

TOWN OF GROTON
CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
August 14, 2017
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 2

Chair Pro Tem Aument called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

- I. ROLL CALL:
Members Present: Chair Hauber, Chair Pro Tem Scott Aument, Commissioners Kathy Chase, Jane Dauphinais, Robert Frink, Patrice Granatosky, Rosanne Kotowski, Daniel Mello, and Jennifer White.
Members Absent: Commissioners Brandon Marley and Darcy Peruzzotti.

- II. Approval of Minutes
 - a. A motion was made by Commissioner Chase, seconded by Commissioner Mello, to approve the minutes of the July 17, 2017 Special Meeting.
PASSED: Vote 8-0-1 (Dauphinais)
 - b. A motion was made by Commissioner Chase, seconded by Commissioner Frink, to approve the minutes of the July 24, 2017 meeting.
PASSED: Vote 7-0-2 (Aument, Dauphinais)
 - c. A motion was made by Commissioner Chase, seconded by Commissioner Frink, to approve the minutes of the July 31, 2017 Special Meeting.
PASSED: Vote: 8-0-1 (Dauphinais)

- III. CITIZENS' PETITIONS
None.

- IV. NEW BUSINESS:
 - a. Review and Approve Draft Report

The Commissioners discussed and edited the draft report.

The Commissioners discussed including member statements with the report and minority reports separately.

Commissioner Granatosky noted that the minority report(s) will be given to the Town Council at the same time as the majority report.

Commissioner White noted that all voices need to be heard; minority and majority report(s) need to be included.

Commissioner Mello stated that the Commission should be careful about including multiple statements about issues that were not agreed upon. He suggested having one minority report.

Commissioner Granatosky noted that there are significant differences in what the Commissioners disagree on; she is not willing to sign somebody else's minority report.

Commissioner Frink questioned why there would be a minority report when there is not a majority report.

Commissioner Granatosky noted that the report coming from the Commission is the result of majority votes; it is a majority report. She stated that her minority report will be submitted to the Council.

Commissioner Frink stated that member statements should reflect how each member feels about the recommendations submitted by the Commission.

Commissioner Dauphinais stated that it is a mistake in not having a deadline to set a mill rate. She stated that according to the Finance Department, June 9th is the latest possible date to set a mill rate in order to have tax bills printed and mailed by July first.

Commissioner Chase noted that this year some towns in Connecticut have not distributed their tax bills yet.

Commissioner Frink noted that Stonington has had its budget approved on or before June 30th seventeen out of the last nineteen years.

Commissioner Granatosky noted that at this point, the Commission should not change anything.

Commissioner Kotowski made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Frink, to approve Section 9.8.3:

~~“The Town Manager shall not act on the budget estimates of the Superintendent of Schools or the subdivisions. Upon the request of the Board of Finance, †The Town Manager may provide comments on the budget estimates of the Superintendent of Schools and any political subdivision. The Town Manager shall present reasons for all the Town Manager's recommendations with other such information as may be required by the Board of Finance.”~~

The Commissioners reviewed the minutes from the April 24, 2017 meeting. Town Clerk Moukawsher reviewed the Town Manager's duties on the budget in the current Charter. The Commissioners discussed if it is the purview of the Town Manager to comment on the Board of Education budget.

Commissioner Kotowski withdrew the motion, seconded by Commissioner Frink.

Commissioner Dauphinais stated that she likes the proposed language for Section 9.8.3. She stated that the Commission should not do anything to limit the Manager from commenting on the Board of Education budget.

Commissioner Dauphinais made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Kotowski, to approve the following language for Section 9.8.3: ~~“The Town Manager shall not act on the budget estimates of the Superintendent of Schools or the subdivisions. Upon the request of the Board of Finance, †The Town Manager may provide comments on the budget estimates of the Superintendent of Schools and any political subdivision. The Town Manager shall present reasons for all the Town Manager's recommendations with other such information as may be required by the Board of Finance.”~~

VOTE: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Commissioner Frink made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Dauphinais, to approve Section 9.9.1: "The Board of Finance shall hold one or more public hearings at least ten (10) days after budget submittals by the Town Manager, the Superintendent of Schools and the subdivisions, but no later than March 8 February 8, at which any elector or taxpayer may have an opportunity to be heard regarding appropriations for the ensuing fiscal year. ~~At least five (5) days prior to the aforementioned public hearing, the Board of Finance shall cause to be published in a newspaper having circulation in the town a notice of such public hearings."~~

Vote: PASSES

In favor (Hauber, Aument, Chase, Dauphinais, Frink, Kotowski, Mello, White)

Opposed: 1 (Granatosky)

Abstained: 0

The Commissioners discussed the language for Section 3.3.1.

Commissioner Dauphinais made a motion, seconded by Commission Frink, to approve the following language for the beginning of Section 3.3.1: "A Board of Finance, hereafter referred to as the BOF, shall consist of ~~not more than~~ (7) members, for a term of four (4) years;..."

Vote: PASSES

In favor: 8 (Hauber, Aument, Chase, Dauphinais, Frink, Kotowski, Mello, White)

Opposed: 1 (Granatosky)

Abstained: 0

The Commissioners continued to edit the draft revised Charter.

Commissioner Frink requested the Commissioners reflect on lessons learned from this process.

The Commissioners discussed the format for the Public Hearing.

V. ADJOURMENT

Commissioner Chase made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner White. Chair Pro Tem Aument adjourned the meeting at 8:09 p.m.