

TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION  
PUBLIC HEARING

April 26, 2022

PRESENT Chair Don Bell, Deb Arrieta (via Teams), Richard Bates, Shelby Brown, Tom Rup (arrived at 6:37 p.m.), Travis Simpson, Eric Thompson, Angel Santiago (via Teams) and Marcia Leclerc

ABSENT

ALSO Rich Gentile, Asst. Corporation Counsel (via Teams)  
PRESENT

CALL TO ORDER

The public hearing was called to order at 6:34 pm by Commission Chair Don Bell to receive public comment on the draft report, proposed charter, and charter amendments as required prior to the submission of said documents to the Town Clerk as required.

Introductory Remarks By Chair Bell & Overview Of The Process

Opportunity For Citizens To Speak

Don Currey, 14 Martin Circle, (i) thanked the Commission for their service; (ii) stated that in section 4.3(e) of the Charter, there is discussion of “termination of appointments” that is not clear in its reference and should have improved language to properly reflect intent; (iii) proposed consistent clarifying language with regards to “Town Council” vs. “Council” in section 3.1; (iv) in Section 3.2, feels that the Vice Chair should be removed in the line of succession should a Mayor be unable to serve; (v) feels that the Chief Administrative Officer position would require a high salary and restrict a Mayor’s flexibility. Mr. Currey feels that by including criteria and qualifications for a Chief Administrative Officer lacks consistency to the rest of the Charter. Mr. Currey suggested that any criteria be removed and left to a job description as approved by the Council.

George Demetrian, 2 Arawak Drive, (i) believes that the Strong Mayor vs. Town Manager debate was not given sufficient time or substantive discussion; (ii) feels that a support person in the Mayor’s Office has value, but should be established with more flexibility based on need of the specific Mayor and time; (iii) recommends a proviso to enable the issue of governance be evaluated more regularly than via a Charter Revision that occurs roughly every twenty years; (iv) expressed his appreciation to the Commission for their time and work invested.

Opportunity For Elected Officials To Speak

Rich Kehoe, 8 Knollwood Drive, (i) commended the Commission members for their efforts; (ii) responded to Mr. Demetrian’s comments regarding a proviso that the Town Council has the ability to establish a Charter Revision Commission in order to review

amendments to the Charter should the need arise at any time; (ii) proposed revised language in the Charter that provides more grammatically consistent language, including the removal of virtually all pronouns; (iii) proposed replacement language with regards to the “Office of Profit” from the Charter for a more clear explanation of intent; (iv) proposed an addition of language to confirm that the Organizational Meeting that typically falls on the Monday that follows an election would not be held on Veteran’s Day, but the day after; (v) provided proposed corrections of reference within the Charter to the appropriate sections; (vi) feels that while his proposed amendments may have come with limited time for the Commission to review, the opportunities to make revisions to the Charter do not occur often.

#### Discussion Of Next Steps In Charter Revision Process

The Chair thanked the public for their participation in the process to this point and that the Special Meeting to follow will provide the Commission with the opportunity for a final vote to approve submission of their report to the Town Clerk so that it may be presented to the Town Council for review.

#### ADJOURNMENT

MOTION        By Eric Thompson  
                     seconded by Rich Bates  
                     to **adjourn** (7:10)  
                     Motion carried 9/0.