

17TH CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

Public Safety & Health/Education/Ethics Committee

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Jay H. Sandak, Chair

Members

CLARENCE R. GREBEY, III

MICHAEL C. JACHIMCZYK

GAIL S. OKUN

ROBERT S. ROBINS

MINUTES April 3, 2012

The 17th Charter Revision Commission Public Safety & Health/Education/Ethics Committee was called to order by Chair Jay Sandak at 7:00 on April 3, 2012. All committee members were in attendance: Jay Sandak, Clarence Grebey, Gail Okun, Robert Robins, and Michael Jachimezyk. Also in attendance were Commission members Rosanne McManus, Dudley Williams, and Vincent Freccia. Members of the volunteer fire companies also attended the meeting.

Mr. Sandak introduced Attorney Stephen Fogerty outside counsel to the Commission.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of March 27 as amended.

A review of the items assigned to Committee from the Master Chart went as follows:

24,30,31,72,73,74,and 75 are still open.

76 was deferred to legislative

77,78,79, and 80-81 were reported out

97,98, 99 and 100 are open,

108,109,110,111,and 112 were reported out to the commission

117 b,c are technical

The committee added 120 which would be creating a Board of Ethics and the membership there on and discussed creating a single fire marshal for the city which would be considered as item 121. Discussion followed on the fire marshal and it was decided to invite the city fire marshal and volunteer fire marshal to the next meeting to get their pros and cons on this idea. There was consent of the committee to pass on this item until next week.

Mr. Sandak reviewed the discussion of last week which included creating some sort of language to change the duties of the fire chief to give authority city wide, to preserve the

volunteers with two chains of command, and maintain some autonomy. The question was raised as to how much authority the chief would have. A discussion followed on the Fire Commission and its role with a single chief in a confederated structure. It was again stated that the volunteers need a voice and an entitlement and that the delivery of fire services within their own districts would not be changed. It was discussed if the language delineating the responsibilities of the new chief needed to be broader and to consider that the chief needed to have dialogue and input from volunteer organizations. It was stressed that input was needed to facilitate working together. It was suggested that the structure would be like GM with the chief as chairman of the board and the districts making the day to day decisions.

A review of the discussion suggested that:

1. A super chief would have the overall administrative responsibility of all fire service in the city
2. The volunteer companies would have primary responsibilities in their districts with assistance and cooperation if necessary.
3. The career companies would have primary responsibilities in their districts with assistance and cooperation if necessary.
4. The super chief would give direction when necessary in cooperation with volunteers.
5. Individual volunteer companies would be responsible for retention, training for their own firefighters subject to the direction of the super chief who would be responsible for training, resources, budget, and SOP. If in the interest of the city the super chief can get involved.

The goal is to ensure that every district is adequately equipped and has an equal voice. The delivery of fire service in this city dictates the preservation of the volunteer service and mandates the use of volunteers.

It was suggested that the Charter language could read as follows... "there shall be a Stamford Fire Department including career and volunteer staff."

Summarizing the discussion of the committee:

1. The Stamford Fire Department shall have career and volunteer members.
2. The chief of the Stamford Fire Department shall have certain specified responsibilities such as training, SOP..
3. Volunteer companies shall be the primary fire fighters in their district with assistance from other companies in primary response area.
4. The super chief shall have additional authority in every district when public safety and health are in jeopardy and in consultation with the volunteers, will allocate resources.
5. The individual fire companies are responsible for recruitment and retention of their own members and all personnel assigned to their house.

Open issues for debate are:

1. Questions regarding the Fire Commission
2. Questions on the Fire Marshal
3. Question of discipline - whether there is a need to expand the Fire Commission or create a volunteer organization.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to adjourn the meeting at 9:15.

Respectfully submitted,
Gail Okun

This meeting is on [video](#).