

MINUTES
TOWN OF GROTON
CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION
JULY 9, 2007 – 7:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 2

1. Members Present: Shirley Dunbar-Rose, Stan Dziurzynski, Robert Frink, Nancy Moffat, Richard Moravsik, Raymond Munn, Frank “Mick” O’Beirne, Ed Stebbins, and John Wirzbicki.

Also Present: Mayor Harry Watson, Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox and Office Assistant Elga Concepcion

Mayor Watson thanked the new members for volunteering their time to the Commission.

2. The meeting was called to order at 7pm., and Town Clerk Tarbox gave the oath of office to all members present. Commission members and staff introduced themselves.

3. a. Election of Chairman: Ray Munn nominated Frank O’Beirne. Stan Dziurzynski nominated Nancy Moffat. Ms. Moffat declined. Nancy Moffat nominated Bob Frink. Mr. Frink declined. The Vote on the Motion to elect **Frank O’Beirne as Chairman** was eight in favor, with one abstention (Mr. O’Beirne).

b. Election of a Secretary: Ed Stebbins nominated Shirley Dunbar-Rose. The Vote on the Motion to elect **Shirley Dunbar-Rose as Secretary** was unanimously in favor.

4. Items for Discussion:

a. Statutory requirements were reviewed. The Town Clerk confirmed that the Secretary will sign the meeting minutes once they are approved.

b. Members discussed the date to be set for the **Public Hearing** and the procedure to be followed. Town Clerk Tarbox explained the procedure used generally, and the locations and dates available for both the Public Hearing and future regular meetings. The Chairman suggested that *“Speakers will be asked to sign in and to speak in order. There will be a 5-minute limit. Written comments will be accepted.”* The members agreed with this procedure for the Public Hearing.

Later in the meeting the following Motion was moved by Munn, seconded by Moffat:

Whereas, Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 7-191 requires that a public hearing on charter amendments be held prior to the Charter Revision Commission beginning any substantive work on such charter amendments, now therefore be it Resolved, that a Public Hearing for such purposes shall be held by the Charter Revision Commission on July 30, 2007 at 7:00pm at the Town Hall Annex, Community Room 1, Groton Long Point Road, Groton, Connecticut.

The Vote on the Motion was unanimously in favor.

c. The Chairman suggested an order of business for the agenda for regular meetings, and will work with the Town Clerk.

The members discussed the Rules of Procedure for the previous Charter Revision Commission. A Motion to Adopt the previous Rules of Procedure, changing the schedule to the “second” and “fourth” Monday of each month, and deleting the sentence concerning an overall time limit for public comment, was made by Wirzbicki, seconded by Munn, and so voted unanimously in favor. The **Rules of Procedure** as adopted are attached.

The Chairman felt that in order to efficiently coordinate questions and responses, that the members should submit their questions through him. He then would coordinate with the Town Manager, staff, and with the Town Attorney. He requested that questions be addressed in writing for clarity.

- d. The Town Clerk suggested that most of the communications to the CRC be sent via email from her office; one member requested that she receive “hard copies” of documents. There was considerable discussion of the procedures to be followed in order to comply with the **Freedom of Information Act**. Copies of emails to commissioners from the public will be sent to townclerk@town.groton.ct.us for record-keeping. The Chairman requested that all members copy each other with respect to emails and to be mindful of not engaging in new discussion with other members via email.
- e. Commissioner Wirzbicki had formatted the previous CRC’s Final Report onto the present Charter, and indicated that it might be advantageous to take a look at what had been done. The Town Clerk will send a hard copy of “Wirzbicki’s Charter” documents to all members, and will also send them via email.

Members discussed their preferred methodology for reviewing and/or editing the Charter. Methods ranged from going line-by-line to writing a new Charter from scratch. Members asked about using consultants or advisors, in particular one citizen who had applied to be a member of the CRC and who is a former municipal attorney. The UCONN Institute of Public Service is another source of expertise.

- f. Members asked the Town Clerk to obtain copies of the Charters of the Town of Madison, the City of Groton, and Groton Long Point.
- g. The Town Clerk will also provide a schedule for the work of the Commission that will include the deadline for the Draft Report and other requirements, and a contact list including email addresses for the members.
- h. The next meeting of the Charter Revision Commission will be on July 23 at 7:00 p.m. in Community Room 2 at the Town Hall Annex.
Town Clerk Tarbox reminded members to confirm meeting attendance by either calling her office or contacting Chairman O’Beirne.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:25 p.m. was made by Nancy Moffat, seconded by Richard Moravsik, and so voted unanimously.

Shirley Dunbar-Rose
Secretary
Approved: July 23, 2007.