

Windham Charter Revision Commission

Thursday, February 27, 2014 7pm

Respectfully submitted by Jessica Niles, Clerk of the Charter Revision Commission

Attendees: Doug Lary, Jan-Maya Schold, Victor Rayhall, Chuck Pennewill, Pam Shorey, Priscilla Root

1. Call to order: Doug Lary called the meeting to order at 7:04pm
2. Citizens & Delegations: none
3. Discussion and possible action to approve minutes for January 23, 2014: Chuck Pennewill made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Victor Rayhall: discussion took place regarding the last citizens and delegations. Motion passed. (5 in favor, 1 abstention: Priscilla Root).
4. Chairman's report: Jan-Maya Schold made a motion to move the topic to later, seconded by Chuck Pennewill: motion passed unanimously.
5. Commissioner discussion and possible action related to Resolution 2595's items 1-7:
 - #3 Board of Education Structure: Pam Shorey mentioned if they were to go this route then she would prefer it to be 4 elected and 3 appointed: it makes sense to have the experience. Chuck Pennewill stated it works in larger places but he does not feel we have the resources here in this town; there is a large question of who would appoint these people. Jan-Maya Schold questioned who would decide what skills are needed and which are lacking: she is not sure it has been thought through enough. Priscilla Root mentioned that the balance is all wrong, if we did this then you would need to work out all the details and she feels the electors would not like this at all. Victor Rayhall stated there may not be enough knowledge. Jan-Maya Schold mentioned that you could bring the board down to 7. Pam Shorey stated that the Board of Education could work with the superintendent and they could bring in experts for advice whenever it is needed: the expert does not have to sit on the board. Victor Rayhall suggested the commission ask the Board of Education how they feel on the issue. ***Jan-Maya Schold made a motion that she does not feel there is enough information to allow for appointments to the Board of Education therefore keeping the Board of Education a fully elected board, seconded by Chuck Pennewill: motion passed unanimously.*** Pam Shorey questioned why the commission was considering shrinking the Board of Education down to 7: the response was the Town Council asked the Charter Commission to consider this. ***Pam Shorey made a motion that based on all current changes the Board of Education will be left as it with 9 members, 4 years over lapping, seconded by Victor Rayhall: motion passed unanimously.***
 - #5 Clarify Town Manager role and authority regarding emergency powers. Jan-Maya Schold briefly reviewed what the issue was regarding this section. Lengthy discussion took place regarding the placement of the word necessary and how it changes the meaning of the sentence depending on where it is located. Discussion also took place regarding having the language of emergency/disaster put back in. ***Jan-Maya Schold made a motion to reopen the***

topic for full discussion, seconded by Chuck Pennewill: motion passed unanimously.

Discussion took place on what constitutes an emergency and who gets to decide that; in addition discussion took place regarding different types of emergencies. **Pam Shorey made a motion to change the language to read: expend or withhold the funds necessary to assure the smooth operation of town business and health, safety and well-being of the town and its residents, consistent with this charter. Seconded by Chuck Pennewill: motion passed unanimously.**

- #6 Service District: Jan-Maya Schold did a lot of work separating out the districts and statutes. Questions arose regarding what the question here really is. Discussion took place on the topic of collecting taxes vs fees and how a set group of people could form a new district. Most commissioners agreed that the charter should allow changes and should not be so restrictive.
 - #1 Board of Finance: Chuck Pennewill stated currently we had a good set of checks and balances and he does not support getting rid of the Board of Finance. Priscilla Root mentioned right now there are so many different variables: and currently the Finance Department is not up and running. The other thing you have to look at is the human factor: you would be giving power and control of policy making and money to one set of people. The fact the checks and balances is cumbersome is the way it is meant to be. Discussion took place regarding other types of checks and balances (voting). **Chuck Pennewill made a motion to reopen discussion on the elimination of the Board of Finance, seconded by Victor Rayhall: motion passed unanimously.** Victor Rayhall mentioned he does not think the cut to Board of Finance would be supported: the people do not want a lot of changes. Jan-Maya Schold brought up we have hired a finance guy with a sound software system to use. This person will be working with the Town Manager and department heads. The line item veto was taken out but they were given bottom line veto. We have professionals and we need to let them be professionals. Discussion took place regarding the different sets of people working together and the focus of the two sets of people. The budget process needs to be rewritten and it can be more streamlined.
 - #2: Town Finance Department: Discussion took place on the Water Commission. Priscilla Root mentioned the Finance Department needs to be mentioned in the charter but no more than that. **Pam Shorey made a motion to move discussion on #2, Dies for a lack of a second. Chuck Pennewill made a motion the Finance Department will coordinate all financial transactions for the town of Windham: Board of Education, Town Council. Chuck Pennewill withdrew his motion.** Discussion took place regarding the report to be given to the Town Council soon.
6. Citizens and Delegations: None
 7. Adjournment: Pam Shorey made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Priscilla Root: motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:02pm