

# Town of Fairfield News

9/29/2021 - CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING



## **WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!** **CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING**

Wednesday, October 6 | 6:30 p.m.

*Instructions to participate are at the bottom of this email.*

**I ENCOURAGE OUR CITIZENS TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS  
FUNDAMENTALLY IMPORTANT PROCESS FOR OUR TOWN'S  
DEMOCRACY**

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### **CHARTER REVISION & PUBLIC HEARING**

#### **Why Should You Get Involved?**

The [Town Charter](#) is Fairfield's governing document that outlines our form of government, elections and budget process, and guides us on the duties of elected and appointed officials including key department heads, boards and commissions. Charter revision is the fundamental process by which you can have a say in our democracy on a local level. It happens infrequently, so I hope you will take the time to get involved now.

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#### **Background:**

Fairfield's government is comprised of the cooperative effort of over 400 elected and appointed Town officials and board members. The vast majority are volunteers elected or appointed to boards and commissions.

As outlined in the Charter, Fairfield operates with three main branches of government: The Executive branch, comprised of the three member Board of Selectmen, elected every four years, with the First Selectwoman, the highest elected official, acting as the town's chief executive officer in charge of the administration of all town operations. The town's Legislative branch is the Representative Town Meeting (RTM) comprised of 40 members in ten voting districts with four representatives elected per district every two years. Finally, the Board of Finance is charged with overseeing the town's financial interests and policies. Members of the Board of Finance are elected every six years, with staggered terms.

There are dozens of other boards and commissions that oversee areas such as Education, Zoning, Parks & Recreation and Conservation - just to name a few.

While the Town Charter is the key document that allows our municipality to govern our community, the [Town Code](#) details many of the specific regulations that Town officials and Town departments undertake in the Town's daily operations. The Town Charter and all town ordinances, rules and regulations have been approved, adopted, ordained and enacted and are codified and consolidated into titles, chapters and sections in the Town Code.

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### **What's the Process?**

The last Charter Revision conducted in the Town of Fairfield was in 2006, 15 years ago, and it is generally recommended that municipalities review their Charter every 10 years.

State Statute governs the process by which a municipality can amend its' governing document. For this process, the Town has retained the assistance of Steven Mednick, an attorney who has many years of experience assisting towns with charter revision. Attorney Mednick will work with the Charter Revision Commission (CRC) throughout the 15 month process.

To begin Charter Revision (consistent with state law), the BOS developed a charge for a CRC and appointed a committee of seven qualified members, with equal representation from Democrats and Republicans, and 1 Unaffiliated member. The members of the commission were chosen based on experience and/or a deep understanding of our town government. I want to thank these residents for stepping up to serve on this very important commission:

Bryan Cafferelli, Chair (R)  
Chris Brogan, Vice Chair (D)  
Marlene Battista (R)

Jay Gross (D)  
Pamela Iacono (R)  
John Mitola (D)  
John Wynne (U)

For the seven member commission, only two appointees were allowed to be members of an existing municipal board or commission.

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### **How it Works:**

After the commission holds meetings and public hearings gaining input from the community, the commission will present recommendations to the Board of Selectmen (BOS). The BOS can either accept or reject the recommendations or they can send it back to the commission with questions or revisions. If the BOS has suggested changes, the process continues until the BOS gives final approval. The entire process will be open to the public and documented.

Ultimately, after the BOS approves the final recommendations, Fairfield residents will have the opportunity to have their say when the items are placed on the November 2022 ballot.

To watch Attorney Mednick's presentation to the Board of Selectmen outlining the process, [watch here](#).

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## **How Can You Get Involved:**

**On Wednesday, October 6, the Commission will host a virtual public hearing to listen to input from residents about our charter.**

### **To Make a Public Comment, join the Webex meeting as follows:**

- Via a web browser: <https://tofit.my.webex.com/meet/online>
- From the Webex app, connect to meeting #: 126 145 0736 #

Or,

- Call 510-338-9438; 126 145 0736 #

### **Please Note:**

The public can also send their comments before or after the meeting to Pru O'Brien at [PO'Brien@fairfieldct.org](mailto:PO'Brien@fairfieldct.org) with Charter Revision Commission in the subject line. As you would in a public meeting, please include your name and address with your comment. All

comments received and verified will be included in the minutes with your name and address. Your email address will be excluded.

To sign up to receive agendas or notifications on future meetings, [click here](#).

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## **MORE INFORMATION:**

**Current Town Charter**

**Charter Revision Commission Web Page**

To listen to the first organizational commission meeting, and a presentation from Attorney Mednick on Home Rule, [click here](#).

[Archives](#)