

Government Committee of the Charter Revision Commission

Minutes of the Monday, April 23, 2012

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

Invited guests: Ms. MaryLou Rinaldi, WPCA Board of Directors; Ms. Cristina Andreana, WPCA Board of Directors

Guests: Mr. Frank Vartuli

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

The first agenda item was a discussion of the WPCA Charter sections (C5-30 - 2) and Committee charges 23 and 25. The Committee asked Ms. Rinaldi and Ms. Andreana to outline what the City provides to the WPCA. Ms. Andreana replied that the City supplies services under the broad areas of Human Resources, Legal, Accounting, Maintenance, Information Technology and Finance (specifically benefits and pension contribution administration). In total, the City charge to the WPCA budget amounts to about \$600,000 to \$700,000, again including the Pension and Benefit contributions for WPCA employees. Ms. Rinaldi stated that the City has a formula for its charges which it applies to all departments including the WPCA. In considering these services, both Ms. Rinaldi and Ms. Andreana agreed that if the WPCA were completely independent and had to bid out for these areas, its corresponding rate increases would be prohibitive.

In the area of maintenance, both Ms. Rinaldi and Ms. Andreana agreed that the help of the City Department of Operations is indispensable. The amount that is budgeted for maintenance and the resources provided by the WPCA are not sufficient to cover emergencies, as was evident in the Wallachs Point emergency situation. Cooperation with the City is critical.

Ms. Rinaldi and Ms. Andreana re-emphasized the need for the charter to clarify whether the operations and plan of the WPCA is the responsibility of the WPCA itself or the responsibility of the Board of Representatives.

The Committee discussed the many areas where the City of Stamford and the WPCA are intertwined and interdependent. The Committee would like to align Charter language to clear up the conflict of responsibilities with the Department of Operations and allow the BOR to designate WPCA organization and management by ordinance. Therefore, the Committee recommends by consensus:

1. Revise C5-30-2 by designating that the Director of Operations shall aid and support the WPCA by carrying out the responsibilities in these numbered items: 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 18.

2. Establish in a separate section that the WPCA is an entity that exists by state statute and managed by ordinance and that said WPCA will work with the Director of Operations and the City of Stamford in carrying out its statutory responsibilities.

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

The third agenda item was to resolve the discussion of the Historic Preservation body. The Committee agreed by consensus to recommend the charter establish a Historic Preservation Advisory Board which would exist as advisory to all land use boards as well as to the Planning Board and to the Land Use Bureau Chief.

Having received information from the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities researcher regarding term limits in other municipalities, the Committee reaffirmed its recommendation that the office of Mayor be limited to two elected terms in office.

The minutes of the 4/16 meeting were amended and a motion to approve was made by Josh Fedeli, seconded by Dudley Williams and approved with one abstention from Rich Roseman.

The minutes of the 4/2 meeting were approved on a motion by Dudley Williams, second by Josh Fedeli, with abstentions from Susan Nabel and Rich Roseman.

The Committee will join the Commission at its next meeting on Wednesday, April 25.

Chair Freccia adjourned this meeting at 9:10 p.m. on a motion by Dudley Williams, second by Josh Fedeli and a unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Nabel

This meeting is on [video](#).