

Government Committee of the Charter Revision Commission

Minutes of the Monday, April 9, 2012

Present: Vincent Freccia, Chair; Rich Roseman, Josh Fedeli, Susan Nabel, Dudley Williams.

Guests: Mr. Frank Vartuli

Via phone: Attorney Richard Roberts

The meeting was called to order by Chair Freccia at 6:07 p.m.

The first order of business was to approve the minutes of the 3/19 meeting of the Govt. Committee. The motion to approve was made by Josh Fedeli, seconded by Dudley Williams, and was passed with abstentions from Vincent Freccia and Rich Roseman. A motion to approve the minutes of 3/26 was also made by Josh Fedeli, seconded by Rich Roseman, and passed, with Dudley Williams abstaining.

The second agenda item was a discussion of the WPCA Charter sections (C5-30) and State Statutes regarding the independence of that organization. Attorney Roberts gave the Committee an overview opinion of the Attorney Mednick's opinion of the state statute, which he felt to be accurate - that the WPCA is independent and has powers granted by the statute. He stated that in some CT towns, a WPCA is run by a sub-group of town selectmen and in some by an independent body; Stamford seems to be a hybrid. Attorney Roberts suggested that the Committee be guided by deciding "what you want to have and how should it work," and formulate any suggestions to change/add to/delete from Charter language based on that decision. The Committee discussion was leading toward consideration of the WPCA as an independent entity with its own fiduciary and policy-making authority, but one which must contract with the City of Stamford for services such as HR/payroll/benefits, IT, and maintenance. It was agreed that Attorney Roberts will draw up a flow chart of WPCA actions and reporting relationships so the Committee can get clarity on how it would like to align Charter language to clear up the conflict of responsibilities with the Department of Operations and allow the BOR to designate its responsibilities by ordinance. He will also survey whether most CT cities have an independent body or a subgroup of the legislative body oversee their WPCA.

After a five-minute break, the Committee reviewed Charges it had shared with the Commission at the meetings of 3/14 and 3/21.

Charge 12, 88 and 91: The Committee agreed by Consensus to recommend the Creation of an Office of Planning and Development, led by a Cabinet-level Director of Planning & Development. The following departments would be moved from Operations to report to the Director of P&D: Land Use, Planning, Zoning, Zoning Board of Appeals, Environmental Protection Board, Economic Development, Traffic. Committee members felt that having all land use functions orchestrated by the Director and under a common departmental umbrella would streamline review and approvals for new projects coming to the City.

Charge 18: now moot given decision on 12, 88 and 91.

Charge 22, 23, 25 and 25A: tabled pending further research on the WPCA and meeting 4/16 with Operations and possibly the WPCA.

Charges 28, 32/33: Committee will research with Attorney Fogarty whether term limits are prevented by statute; will research data from CCM regarding other municipalities and whether they regulate term limits. Once the data is presented to the larger Commission, it can make its decision by a full vote. The Committee will stand by its recommendation to add language outlining term limits for the office of Mayor.

Charge 34: should be taken to a vote by the full Commission.

Charge 59a: Government Committee joins the Finance Committee in recommending that the Internal Audit position be mandated by Charter.

Charge 87: Committee Consensus is to keep the Personnel Department under the Legal Department.

Charge 88: done with Charge 12 and 91

Charge 102: Chair will ask Randy Skigen for further clarification of the charge.

Charge 105: Committee to discuss further. Recommendation of the Director of PSHW and other departments was clear.

Charge 106: Was C5-30-8 a placeholder for an additional duty? If not needed, should it be eliminated?

Charge 108: Error in minutes – this was a PSEthics Committee Charge.

Charge 113: Committee recommends a date change consistent with the date change recommended by the Finance Committee.

Charge 117: continue to table

Charge 117a: refer to counsel

Charge 119: Committee recommends by consensus that a 3 member Historical Preservation Commission be established in the Charter. The Commission should be advisory to the Planning Board and/or to the Land Use Bureau Chief. Its duty should be to render advisory opinions on planning decisions and their historical impact.

The final agenda item was further discussion of the proposed Citizens' Bill of Rights. Committee consensus is to recommend to the Commission that the Charter mandate the Citizens' Service Bureau, that the Bureau report to the Mayor, and that the Bureau

incorporate an Ombudsman role. If the Commission approves that recommendations, the Government Committee recommends that the Citizens' Bill of Rights be added as Preamble to the Charter.

Chair Freccia adjourned this meeting at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Nabel

This meeting is on [video](#).

DRAFT