

REPORT ON PENSION ISSUES BEING CONSIDERED BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE 17TH CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF STAMFORD, CT

The Finance Committee of the Charter Commission has conducted several meetings over the past few months regarding the charges as related to issues of financial significance. These meetings were attended by bond counsel, representatives of the four unions covered by collective bargaining agreements, various city agencies and members of the public.

In summary, regarding the items concerning pensions in charges 60 through 71, the overall consensus is that most of the references in the charter regarding pensions are superseded either by state statute and/or the terms of existing collective bargaining agreements. Any such charter references we feel should therefore be eliminated subject to review by legal counsel. Specifically:

Charge 60: The mayor, or his/her designee, should be a trustee on all four pension plans. There also needs to be clarification on who sits on each board as outlined by the plan documents, and the language of Section C7-10-2 needs to be updated accordingly. In the case of the Board of Education, the superintendent or his/her designee should also be specified as a member of that board.

Charge 61: Clauses 2 and 5 of Section C7-10-8 need to be eliminated. This is not current practice.

Charges 62 & 63: There are apparent conflicts between the charter, state statute and labor contracts concerning such areas as disability and years of service, among other issues. It is the committee's opinion that legal counsel should review all of Section C7 and advise which clauses should be deleted.

Charge 64: The Committee feels an oversight board would create an extra layer of review that is unnecessary given the current level of knowledge of the personnel on each board and their vested interest in maximizing returns for its members. The committee recommends this charge not be considered.

Charge 65: Although each plan advised that they are happy with their current paid financial advisors and their own members' level of expertise, some members of the committee felt it may be beneficial to establish minimum financial proficiency criteria as is currently the practice in some other national municipalities. We would like to ask the full commission to provide its input on this issue.

Charge 66: These forfeiture provisions are already provided for under the power of the Attorney General's office; therefore the committee recommends that this charge not be considered.

Charge 67: The committee recommends that this charge not be considered as OPEB benefits are covered by contract negotiations.

Charge 68: The committee recommends that this charge not be considered.

Charge 69: The committee feels this charge is a legislative function and should not be considered.

Charge 70: The committee has confirmed that this audit review is already being performed annually, and as such this charge should not be considered.

Charge 71: The committee recommends that this charge not be considered.