

Enfield Charter Revision Commission
Regular Minutes
May 6, 2014 – 6:30 p.m.
Enfield Town Hall, Enfield Room

Call to Order

Chairman Marge Perry called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Roll Call

Present: Chairman Marge Perry, Vice Chairman Earl Provencher, Secretary Judy Kilty, Thomas Joaquim, Michael Lally, Thomas Froment, Jeff Gentes, Debbi Kruzel, Karen Weseliza, Jack Sheridan, Edward McGuire and William Scheele

Also present: Lynn Nenni and Christopher Bromson, Staff Liaison

Absent: Lewis Fiore, Mayor Scott Kaupin and Cynthia Mangini; Town Council Representatives

Approval of Minutes

Earl Provencher made a motion; seconded by Tom Joaquim, to table the minutes dated may 1, 2014. The motion carried with a 12-0-0 vote.

Tom Joaquim made a motion; seconded by Jack Sheridan, to append email from Mr. Ed Poremba. The motion carried with a 12-0-0 vote.

Appended to minutes

Staff Report

Chris Bromson stated, "There was nothing outstanding."

Kevin Deneen spoke to the email he received from Jeff Gentes, and the schedule going forward. The completed draft report needs to be filed with the Town Clerk by May 23, 2014.

Discussion

Judy Kilty stated, "The committee has worked hard, the debates, conversations and discussions that have been going on. The committee member's have accomplished a lot more than it may seem, this was more than just changing a him or her and councilperson. The committee member's have different opinions and have worked well together, "I believe we have accomplished what we set out to do."

Earl Provencher stated he would like time to digest the information from the public hearing. The committee has a meeting scheduled on May 15; he would like to take a second look at the items brought up from residents. Mary Scutt had some information that might be helpful towards the Power of Initiative. Earl said he has not had the opportunity to see that information, and he would like to have a chance to review that information. As Judy said, the committee has beaten certain sections until they were dead. Earl feels the members owe the residents who came out and spoke, to take another look, not saying anything will change. There may be other areas for the committee to take a second look at; Mr. Poremba noted certain sections in his email. The committee has the time. He would like to digest the comments from the public hearing, review Mr. Poremba's email, and get additional information that was talked about tonight.

Vice Chairman Provencher made a motion; seconded by Mike Lally to save the public hearing comments, Mr. Poremba's email, information from Mary Scutt, and all other information not previously obtained for discussion on May 15, 2014.

Jack Sheridan said he would like to at least commit to readdress some issues that were brought up tonight in the public hearing and also some items in Mr. Poremba's email. One item would be at the next election, asking the residents if they want a referendum budget; that could be a separate item in this charter.

Chairman Perry stated she also read through the email, and some items jumped out at her. Marge went on to agree with Earl and Jack that these items brought up at the public hearing, in the email, were open for discussion. Citizens took the time to come out to attend the public hearing, and Mr. Poremba took the time to write an email; absolutely these items should be discussed.

Vice Chairman Provencher asked Jack Sheridan for his opinion. Earl said that's not a totally bad idea on the referendum question, but Earl believes it's not up to the charter revision committee to decide. The committee could make a suggestion, but it's not for the committee to make the decision with regards to the referendum. Jack Sheridan suggested if it's not included in the charter, it probably wouldn't happen, in the past it's never happened, it's been challenged, but it has not happened.

Chairman Perry asked the Town Attorney, "What are the specific steps to get a question on the ballot for the next election?"

Kevin Deneen said, "With regards to the charter revision, the question whether you do, or do not want to have a budget vote. You can't spend public money to ask an advisory referendum issue, do you think this should be there or not? The only way to get a vote on it is to include it in the charter revision. The town council would have to agree to put it in the charter, and the council would have to break it into separate questions. There are certain requirements that need to be met to get that question isolated, and presented to the electorate; as part of the charter revision vote. It would have to go into the charter as a recommended change for the voters to vote on.

Mike Lally asked a question for clarification, "Does the town have to present the charter revision as a whole to be voted on? "

Kevin stated yes it does. However, the charter revision committee needs to have a whole draft document to submit to the town council. The town council may break or split it out into different pieces for a vote by the residents.

Jack Sheridan and Kevin Deneen discussed the difference between an advisory referendum and a referendum, and the requirements that need to be met.

Jack Sheridan asked what is the cost in a referendum if you are in an election year? Why are there any additional costs when the voters will already be voting?

Kevin stated that a municipality is not allowed to spend any monies obtaining an advisory referendum. The law states you cannot ask a question, whether you like to do "a" or "b" on a ballot, for example. Council would need the ability to act on an issue.

Committee members and the Town Attorney discussed the requirements for a referendum vote.

Mike Lally asked Kevin, "Who would fund a referendum, this issue came up tonight in the public hearing?"

Kevin stated the town would fund the referendum; "it's the cost of doing business."

The motion carried with a 12-0-0 vote.

Bill Scheele asked where could the committee find out what like sized towns are doing in the state of Connecticut, with regards to referendum voting.

Chris Bromson stated; staff would provide the committee this information. Kevin said he would get the requested information from CCM, and forward to all committee members.

Chairman Perry would like to get more information on the percentage provision. She asked staff more information on this subject. Kevin will provide information on this subject as well.

Vice Chairman Provencher asked the town attorney for information on town employees and state statutes. Kevin stated he would provide the member's with that specific information.

Tom Froment asked Kevin for state statutes in regards to the board of education. Specifically why the town does not have any major power as to what they actually do? The public believes we have control on the board of education budget, but we actually don't. Kevin stated "no," it's a single line item allocation. Kevin will provide the member's a copy of state statute with regard to the boards of education.

Earl added there are provisions in the charter that the board of education does not follow, and no one seems to make them follow; has been a previous discussion with the committee members.

Jeff Gentes said he would circulate an email to all members checking for their availability, if the committee would have to meet in the July August time frame.

The next meeting is scheduled for may 15, 2014 at 7pm.

Mike Lally made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Debbi Kruzel. The motion carried with a 12-0-0 vote. The meeting adjourned at 6:50.

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Ed Poremba <ejpor@sbcglobal.net>

To: "cbromson@enfield.org" <cbromson@enfield.org>; "lfiore@cox.net" <lfiore@cox.net>; "tfroment@msn.com" <tfroment@msn.com>; "gentes@gmail.com" <gentes@gmail.com>; "kofc14600@att.net" <kofc14600@att.net>; "skaupin@enfield.org" <skaupin@enfield.org>; "Judykilty@hotmail.com" <Judykilty@hotmail.com>; "djkrusel@cox.net" <djkrusel@cox.net>; "themikelally@gmail.com" <themikelally@gmail.com>; "EdMc475@aol.com" <EdMc475@aol.com>; "Cmangini@enfield.org" <Cmangini@enfield.org>; "Inenni@enfield.org" <Inenni@enfield.org>; "sperry20@cox.net" <sperry20@cox.net>; "earlprovencher@sbcglobal.net" <earlprovencher@sbcglobal.net>; "wascheele@aol.com" <wascheele@aol.com>; "jacksheridanjr@cox.net" <jacksheridanjr@cox.net>; "kaw9598@aol.com" <kaw9598@aol.com>

Sent: Monday, May 5, 2014 3:37 PM

Subject: Town Charter Revision Process- Public Hearing May 6, 2014 at 6:00pm

Greetings:

Unfortunately I will not be able to attend the second scheduled charter revision hearing but I do have more concerns. I did read some of your meeting minutes, so this electronic mail maybe a repeat of a previous discussed items.

Number 1-Should term limits for Enfield Council members and Enfield Board of Education members to no more than three, two year terms be explored? This item was discussed at the previous charter revision committee in November 1996 and reason of this concern was councilman burnout and stagnation how councilmen voted but endorsed by their political parties.

Number 2-With the present two political party systems should other registered political parties have a seat (minority representation) on the council and board of education? Also on our commissions and committees they should have a seat. Bottom line we need to expand the political party system. Perhaps a reduction of the current two party "councilman at large" and allow further minority representation.

Number 3- Should the Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, Chief of Police, Deputy Chief of Police, Director of Public Safety reside in the Town of Enfield?

Number 4-If there are revisions to our current town charter that will be sent to the voters, each change should be addressed and voted on separately.

For example:

Should the town budgets go to a referendum for approval by the electors?

Should the "Power of Initiative be reduced from ten (10) percent to five (5) percent of the registered voters eligible to vote at the last biennial municipal election

Housekeeping changes within the charter should be listed of wording change in *Italic* or **bold** type, as "Section, Safety Manager to Safety Director, also include present town employees not listed in the current charter.

Thank you

Ed Poremba

8 Overhill Road