

**MEETING NOTICE**  
**Charter Revision Commission Meeting**  
**Monday, November 8, 2021**  
**6:30 p.m.**  
**Via Webex**  
**Fairfield, CT**

A recording of this meeting can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2O6GVVUKWyE>

**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:** Town Attorney James Baldwin, Attorney Steven Mednick, FairTV, elected officials and members of the public.

**I. Call to Order**

Chairman Bryan Cafferelli called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**II. Roll Call**

Recording Secretary Pru O'Brien took the roll call. Jay Gross was absent.

Mr. Cafferelli led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**III. Information Item: Public Email Comments (Posted on CRC Webpage)**

Mr. Cafferelli thanked those who sent emails and explained that they are read and gathered into the Comment Grid, as well as into documents for the meeting backup. Vice Chairman, Chris Brogan said he also appreciates the emails and the comments at the meetings. He suggested any public new to the Charter Revision Commission meetings, go to the information from the 9/22/21 meeting backup and see the whole presentation submitted by Attorney Mednick.

**IV. Approval of Minutes: October 14, 2021 and October 28, 2021**

John Mitola made a motion to approve the minutes as written for both 10/14/21 and 10/28/21 CRC meetings. Marlene Battista seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

**V. Testimony of Elected Public Officials**

Karen Wackerman, RTM, District 7

- §2.3D-Town Elections and Terms of Office and §4.4A-Annual Meetings, Organizations and Elections conflict. Ms. Wackerman asked that those be reviewed and questioned whether they need to be in the Charter.
- Eliminate the need for the BOS to review contracts. It is important that another body reviews them, and she encouraged the CRC not to eliminate that.
- RTM Structure- The Assistant Town Attorney doesn't have to be in the Charter. In the past, that person was assisting the RTM.
- RTM doesn't have a corresponding department. Can the RTM have use of a staff person if necessary?

Roger Autouri, Town Constable

- Mr. Autouri read the minutes from 10/28/21 which mention eliminated Town Constables. They work with Probate Court and serve participants in hearings and file returns with Probate at no cost to the town. Their fees are paid by the town participants. He referred to State Statutes, §52-50, §52-896, Title 7-95 sec 789.

#### Karen McCormack-RTM District 2

- Speaking as a citizen with experience, she has gone through serving the RTM for two years. The size of the RTM is too large and inefficient. It is the same 10-15 RTM members who engage and give input. She suggests scaling back the RTM to below 40 members.

#### Dru Georgiadis-RTM District 9

- Ms. Georgiadis is in her third term and having the 4 members in her district. She said it takes away the incumbency advantage.

#### William Gerber-RTM District 2

- Finishing fourth term and thinks no redistricting proposal should come out of the Charter Revision Commission without redistricting committee approval.
- Town Attorney should be separated from the First Selectperson. Mr. Gerber feels that the Town Attorney is too close to the First Selectperson and is serving as an attorney to the First Selectperson and not the town.
- Recent issued with contract reviews, especially with the Julian contract. Mr. Gerber said the review should be based on risk and not the dollar amount.
- Not proper to judge the number of RTM members by who speaks at meetings. Not everyone feels comfortable speaking. Forty members is fine, thirty is too few.

#### Jill Vergara-RTM District 7

- Broadcast Charter Revision Commission meetings live on FairTV and WebEx for the public.
- Doesn't agree with the issues of the RTM relating to size.
- It is an interesting idea to have the RTM nonpartisan. Elections are through the people and not how they are affiliated.
- Lack of resources for the RTM. Since there is no staff, it is difficult at times to legislate. She is a lawyer but needs a staff attorney focused on RTM.
- She doesn't know why there is a big focus on the RTM. She suggested keeping the town structure to prevent what happened with Penfield and other issues in the town.

#### Sharon Pistilli-RTM District 3

- Reducing the size of the RTM expands ground that needs to be covered and will become less representative. Keeping the current size allows accessibility.
- It is important to align commissions with organization of town government.
- CRC should have more opportunities for elected and newly elected to speak in public.

#### Kate Braun

- Concerns with aligning departments and commissions. Would advise to be cautious it won't do anything to denigrate what Conservation supports. As a coastal community with climate change, there needs to be more, not less support for conservation. Conservation supports many boards and commissions.
- Would like to see something in the charter regarding retaining and maintaining conservation and wetlands records.
- Suggested a commission for Public Works.

#### Jay Wolk-RTM District 5

- Wanted to acknowledge that the meeting is being shown live on FairTV.
- RTM has room for improvement, but not reducing number of members.
- He is a duly elected Constable. Very rewarding part of the court and the town isn't absorbing any expenditures to keep Constables.

John Kuhn-RTM District 7

- Newly elected to the RTM and doesn't have tenure but has gotten help and support from others that ran in his district RTM. He feels it is a small percent of the community.

Some comments from the CRC:

John Mitola was intrigued about RTM members petitioning candidates and not being endorsed by a party. Pam Iacono stated that there are petitions and suggested a follow up discussion with Attorney Mednick. Chris Brogan commented on a suggestion to align departments and commissions. He said if department functions change, the commission needs to align with that and other departments.

**VI. Discussion of Next Steps**

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 16, 2021. It will be a Commission Level Set meeting. Attorney Mednick thanked all the officials who spoke and said this is the last of the Due Diligence meetings. The Level Set is the first opportunity the Commission has to look at the Comment Grid and get a sense of priorities. The Commission can also raise their concerns about what they have/have not heard. Some issues will require legal research and comparative data from like sized communities. Some will have panel discussions and may require more than one meeting. Tentatively, the 12/9/21 meeting will have public comment. There are several issues on a limited time frame as set by State Statute. Bryan Cafferelli wants to be sure the CRC is headed in the right direction and will keep updates on the website as to the 12/9/21 meeting regarding whether or not it will be hearing public comments.

The 2022 meeting dates will be set at one of the December meetings.

**VII. Adjournment**

Pam Iacono made a motion to adjourn. Marlene Battista seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Pru O'Brien  
Recording Secretary