

**TOWN OF HADDAM
 CHARTER REVISION COMMITTEE
 REGULAR MEETING
 ANNEX BUILDING
 11 JAIL HILL ROAD, HADDAM, CT 06438
 MONDAY, 15 AUGUST 2016
 UNAPPROVED MINUTES
*Subject to Approval by the Commission***

ATTENDANCE

X	Michael Battistoni, Assistant Secretary
A	Thomas Berchulski
X	William Bowles
X	Audrey Brookes, Secretary
X	John Fernandes, Vice Chairman
A	Harlan Fredericksen
A	Amy Jacques-Purdy
X	Wayne Rutty, Chairman
X	Lizz Milardo, First Selectman
X	Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

1. Call to Order

Mr. Rutty, chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. Review Minutes – 20 June 2016 Regular Meeting and 1 August 2016 Special Meeting

Correction to the 20 June 2016 minutes: page 4, third paragraph, third line from the bottom – correct misspelling of Mr. Bowles name.

MOTION: Bill Bowles moved to approve the 20 June 2016 minutes as amended. John Fernandes second. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: John Fernandes moved to approve the 1 August 2016 minutes as submitted. Audrey Brookes second. Motion carried unanimously.

4. General Discussion

Mr. Fernandes asked if the Committee would be addressing items brought up by the public during the public hearing. Mr. Fernandes reviewed his notes from the public hearing.

Expansion of the Board of Selectmen (BOS) - Mr. Rutty and Mr. Bowles stated they see no need to expand the BOS. Mr. Bowles also stated he could see a need for expanding the BOS (or council) if there was a decision to transition to a town manager; however, based on discussion at the 1 August 2016

meeting, there was a consensus by the Committee that there isn't a need for a town manager at this time. Mrs. Brookes stated she feels the system works fine with three members and doesn't see a need for five.

In regard to a town manager's position, Mr. Battistoni agreed with where the Committee's thoughts were; however, it wasn't his opinion that it had been affirmatively decided not to pursue the town manager's position. Discussion followed in regard to: 1) whether a resolution had been made indicating the Committee would not be pursuing the matter of town manager; 2) pursuing a town manager's position was not part of the town's resolution to the Committee; 3) the need for a town manager wasn't brought up at the public hearing; 4) whether or not the Committee is obliged to explore the matter; and 5) whether the Committee should just make it a recommendation to the BOS (to be sent with the final report).

Discussion returned to whether or not there should be five members on the BOS. Mr. Battistoni asked the reasoning behind the proposed change. Mr. Bowles stated he felt it was inclusiveness, more interaction. Mr. Fernandes stated he thought it had more to do with reaching a quorum. Discussion followed in regard to whether meetings have been canceled (Mrs. Milardo stated none have been canceled since she's been in office); the ability to teleconference during a meeting; and the system working as it currently exists.

MOTION: Bill Bowles moved to leave **Section 4-8 Election of Board of Selectmen** as it currently exists (no revision required). Mike Battistoni second. Motion carried with Mr. Fernandes abstaining.

Filling Vacancies on Boards/Commissions – Mrs. Milardo discussed an unaffiliated alternate moving up when a vacancy occurs and the experience that alternate would have from attending meetings and there being nothing within the Charter in regard to party representation. Mr. Battistoni stated in **Section 4-4 (a) Vacancies in Elective Offices** the language "a member of the same political party" is hanging things up. Discussion followed at length in regard to how to address this matter; whether both parties could endorse an unaffiliated alternate; whether the BOS could appoint the unaffiliated alternate; which boards/commissions have elected alternates; whether the Secretary of State would have any information concerning this matter; the need to follow the minority rule; the two party system being ingrained in the Charter, and difficulty finding individuals to fill positions. Mr. Battistoni asked if the Committee wants to address the unexpired portion of a term. In reviewing his notes, Mr. Bowles stated Melissa Schlag had brought this matter up - "vacancies in elected offices (with terms longer than 2 years) should be filled until the next municipal election not for the balance of the vacated term". Mr. Battistoni noted the Committee should have been reviewing **Section 4-4 (e)** in regard to this matter rather than Section 4-4 (a) and apologized for the misdirection.

Discussion followed at length in regard to an unexpired portion of a term and how long an individual may be in a position and the need to explain to the public how long an individual would serve if running to fill an unexpired term. Using the white board, Mr. Bowles outlined the situation. Discussion followed at length and again it was questioned the thought pattern behind the revisions made in 2002. Mrs. Milardo stated there needs to be something in place that's fair. Mr. Fernandes stated he would like to hear Mr. Fredericksen's opinion on this matter.

Mr. Bowles will draft some language addressing 1) an unaffiliated alternate filling a vacancy, 2) how a new alternate is chosen, and 3) how an unexpired portion of a term will be handled. A draft will be available at the September meeting for review.

Code of Ethics – Discussion followed in regard to whether or not the Code of Ethics should be within the Charter. Mr. Bowles asked if the Code of Ethics was an ordinance. Mrs. Milardo stated yes, but this should be addressed. Mr. Battistoni asked how the Ethics document would tie into the Charter. Discussion followed in regard to the age of the document and whether or not a non-updated document should be included within the Charter. Mrs. Milardo will email the document to all members prior to the 19 September 2016 meeting. Mr. Bowles stated if there is to be a reference to the Code of Ethics it should probably be under **Section 4-2 Eligibility for Election to Town Offices**. Mr. Battistoni asked what the Code of Ethics covers and if it's appropriate for every person covered by the Charter. Mrs. Milardo stated

she believes so. (**Recording Clerk's Note: The Code of Ethics document shows an effective date of 08.28.2012 as shown on the Town's website.**)

Appointed Positions v. Elected Positions – Mr. Fernandes thought it was suggested that some positions be appointed v. elected. Mr. Bowles stated his notes indicate that the town clerk and tax collector be appointed/hired rather than elected. Mr. Bowles stated the treasurer's position should be included as the position is no longer necessary. Mr. Ruttly asked if the town currently has a treasurer with Mrs. Milardo responding yes, but the duties have changed.

Discussion followed in regard to the town clerk's and tax collector's positions requiring certifications and continued education; the suggestion may have been made in order to eliminate the popularity contest and replacing it with qualified candidates for these positions; how one gains experience for either position; and the need for the town to have qualified people working for the residents. Mr. Bowles stated in his opinion of the two positions the town clerk should be someone from town and the position should be elected. Mr. Fernandes stated he can see the value of hired v. elected, but what's the expense to the town v. the elected position. Mr. Bowles asked if the salaries of the town clerk and tax collector are competitive with other towns. Mrs. Milardo stated she doesn't think so. Discussion followed in regard to elected (the individual truly wanting the position) v. being hired; possibly looking at expanding the election time frame for the tax collector from two years to four years; the benefits to the town of these two positions requiring continued recertification/education; and self-evaluation of these positions by the taxpayers come election time. Mr. Fernandes stated he wasn't convinced on the hired v. elected for both positions. Mrs. Milardo will contact the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) to obtain additional information.

Mr. Bowles asked Mrs. Milardo how the town is doing in regard to the treasurer's position. Mrs. Milardo stated in her opinion, there isn't a need for a treasurer. Mrs. Brookes stated she thought the Committee was to receive a list of duties (job descriptions) for the Finance Director, Finance Coordinator, and Treasurer. Mrs. Milardo stated either the treasurer needs to be given more responsibility or eliminate the position; and make a part-time (quarter or 20 hour) position as there's not enough work as to what the treasurer does. Mrs. Milardo also stated things are currently a bit busier due to the bonding issue. Mr. Bowles asked if there was anything within the Charter that's specific to the treasurer (nothing within the Table of Contents). Discussion followed in regard to checks and balances (can't have the same person inputting and reconciling information); and **Section 4-9 Election of Tax Collector and Treasurer** being the only place where there is mention of the treasurer.

Mrs. Brookes asked to see the duties of the finance director and coordinator prior to and after hire to see how things have changed. Mrs. Milardo stated she believes the job that would be most affected would be the financial coordinate as she will be taking on some of the treasurer's responsibilities. Mrs. Milardo also stated in her opinion there needs to be some restructuring. Mrs. Milardo noted that Robin Munster, Treasurer, is good at her job and Georgia Emanuel, Finance Coordinator, has been giving her additional work to do. Mr. Bowles asked who the treasurer reports to. Mr. Battistoni stated the townspeople. Mr. Bowles reviewed **Section 9-5 (c) Expenditures and Accounting** and that it would appear the treasurer should be reporting to the Board of Finance (BOF). Mrs. Milardo stated that is not what's taking place at this time and there is no job description. The Committee was unclear what **Section 9-5 (c)** means and they reviewed **Section 9-7 (c) 3**. Discussion followed.

Mrs. Milardo explained how Barbara Bertrand, Finance Director, Mrs. Emanuel, Kristen Battistoni, Tax Collector, Mrs. Munster, and she worked on the process for selecting a new bank. Mrs. Milardo stated Mrs. Bertrand took the lead on this matter and Mrs. Munster set up the accounts, doing some research, and reconciliation due to lack of time for Mrs. Emanuel to do at this time. Mr. Battistoni stated in terms of the Charter, these duties should point somewhere. Mrs. Milardo stated in her opinion they should be embedded within the Finance Department (department needs to be restructured). Mrs. Milardo stated Joe Centofanti, Chairman, BOF, has some good examples and should make a presentation to the Committee. Mrs. Brookes asked how often the town is audited with Mrs. Milardo responding every year.

Mr. Ruttly felt there is no longer a need for a treasurer as the town now has a finance director. Mrs. Milardo discussed the new system for submitting property and vehicle taxes; and if the residents used this new

system, the money was deposited directly into the town's account. Mrs. Milardo stated she didn't feel there was any longer a need for a treasurer and that some things could be merged together. Mr. Bowles asked if Mrs. Milardo and/or Mr. Centofanti would be able to explain how the system would work without a treasurer and how it will relate to the Charter. Mrs. Milardo stated yes. Discussion followed. Mrs. Milardo will ask Mr. Centofanti to attend the 19 September 2016 meeting.

The Committee reviewed the list of suggestions to see if all items had been discussed. The following suggestions remained: 1) **Charter Compliance Commission** – Mr. Ruddy asked what a compliance commission would be/do. Mr. Bowles stated he didn't ask when the suggestion was presented. Mr. Fernandes stated in his opinion it would be a commission that would be monitoring the various departments/commissions to see that they are following the Charter. 2) **Elected officials to abide by the personnel policy.** A brief discussion followed as to whether this should be a part of the Charter as a personnel policy could change more often than the Charter. Item tabled.

Mr. Bowles stated if the Committee is responsible to review all suggestions put forth at the public hearing, then it certainly must review every aspect of the resolution made by the BOS, especially if a report needs to be written. This will need to be discussed further.

5. Adjournment

MOTION: Audrey Brookes moved to adjourn. John Fernandes second. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bunny Hall Batzner
Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, 19 September 2016.