

MINUTES
Charter Revision Commission
Wednesday, August 27, 2025 – 6:00 P.M.
Norma Drummer Room - Seymour Town Hall

COPY RECEIVED
DATE: 9/3/25
TIME: 12:00pm
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Members Present: Thomas Gardella, Tara Miller, John Lombardo, Richard E. Peck, John Stelma, JoAnn Sardo and Naveen Madivala

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Town Counsel, Bryan LeClerc; CAO, Kurt Miller, First Selectwoman, Annmarie Drugonis; Dr. Susan Compton, John Jurkowski, Kristen Harmeling and Dave Bitso.

Item #1: Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 PM

Item #2: Pledge of Allegiance

All stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item # 3: Public Comment

Dr. Susan Compton, Superintendent of Seymour Public Schools, 122 Walnut Street, thanked the Commission for all their efforts and hard work they did on this Charter revision. She spoke regarding shared services and how it would be best to leave any language out about shared services. The Board of Education is a separate entity independent of the Town. She stated that they work diligently with the Town and they appreciate everything the town does for them. She discussed CT General State Statute 10-220.

Dave Bitso, discussed the Annual Town Meeting. He recommended keeping the Charter as is. He suggested keeping the quorum requirement as is also.

Item # 4: Comments from the Student Body Representatives.

None.

Item # 5: Discussion and possible action regarding Final Report to the Board of Selectpersons

Chairman Gardella discussed the six motions/changes from the last Board of Selectpersons meeting:

- Eliminate proposed new section Shared Services
- Revising Section 14.3 of the Town Charter regarding language for actions taken at the annual town meeting so that anyone in attendance at the town meeting can increase and decrease a budget line item.
- Removal of any mention of annual town meeting and proposed budget will go to the Board of Finance to referendum
- Modify Section 12.17 regarding language for Town Treasurer education, accounting and investment banking requirements
- Change charter to refer First Selectperson as First Selectperson throughout as opposed to First Selectman/First Selectwoman/First Selectperson – amend to give the person the option to use person/man/woman
- Using "Their" throughout the charter as opposed to his/hers/their

Town Attorney, Bryan LeClerc stated the Charter Revision Commission will come up with a final report this evening. Next week on September 2nd, the Board of Selectpersons can either approve or reject the final report in whole or in part of the proposal.

➤ **Proposed new section Shared Services:**

- o John Lombardo wrote some of the verbiage and presented to the board members. He discussed his feelings regarding this topic. He stated he feels there should be shared centralized services to better run the town in a more efficient manner and it would be great if that achieves economic savings also. He believes it should be presented to the people and they can decide.
 - o Chairman Gardella asked Town Counsel if he sees anything that would in any way violate any state statutes.
 - o Attorney LeClerc stated they cannot force the Board of Education and the Town to agree on shared services. The draft talks about the shared services organization may oversee and deliver shared services. It talks about a budget being developed collaboratively as approved by the Board of Finance, Board of Education and the Town. They would need to have everyone on board before you can have shared services and that is what the law provides.
 - o Richard E. Peck stated the wording "hereby establishes" sounds like it is mandated and does not believe it is the correct verbiage.
 - o LeClerc suggested fixing the verbiage to read "in order to promote efficiency, reduce cost and enhance the delivery of public services to the residents of the Town, the Town and Board of Education may jointly plan, develop and implement a shared services relationship by which the Town or Board of Education will provide certain shared administrative, operational and support services. Such shared services may include Human Resources, IT, financial management, procurement, facility operations and maintenance and any other administrative, operational and support services that the Town and Board of Education may agree to in writing from time to time."
 - o John Lombardo suggested adding mention of inter-local agreements as well.
 - o LeClerc suggested adding "in addition the Town may enter into inter-local agreements with other municipalities, school districts, or regional entities in connection with the provisions of shared services."
 - o First Selectwoman Drugonis suggested not including shared services as part of the charter due to it being a part of the Strategic Plan for the Town of Seymour.
- Motion to include in the final report the verbiage regarding shared services: "in order to promote efficiency, reduce cost and enhance the delivery of public services to the residents of the Town, the Town and Board of Education may jointly plan, develop and implement a shared services relationship by which the Town or Board of Education will provide certain shared administrative, operational and support services. Such shared services may include Human Resources, IT, financial management, procurement, facility operations and maintenance and any other administrative, operational and support services that the Town and Board of Education may agree to in writing from time to time. In addition, the Town may enter into inter-local agreements with other municipalities, school districts, or regional entities in connection with the provisions of shared services."
- o Motion: John Lombardo
 - o Second: Tara Miller
- Discussion:* the board members discussed the effects of including shared services in the Charter. They all agreed that the purpose of including shared services is for efficiency for the Town of Seymour. First Selectwoman Drugonis explained how Human Resources, IT Director and Facilities Manager are all shared services currently. They continued to discuss the pros and cons of adding this to the Charter

vs not adding it. They also discussed including this as an Ordinance instead of including this in the Charter.

- Richard E. Peck moved to call the question. Seconded by John Lombardo.

Vote: 7-Yes 0-No 0-Abstain

- Motion to include in the final report the following verbiage regarding shared services to the Charter: "in order to promote efficiency, reduce cost and enhance the delivery of public services to the residents of the Town, the Town and Board of Education may jointly plan, develop and implement a shared services relationship by which the Town or Board of Education will provide certain shared administrative, operational and support services. Such shared services may include Human Resources, IT, financial management, procurement, facility operations, maintenance, and any other administrative, operational and support services that the Town and Board of Education may agree to in writing from time to time. In addition, the Town may enter into inter-local agreements with other municipalities, school districts, or regional entities in connection with the provisions of shared services.

Motion: John Lombardo

Second: Tara Miller

Vote: 2-Yes 4-No

1-Abstain

John Stelma – No

JoAnn Sardo – No

John Lombardo – Yes

Tom Gardella – Yes

Richard E. Peck – No

Naveen Madivala – No

Tara Miller – Abstain

- **Revising section 14.3 of the Town Charter regarding language for actions taken at the annual town meeting so that anyone in attendance at the town meeting will not have the ability to change any budgeted amount as approved by the board of finance.**

- Consider the suggestion that you consider allowing the voters at the annual town meeting to not only decrease a line item but to increase as well

- Motion to add "increase" in Section 14.3 regarding the Annual Town Meeting, for budget line item adjustments.

Motion: John Lombardo

Second: JoAnn Sardo

Discussion: Bryan LeClerc discussed the various line items in the budget. This would allow the public to increase any line item or multiple line items on the Town side by \$1.00 plus each. The public could also make a motion to increase by a \$1.00 or more on the Board of Education side as well.

Vote: 6-Yes 1-No (Richard E. Peck) 0-Abstain

- **Changing quorum requirement to a higher number**

- Chairman Gardella discussed what he had heard from the residents of Seymour who had reached out to him who felt that a quorum of 50 would give representation to the minority.
 - John Lombardo stated that if they go by the two-thirds requirement suggestion from the Board of Selectpersons, it would make the required quorum 800 using the turnout for the last five years of Referendum turnout. If they went by 2025 Referendum turnout, it would make the required attendance 944. He does not agree with the two-thirds suggestion. He believes it should be a fixed number.
 - The Commission decided to leave this as is.

- **Modify Section 12.17 regarding language for Town Treasurer's education, accounting and investment banking requirements**

6. Section: 12.17 Treasurer: this section be amended to add language regarding alternative equivalent training and education of the Treasurer at the discretion of the appointing official.

- As enumerated by Town Counsel, motion to make the above presented as the final report for the board of first selectpersons for their actions.

Motion: Richard E. Peck

Second: John Lombardo

Vote: 7-Yes

0-No

0-Abstain

Item #6: Public Comment

Kristen Harmeling, 134 Davis Road, stated she thinks there should be more changes done to the Charter. She stated there should be no set dates regarding the budget process. She asked why the Charter Revision Commission did not consider combining the Board of Education and Town budgets. She voiced her opinions and concerns regarding the Annual Town Meeting. She discussed the commission not addressing the language that speaks to contractual obligations.

John Jurkowski, 9 Amber Drive, commended the board on listening to the residents.

Item #7: Commission Member Comments

Tom Gardella stated it has been an enjoyable road. All seven members worked diligently going section by section of the Charter. Everything was done by vote. Thanked his fellow commission members. He also thanked Bryan LeClerc and Kurt Miller for their help and guidance.

Tara Miller thanked her fellow commission members. She also acknowledged Kevin Atterberry's, (previous commission member) absence and sent him well wishes. She thanked JoAnn Sardo for stepping in.

Item #8: Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn at 7:50 PM

Motion: Richard E. Peck

Second: John Lombardo

Vote: 7-Yes

0-No

0-Abstain

Respectfully submitted,

Lianna McMurray