

Town of Ridgefield Charter Revision Commission

Special Meeting Minutes

February 9, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.

Town Hall Annex Conference Room #2

These minutes are a general summary of the meeting and are not intended to be a verbatim transcription. A video of the meeting is available on the Town's website.

Members Present: Bob Cascella, Tom Lansen, Mike Lordi, Rebecca Mucchetti, Michael Rettger, Derick Schirm, Kim Welton, Todd Zagorec (by phone)

Members Absent: Laurie Christiansen

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Rebecca Mucchetti at 6:30 p.m.

2. Discussion with Jonathan Seem, 2018 CRC Chair

Jonathan Seem, the 2018 Charter Revision Commission (CRC) Chair, and Joe Shapiro, the 2018 CRC Recording Secretary, shared their approach and experiences on the 2018 CRC. The discussion covered how the 2018 CRC encouraged boards, commissions, committees, and the community to submit recommended revisions to the Charter. Mr. Seem and Mr. Shapiro reviewed how the 2018 CRC recorded recommended revisions. Mr. Shapiro will provide the excel spreadsheet tracker used by the 2018 CRC.

Jonathan Seem explained that recommended revisions are often submitted in a conceptual format and that the 2018 CRC members shared the responsibility of drafting recommended revisions into specific language on which the CRC members would vote.

The 2018 CRC reviewed the tracker at each meeting to ensure that the commission covered all action items.

All 2018 CRC meetings had an opportunity for public comments.

The 2018 CRC did not require that recommended revisions be submitted in writing.

The 2018 CRC did not notify an individual that the recommendation they submitted did not move forward since the decision was part of the public record.

Mr. Shariro explained that the town attorney is responsible for preparing the language used in the referendum.

3. Member Updates from January 31 meeting

a. Bob Cascella

At January 31, 2023, meeting, the question was raised if all boards, commissions, and committees need to be enumerated in the Town Charter. Mr. Cascella requested and received from the First Selectman a list of all boards, commissions, committees, and appointed offices. In addition, Mr. Rettger provided a list of boards, commissions, and committees from the Town's annual financial report. Mr. Rettger explained that a Town Meeting, the Board of Selectmen, and an ordinance have different powers to create boards, commissions, committees, and departments. Mr. Rettger and Mr. Cascella felt that not all boards, commissions, and committees need enumeration in the Charter. Mr. Casella is reaching out to all boards, commissions, and committees requesting their comments on the Charter. The CRC will rely on the board, commission, and committee to request inclusion in the Town Charter.

b. Rebecca Mucchetti: Meeting Calendar, Meeting Room, Administrative support

Meeting dates have been submitted to the Town. The meeting schedule has been posted in Town Hall and on the Town website. Meeting rooms have been reserved. All meetings will be streamed with the video stored on the Town website.

Ms. Sheerin, the Town Hall/Social Media Office Administrator, will post all legal notices and agendas. Ms. Sheerin will also post CRC information on social media and Town alerts.

c. Mike Rettger: 2018 CRC referendum results, Meeting Room, CRC email account

Mr. Rettger distributed the 2018 CRC referendum results.

Ms. Sheerin will distribute all emails received on the CRC email account to CRC members.

d. Kim Walton and Mike Lordi: Minutes, Spreadsheet

Mr. Lordi informed the Commission that he would be responsible for the minutes.

Ms. Welton reviewed the action items from the last meeting.

4. Follow-up discussion re: Conflict of Interest

Mr. Rettger stated that previous Charter Revision Commissions had typically considered one or more proposals pertaining to the Board of Finance. As he is a current member of the Board of Finance, someone might question whether his participation in the consideration of such proposals could be a conflict of interest. He asked that the Commission address the

question up front by acting pursuant to Section 11-5 of the Town Charter to grant him permission to participate in any such discussions that arise and to vote on such matters. Mr. Rettger stated that if his request is approved, he will commit to abstain from voting on any matter that specifically affects the role, scope, or authority of the Board of Finance.

After discussion, there was a motion by Mr. Cascella, second by Mr. Larsen, to authorize Mr. Rettger to participate in deliberations and to vote on matters before the Commission pertaining to the Board of Finance. The vote was 7 in favor, none opposed, with Mr. Rettger abstaining.

Mr. Lordi disclosed that he was a current member of the Youth Commission and asked the Commission to act pursuant to Section 11-5 to approve his participation and voting on any proposals pertaining to the Youth Commission. Mr. Rettger moved, and Mr. Larsen seconded that Mr. Lordi be authorized to participate in deliberations and to vote on matters before the Commission pertaining to the Youth Commission. Vote was 7 in favor, none opposed, with Mr. Lordi abstaining.

5. Contact info update re: Town of Ridgefield email addresses, set-up

Commission members will use the email address assigned by the Town.

6. Public Hearing Protocol

Ms. Mucchetti and Mr. Cascella reviewed the protocols used in Public Meetings.

7. Comments/questions/discussion from Members

The CRC agreed that if a revision is being discussed that impacts a board, commission, committee, or department, a copy of the agenda will be sent to that board, commission, committee, or department.

The CRC agreed that all meetings would include the opportunity for public comment.

Agenda items for the February 16, 2023, meeting were discussed. The agenda will include public comment, a review of the public hearings, CRC member-suggested revisions, changes, and amendments to the Charter, Planning Session, Old Business, Correspondence, and Minutes review and approval

8. Minutes – review and approval

Motion to approve as amended the minutes of the January 31, 2023 meeting by Mr. Cascella, seconded by Mr. Rettger. Motion carries 8 to 0 in favor.

9. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn at 8:50 p.m. by Mr. Cascella, seconded by Mr. Schirm. Motion carries 8 to 0 in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Lordi, Recording Secretary