

WINDHAM CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2013 7:00 PM

Attendees: Erika Haynes, Barbara McGrath, Doug Lary, Jan Maya-Schold, Chuck Pennewill

1. Call to order: Erika Haynes called the meeting to order at 7:09pm
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 November 21, 2013: Doug Lary made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Barbara McGrath: 3 in favor 2 abstentions (Erika Haynes, Chuck Pennewill)
4. Commissioner discussion and possible action related to(budget planning process and Phase-in of Board of Finance phase-out): Brief discussion was held regarding Neal Beets presentation. Jan-Maya Schold gave Chuck Pennewill an idea of what the commissioners were thinking regarding the Board of Finance and Town Council. Barbara McGrath stated that once the two boards are merged then no one can shift the blame or say it is not their job. Jan-Maya Schold stated she felt it is valuable for both sides to hear questions from all the different sides. Erika Haynes stated the accountability will be more direct. Chuck Pennewill stated that he felt maybe the commissioners were moving too fast: there is a lot going on with the town: audit, new finance department, and the computer system changes. He also questioned what happens if the plan does not work? Doug Lary brought up that they may need to look at staggered terms and the details for the merger. Jan-Maya Schold brought up that the maybe the Board of Finance could be a subcommittee. Doug Lary and Jan-Maya Schold have tasked themselves with developing language and details for the merger and the duties. Jan-Maya Schold stated the Town Council should have bottom line veto not department veto: you have three professionals looking at the information. Discussion took place regarding the bottom line veto. Chuck Pennewill mentioned that whoever is in charge needs to be aware of how the education budget is presented. Jan-Maya Schold made a motion to have Town Council and Board of Finance have department veto on department budgets from inspection of new charter and on, seconded by Barbara McGrath; motion passed unanimous. Discussion took place regarding who would run the joint meeting; commissioners decided the president of the Town Council would run the meeting. Discussion took place regarding district/ward representation. Erika Haynes stated the voters need to understand what is happening. The goal was to have a document that was clear, informative, concise, and easy to navigate. Brief discussion took place regarding the police departments and mutual aid.

5. Commissioner discussion and possible action related to:
 - a. Town Manager's role and authority regarding emergency powers: At one point Neal put a spending freeze on his departments, it was brought to his attention that he did not have the authority to do so. There is a lack of language in the charter regarding this topic which is located on pages 11-12 of the charter. Discussion was held regarding language to be developed. Doug Lary made a motion to change page 12 (H) to The Town Manager shall extend or withhold the necessary funds to assure the smooth operation of town business and the health, safety and well-being of the town and its residents, consistent with this charter., seconded by Jan-Maya Schold: motion passed unanimous.

6. Future Agenda Items

Budget planning and phase in.

Role of the Mayor.

Erika Haynes has given her resignation as of January 1st. Barbara McGrath has also been asked to leave the Charter Commission for personal reasons.

7. Citizens and Delegations (3 minutes, related to Charter, Commissioners may ask questions or seek clarification): Dr. Bloomer- asked if after the resignations will there still be a quorum? The answer was yes because there will still be five members.

Henry Crane- he asked two questions the first being will there be one referendum and then the Town Council makes the call? The second question was by changing the wording of emergency funds did you tie the Town Council hands if they wish to fire the Town Manager? The answer to both questions was: not yet.

8. Adjournment: Doug Lary made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Barbara McGrath: motion passed (unanimous)

Meeting adjourned at 9:07pm