

CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

Special Meeting

April 14, 2022

6:00 PM

Via Webex

Fairfield, CT

A recording of this meeting can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lryjiunvBNo>

DRAFT MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bryan Cafferelli-Chair, Chris Brogan-Vice Chair, Marlene Battista-Secretary, Pamela Iacono, John Mitola, John Wynne

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jay Gross

OTHERS PRESENT: Attorney Steven Mednick, Town Attorney James Baldwin, FairTV, members of the public

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Bryan Cafferelli called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

II. **ROLL CALL**

Recording Secretary Pru O'Brien took the roll.

III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair Bryan Cafferelli led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. **Meeting Topics:**

Attorney Mednick said this is a critical period of time in the Charter Revision process. A public hearing will need to be set up. The charter process is a multitiered process. There have been many public comment sessions with local officials and there is an active log of public comments and discussions with public officials. The document he is presenting today is what he has heard from everyone during this process and what he has experienced doing Charter Revisions throughout the state. This should be something moving Fairfield into the future. This Commission has moved forward and has looked into the future for form of governments along with comparative data from other local governments. Action item 3 is designed to create a couple of steps forward from the system of today, to create balance with the rest of government and elected boards. There is greater accountability for a Chief Officer by the Board of Selectmen. Attorney Mednick went over procedures that would change without the Board of Selectmen and even with the changes, the First Selectperson would still not be a strong executive. It would not give that person more authority even though it is what people may think. The size of the legislative body is a significant issue. RTM communities have kept largely legislative bodies, but there needs to be a line of demarcation and defined powers of the RTM. The Commission needs to make decisions on whether or not to keep the Board of Selectmen. Nothing is written in stone and it can still change. Any decisions made today will help him move forward with the document.

Action Item #3 (include content of Action Item #2): Articles II – VI and XI (includes Minority Party Representation; Constables; Redistricting and Reapportionment; Governance impact on Budget process (Action Item #1)

There was a discussion regarding the size of the RTM, especially if the BOS was to be eliminated. Commissioners discussed different scenarios with reducing districts and keeping the size of the RTM between 20-30 members. Chair Bryan Cafferelli wanted to be sure the Commission wasn't making changes for the sake of making changes. Chair Cafferelli suggested keeping the BOS, incorporating a COA role, streamlining the budget process and reducing the size of the RTM. Commissioner Wynne made a motion to eliminate the BOS, move the legislative body to 15 members-10 districts, 1 member per district and 5 At-Large. Commissioner Iacono seconded the motion. After much discussion, Commissioner Wynne withdrew his motion. Chair Bryan Cafferelli suggested keeping the BOS, having a smaller RTM of 30 members and 10 districts, adding a CAO and redefining the BOS. Chair Cafferelli didn't make a formal motion so no vote was taken, but the other Commissioners agreed to this idea for Fairfield.

Attorney Mednick referred the Commission to background document #9 regarding minority representation and reviewed the rest of backup document #3.

Remainder of Calendar and Workplan

The Commissioners want to address the budget process at the next meeting. Attorney Mednick said he will prepare a document regarding the budget process for the next meeting.

The next two meetings are on April 25, 4:30pm and April 28, 7:00pm. Attorney Mednick will need to ask the BOS when they expect the draft of the Charter changes. Both the Board of Selectmen (BOS) and the Charter Revision Commission (CRC) still need to schedule a public hearing.

The next meeting is a Special meeting on Monday, April 25 at 4:30pm.

V. ADJOURN

Commissioner Wynne made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Mitola seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:17pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Pru O'Brien
Recording Secretary