

CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION
CITY HALL
253 Main Street
Ansonia, Connecticut 06401
Telephone (203) 736-5930 FAX (203) 735-5422

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14 JUN 30 AM 10:28
Elizabeth S. Lynch
TOWN AND CITY CLERK
ANSONIA, CONNECTICUT

Christopher Lisi
Chairman
William Luneski
Vice Chairman

MINUTES

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING, WEDNESDAY, June 11, 2014 MAYOR'S OFFICE 7:00 PM

The Charter Revision Commission held its regularly scheduled meeting on Wednesday, June 11, 2014. The meeting began at 7:00 P.M.

Roll call:

Christopher Lisi	present
Dan King	present
Horace Behrle	present
Beverly Tidmarsh	absent
Joseph Jeanette	present
William Luneski	absent
Matthew Edo	present
Lorrie Vaccaro	present
Joseph Jaumann	present

7 present, 2 absent

A quorum was present.

Mr. Lisi opened the meeting at 7:00. The meeting began with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Mr. Lisi then entertained motions to approve the minutes of the last meeting. Mr. King made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Vaccaro. All were in favor of the motion.

Mr. Lisi asked if there was any correspondence. He stated that there was correspondence from Atty. Marini's office. There was no further correspondence.

Mr. Lisi stated that there also was a draft of proposed changes with regard to BOAT.

Atty. Marini stated that the Commission should motion to accept this as a late communication. Mr. Vaccaro made a motion to accept the late communication and place it on file. The motion was seconded by Mr. Behrle. All were in favor of the motion.

Mr. Lisi then opened up the Public Session. Beth Lynch, Town and City clerk stated that there was a

mention in the previous minutes about making changes in the Town Clerks position from being an elected on to an appointed position. She would like to know what the driving force is behind this. She further stated that there are no other departments that are singled out. There is no other department in the city that has been cut in staff. The city is adding staff to every other department in the city, but her department was cut by 25% of their workforce. She stated that there wasn't anyone from the last Charter Revision Commission that came to see what the department does and how long things take to do. No one even asked any questions as to what their various functions are. She is just concerned why her department is under the microscope. She was told that it was something that was brought up by a member of the public at a public forum. Mr. King stated that none of the Commission members brought it up spoke for it nor did they have any support for it. It came up during a public session and the general consensus was that there was no support for that at all. It doesn't make sense. He further stated that he doesn't believe that there was anything personal towards her office. She then stated if this was going to be brought up again in the future, she would like to be informed about it so that she can be there to defend herself. Mr. Lisi stated that this Commission has already decided what their agenda is and there will not be any changes to the City Clerks office. Mr. Lisi stated that the Commission has already decided which issues that they were going to concentrate on this term and that was not on that list. Mr. Lisi asked if someone could make a motion to close the public session. Mr. Vaccaro made the motion to close the public session. The motion was seconded by Mr. Edo. All were in favor of the motion.

Mr. Lisi then went on to unfinished business. Mr. Vaccaro stated that at the last meeting, he addressed the idea of disbanding BOAT. He stated that they are not elected and are not accountable to the people. He further stated that he believed that BOAT was the hardest working committee in the city. He then stated that he now believes that we should keep BOAT and make it a smaller number of members. He then stated that the alderman would have the final say over the budget. The mayor would propose his budget in February to BOAT no later than February. Then the budget that BOAT approves would then go to the Board of Aldermen at their monthly meeting. In this way, the aldermen that are elected would be accountable and would have more say in the budget process. Atty. Marini then explained that the Board of Aldermen can reduce or delete any item in the budget by a simple majority and if they chose to increase the budget or add any item, they would need to have a two-third majority vote to do so. In this way there is a check and balance.

There was a discussion regarding the attendance of former BOAT members. There was a suggestion that the members should be from each ward with three year staggered terms. They also suggested that there be minority representation.

The other unfinished business issue is in regard to the pension issue. Mr. Rich Bshara is present and will be able to answer any questions that the Commission may have. The members were told that they are underfunded. However, he doesn't believe that they are grossly underfunded. He stated that the Police pension is fully funded. The City Hall and Public Works MERF is in approximately at year 22 of a 30 year buyback with the state. In about five or six years all of the current MERF members will be fully funded. The police pension, which is the old one, is currently has a balance of 1.2 or 1.4 million in it fully funded currently with the 4.5 million. It is closed. There are no new members going into it. Through attrition it will go down and we are currently funding it at a level of 350 or 400. The current yearly out flow of money for the whole police pension is approximately 525K and we are funding it at 400K and utilizing part of the 1.5 million that's currently in there. So they are not fully funding it to do the pay as you go, but the people that are in this plan, the number will start to go down. That 525 will reduce over time. The old City pension plan is the problem. It was designated as the City pension plan that's in the Charter was primarily

for City employees, Public Works and City Hall and those were the main players in it until the 1990's when we went to MERF. At that time, it was decided that would be a declining pension system. During that time members from the Board of Education started to go into it. There are 26 receiving benefits and 31 active or vice versa. It's currently about 8 or 9 thousand that we believe is in the plan and it is underfunded of about 5 million dollars. Because it is not closed, that figure is escalating. In that one, we haven't been funding anything. 10 years ago it was fully funded. 20 years ago we were approximately 200% funded. We are currently only 25% funded. We need to do something with it. MERF requires that the city pay as we go.

There was no other business to come before the board.

Mr. Jaumann made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Behrle. All were in favor of the motion.

The meeting ended at 8:47.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carol Sardinha', written in a cursive style.

Carol Sardinha
Secretary