

WINDHAM CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2013 7:00 PM

Respectfully submitted by Jessica Niles,

Attendees: Doug Lary, Dennis O'Brien, Jan-Maya Schold, Priscilla Root and Barbara McGrath,
Special guest: Neal Beets and Gay St Louis.

1. Call to order: Barbara McGrath called the meeting to order at 7:06pm. Jan-Maya Schold made a motion to make Barbara McGrath the chair for the meeting, seconded by Dennis O'Brien: motion passed.
2. Citizens and Delegations (3 minutes, related to Charter, Commissioners may ask questions or seek clarification): none
3. Discussion and Possible Action to Approve Minutes for October 24, 2013- few corrections were made. Doug Lary made a motion to approved the minutes with corrections, seconded by Jan-Maya Schold: motion passed (1 abstention: Barbara McGrath)
4. Commissioner discussion related to (Guests Town Manager Neal Beets will join the discussion at the table. Guest Gay St. Louis, Tax Collector, will also be available):
 - Fiscal calendar, process/timing related to budget planning & presentation for the town government and opportunities to improve on the process through charter revision. Neal Beets handed out Town Budget Schedule for FY 14-15. Neal Beets stated while the idea of phasing out the Board of Finance is interesting he has never seen it done with two public independent bodies. You would have to set it up where the elected officials have a set term and you establish when they will go away. The official will know when their term will diminish and that the board will be going away. Jan-Maya Schold stated that a lot of people are concerned that the town council does not have a lot of fiscal experience and the goal would be to give them exposure and that when merging you would get a council who has embodied both perspectives. Barbara McGrath mentioned the goal is not to have an immediate pulling out. Neal Beets stated you cannot force the two bodies to actually work together, questions would be raised as to is it a financial or policy issues and who can vote or respond.

Neal Beets states the first week of December he tells them his expectations and they fill out all the operating expenses. Three questions get sent to the voters: Board of Education, General Government and Willimantic Service District. Discussion took place regarding the budget seasons seems long and how to make meetings more efficient. Discussion took place about when Neal finds out how much money the town is going to get from the state. Neal reported he asks for the proposed spending targets and sets the expectations. Discussion took place on Department heads and their input regarding budgets.

Jan-Maya Schold asked if “the Town Council did not line item veto but had bottom line would that help Neal” the response was yes. Gay St. Louis stated that once the Town Council had put the budget back to last years budget without discussion and then she had to go back and present why the position needed to be added back in. Discussion took place on the capital improvement program. Neal Beets will write up a paragraph on: Regional work, capital and maintenance issues and policy making.

5. Future Agenda Items – Jan-Maya Schold stated she felt the commission does not have enough meetings to get things done maybe more homework needs to be handed out or an extra meeting needs to be added.
 - a. Town Manager’s role & authority regarding emergency powers- Neal Beets was asked what his thoughts were on this topic. There is no provision or anything in the charter. Discussion was held. Doug Lary asked if the aspect of seeing the town as divided has made Neal Beets experience abnormal challenges. Neal Beets responded that it’s normal to have abnormal, we are in many aspects two towns and some day we need to become one town.

Gay St. Louis questioned the issue of treasurer and town clerk- Attorney Cody is supposed to develop language.

Dennis O’Brien handed out case decision on tax payers vs. selectman.
6. Citizens and Delegations (3 minutes, related to Charter, Commissioners may ask questions or seek clarification): Dr. Bloomer- he stated he would like to see discussion on

what to do with economic development- someone needs to figure out a way to poke it up.
Discussion took place regarding: commissions.

7. Adjournment- Doug Lary made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Priscilla Root: motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:07pm

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Patricia P. Spmanco
WINDHAM TOWN CLERK