate it through the Communications Committee. It does not have to be screened through the co-chairs. The Communications Committee will help the speaker develop some bullet points for the talk. Co-Chair Sandak noted that nothing has been voted on by the Commission yet.
2. Government Committee.
  - a. Chair Freccia stated that the Committee did not meet this past Monday.
  - b. A chart prepared by Susan Nabel for the Government Committee ([attached](#)) was distributed to all commission members.
    - #1 – The Committee recommended changing the wording, such wording to be developed by counsel, to read that the first BOR meeting should be “the first business day in December.”
    - #2 – This item was tabled for further consideration; the Committee will wait until counsel weighs in on this matter.
    - #3 – The Committee recommends that at the end of a BOR term, all items on the agenda be terminated and re-introduction be necessary. This is the BOR current practice, but the Committee feels the language should be clarified.
    - #4 – The Committee will recommend that the BOR can, by resolution, skip a meeting one month during the year. This would be during a calendar year.
    - #5 – The Committee agreed not to consider this item.
    - #6 – The Committee has decided that the Mayor must return an ordinance within 10 business days to the BOR, or it is automatically approved. This provides a veto time frame, and this is how it is currently handled. A lengthy discussion was held regarding a situation where the Mayor is out of town for 10 days and the responsibilities of the Deputy Mayor.
    - #7 – The Committee agreed that an ordinance is effective 10 days after the Mayor has not signed it.
    - #8 – The Committee recommended two business days for the BOR to present an ordinance to the Mayor, after approval by the BOR.
    - #9 – The Committee recommended that staggered terms for police and fire commissions be tied to the Mayor’s term. Other boards will remain the same.
    - #10 – All terms to end at the end of the organizational year, or November 30.
    - #11 – The Committee disagreed with raising the bar for appointees to boards and commissions. The Committee did work to depoliticize the appointment process by requiring public notice. The Commission discussed the traditional process of having the political parties submit

names to the Mayor, and Commissioner Freccia noted that the current administration has also submitted names from unaffiliated voters.

- #12 – The Commission discussed whether the Director of Economic Development should be a cabinet position; it currently is within the Office of Administration. Because the Mayor is appearing at the next Committee meeting, this item was held.
- #13 – The Committee discussed adding the Director of Human Resources to the cabinet, and the Committee elected not to take any action on this. Mr. Hibson felt that it currently works well.
- #14 – The Committee is not going to recommend BOR approval of interim directors.
- #15 – The Committee did not feel the Director of Public Safety & Health should have minimum qualifications, nor should it be a civil service position.
- #16 – In interviews with two former Directors of Legal Affairs, both were adamant that you would not find a competent director who could give up his career/practice for four to eight years. The Committee recommended no changes.
- #16A – The Committee agreed to add language to clarify the meaning of “appear” in legal parlance; they will include “and/or his/her designee” for clarify.
- #17 – The Committee rejected having the Director of Administration also report to the Fiscal Committee of the Board of Representatives.
- #18 – This item was tabled.
- #19 – The Committee agreed to modernize the language (e.g., change “data processing” to “information technology”).
- #20 – This item was referred to the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee agreed to require an internal audit function, and the auditor will report to either the director of administration or his/her designee, which would most likely be the controller.
- #21 – The Committee recommended no changes.
- #22 – Chair Freccia gave a background on the WPCA. It is an authority and derives its authority from state statute. Mr. Freccia stated that its structure is very complicated. It is supposed to be a separate entity, with directors appointed by the BOR. Some of the appointees are city employees. There are a bunch of functions that should be separate from the city but are not. Pensions, payroll, etc. are handled by the City. The employees are city employees and part of the City unions. The committee was told that usage fees would skyrocket if the WPCA had to take on all of these expenses itself.

Further, other sections of the Charter direct the Office of Operations to be responsible for some sewer functions, and this probably violates State statute. The Commission needs to reconcile the old charter sections with the State statute.

The BOR approves the WPCA budget; however, the WPCA sets its rates, so a budget cut by the City can be addressed that way. The City-approved budget is included in the mil rate for districts that have sewers.

Co-Chair Sandak stated that it is the Charter Commission's responsibility to conform the charter language to State statute, and the administration is responsible for setting up a structure that works for Stamford.

This item will be discussed further.

- #25 & #25A – This relates to the old Water Pollution Control Commission, and the Charter sections will be recommended for removal.
- #26 – The Committee agreed to merge the Personnel Appeals Board and the Personnel Commission, as recommended by the Mayor's Governance Task Force. The duties would be transferred to the Personnel Commission.
- #27 – The Mayor's Task Force recommended the elimination of the Municipal Building Board of Appeals. Co-Chair Sandak will confirm that it is not in the Charter due to a state requirement.
- #28 – The Committee recommended the Charter limit that individuals only serve on one elected board. Elected representatives could serve on an appointed commission.

#### Minutes from March 7, 2012 Commission Meeting.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes were approved unanimously, with a single spelling correction ("horatory" on Page 2).

#### Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 14, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.

#### Adjournment

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Submitted by,

Jay Sandak, Co-Chair

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