

## WINDHAM CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

WINDHAM TOWN HALL  
979 Main Street, Willimantic, CT  
THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 2014 7:00 PM

**Respectfully submitted by Janet Laukaitis, Clerk of the Charter Revision Commission**

**Attendees:** Members Dennis O'Brien, Doug Lary, Jan-Maya Schold, Victor Rayhall, Chuck Pennewill, Priscilla Root, Richard Bloomer, Claire Lary; Citizens Mary Lou DeVivo, Richard Bloomer and Bernard D'Auteil.

1. Call to order: Dennis O'Brien called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.
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 April 3, 2014: Amendments were suggested to the April 3, 2014 minutes as follows: #5 DUTIES OF THE TOWN MANAGER ON BUDGET, change phrase to read as follows: ' . . . "As a part of" to be replaced by "in addition to" . . .' and to insert the word "see" between "they" and "fit" in line 3 of #2 Citizens and Delegations. Moved by Chuck Pennewill and seconded by Doug Lary, to accept the minutes as amended. Motion carried with Jan-Maya Schold and Pam Shorey abstaining.
4. Chairman's Report: Dennis O'Brien reviewed the service district issue and the proposed changes Jan-Maya Schold sent to commissioners in January. He feels the Commission has made good progress on the charter revision and is finally on schedule despite all the difficulties Commissioners have experienced, including but not limited to the dissolution of the original commission due to Town Hall administrative error, the resignation of several members, and changes in leadership of the Commission. The Charter revisions must be filed with the Town Clerk on June 1, 2014, and presented to the Town Council at their meeting on June 3, 2014. The Chairman will also report to the Council at their May 20, 2014 meeting, prior to the final public hearing of the Commission on May 22, 2014.
5. Continued Commissioner Discussion and possible action related to Items 1-7, but for number 4, of Resolution 2595, using Commission Vice-Chair Doug Lary's tool/document as a guide with special emphasis on:
  - a. Proposed changes to the Budget Process. This item was completed at prior meetings.
  - b. Proposed replacement of Willimantic Service Districts by a Taxing District governed by Town Council Members representing Willimantic with no Town Manager or Board of Finance Authority. The commission's work on this item, at their last meeting, was summarized; the Service District would not be managed by the Town Manager. Chairman O'Brien had discussed the subject with the Town Manager who feels this would be a mistaken move away from the Town Manager form of government and opposes the change.

Jan-Maya Schold said the Town Council should have the option to invite the Town Manager into their process, and that the Town Council should have the right to choose who has executive power over their money.

Doug Lary said differences are not geographic; one group (Willimantic residents) has different needs than the other group (the Windham villagers) but, both groups want roads and education.

There was much discussion of the Willimantic Service District being replaced by a taxing district.

Priscilla Root said it's logical for the Willimantic Service District to be separate; like the State is under the Federal umbrella, the Service District should be able to choose what services they want to pay for.

Dennis O'Brien said he will create a draft of the Town Charter based on what the Commission has done so far for the commission's next meeting. Though O'Brien disagrees with the Commission on the matter, his draft will include the Willimantic Service District being replaced with a taxing district. The Chairman said he is likely to vote against such a change, but the majority of commissioners apparently support it.

Dual membership on town boards and or commissions was discussed; how it happens and how it should not happen when there is a conflict. Dual membership is needed because of the need for volunteers to fill committees.

Jan-Maya Schold suggested defining commissions, committees, sub-committees, ad-hoc committees, etc. A definitions section should be included in the new charter, she said.

Victor Rayhall requested a discussion of the need to appoint a replacement to the Town Manager when s/he is on vacation or absent for short periods, or extended periods. After discussion, it was agreed that when the Town Manager is absent for more than four weeks, the Town Council would appoint a replacement and, when absent for four weeks or less, the Town Manager would appoint a replacement.

Jan-Maya Schold requested that the Planning and Zoning Commission define the commission, as the current charter says the planning commission and zoning commission are separate and the new charter should say that the commissions are combined into one.

Commissioners moved to the tool developed by Vice-Chair Doug Lary.

The filling of vacant positions was discussed. It was suggested that nominations for vacancies should be presented to the Town Clerk and reported to the Town Council. Dennis O'Brien understands the vacancy issues some commissioners are concerned about and he will try to address them in the draft he will be preparing.

Jan-Maya Schold said a person should hold only one elected position but appointed positions should be open to anyone who is otherwise eligible.

6. Citizens and Delegations (3 minutes, related to Charter, Commissioners may ask questions or seek clarification): Citizen Mary Lou DeVivo asked that extra copies of the draft Charter Revision be provided to citizens attending the meeting.
7. Adjournment: Victor Rayhall made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Chuck Pennewill. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.