

**CITY OF NORWALK
CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 15, 2025**

ATTENDANCE: Tyler Fairbairn, Chair; Jo Bennett; Atty. Ed Camacho; Jim Clark; Carl Dickens; Douglas Hempstead; John Levin; Rick McQuaid; Tanya Rhodes-Small

OTHER: Steven Mednick; Jared Schmitt; Laurel Peterson

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Fairbairn called the meeting to order at 6:32 P.M. There was a quorum present.

ROLL CALL

A Roll Call of those present was performed.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING: APRIL 1, 2025

Please make the following changes:

- Page 6: Change 1.1 Million for the park parcel at Lockwood-Matthews Mansion to Parcel at Butler Street.
- Page 7, Paragraph 2: Change ‘Attorney Camacho reminded everything’ to ‘Attorney Camacho reminded everyone.’
- Page 7, Paragraph 5: Change ‘Mr. Levin said that he’d like to respond to Attorney Camacho’s suggested’ to Mr. Levin said that he’d like to respond to Attorney Camacho’s suggestion’.
- Page 9, Paragraph 4: Change ‘He added that he would be added’ to he added that he would be adding’.
- Page 12, Paragraph 3: Change ‘As a consequence, the Police Commission is dysfunctional and by diluting the appointment authority the City will have a better result than what is currently in place.’ to ‘As a consequence, the Police Commission is dysfunctional and by diluting the appointment authority the City might get a better result than what is currently in place’
- Page 12, Paragraph 3: Change ‘Mr. Dickens asked for an example of where the Police Chief has been negligent or dysfunctional’ to ‘Mr. Dickens asked for an example of where the Police Commission has been negligent or dysfunctional’
- Page 12, Paragraph 3: Change ‘Mr. Levin said that the charter indicates what they have not done, such the Commission being in control, management, and supervision of the

police force in the City and all of its property.’ to ‘Mr. Levin replied that under the City Charter the Police Commission is responsible for control, management, and supervision of the Police Force in the City and all of its property. The dysfunction and negligence are due to what the Commission hasn’t done.’

**** MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF APRIL 1, 2025 AS AMENDED.**

**** MR. DICKENS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ms. Peterson came forward for Public Participation. She is a member of the Norwalk Public Library Board of Directors. She is in support of the recommended changes to the City Charter regarding library governance. She explained her reasoning for the support.

NEW BUSINESS

STRUCTURE OF B.E.T.

This item was tabled previously.

**** MR. CLARK MOVED TO REMOVE THE STRUCTURE OF THE B.E.T. FROM THE TABLE.**

Chair Fairbairn made it clear that they needed to decide what to do regarding the proposed structure of the B.E.T. Mr. Dickens said he would like to get a clear-cut picture of how the current council feels about B.E.T. members being either appointed or elected.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Discussion followed regarding how to ensure that they had proper information regarding the council’s feelings and desires. There were issues with uncertainty at the federal level providing additional complications. Atty. Camacho reviewed the changes he wished to make for those present. He wished to add that there would be one member from each Council district. Discussion followed.

Mr. Levin put forward a proposal for a three-and-three split was put forwards in which three members will be appointed by the Mayor for a term of four years subject to approval by the Common Council and three members shall be appointed by the Common Council for a term of four years.

**** MR. DICKENS MOVED TO VOTE FOR A THREE AND THREE SPLIT FOR THE STRUCTURE OF THE B.E.T.**

**** THE MOTION FAILED WITH THREE (3) IN FAVOR (LEVIN, BENNETT, DICKENS) AND SIX (6) OPPOSED (FAIRBAIRN, MCQUAID, HEMPSTEAD, CLARK, CAMACHO, RHODES-SMALL)**

Atty. Camacho suggested that they have at least one member of each Council District represented on the B.E.T.

**** ATTY. CAMACHO PUT FORWARD HIS PROPOSAL FOR THE B.E.T.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH EIGHT (8) IN FAVOR (FAIRBAIRN, MCQUAID, HEMPSTEAD, CLARK, BENNETT, DICKENS, CAMACHO, RHODES-SMALL) AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (LEVIN)**

Questions were raised as to if the nominations needed to be staggered or not and discussion followed regarding this as well as language regarding the start dates. Mr. Levin said staggered terms were already present and did not need to be added. Further discussion followed regarding what was in the charter regarding terms.

Chairman Fairbairn said they needed to move on the staggered nominations and adjusting the start time to February 1st. Discussion followed as to what the best start date would be.

**** ATTY. CAMACHO MOVED TO APPROVE THE STAGGERED NOMINATIONS FOR THE B.E.T. AND TO ADJUST THE START TIMES TO BE NO LATER THAN FEBRUARY 1ST.**

**** THERE WAS A SECOND FOR THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ARTICLE X

Atty. Mednick came forward to discuss this item. He reviewed what Article X was about including the importance of Public Hearings. There was also discussion about term reinstatement. He noted that they were consistent in their definition of the capital expenditures plan which would be called 'The Capital Improvement Plan'. A document has been sent out called 'Additional Comments from CFO and CRC'. Final language of the document will be prepared for the next meeting. Review of the document followed. They decided to wait till the final version before giving a motion for approval.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Chair Fairbairn reviewed what section of the charter needed revision. He said it was division heads and department chiefs. The proposed revision would add 'The mayor shall appoint the library director in consultation with the Library Board of Directors from a list of not less than three candidates nominated by the Board.' There was also an ordinance proposed. Mr. Levin said he was under the impression that the Library Board wished to return to the appointment process that was in place before the last charter. Discussion followed regarding how department heads

are appointed. It was suggested that this item be tabled until they could confirm what was present in the last charter. Further discussion followed. It was decided to add language to make the terms concurrent with the term of the mayor.

- ** MR. MCQUAID MOVED TO TABLE DISCUSSION OF THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR.**
- ** MR. HEMPSTEAD SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

DISCUSSION

COUNCIL COMPENSATION

MISCELLANEOUS REVISIONS

TAX COLLECTOR

CONTROLLER

PUBLIC WORKS

PURCHASING

HISTORICAL COUNCIL DISTRICTS

NORWALK HARBOR

PENSIONS FOR CERTAIN RETIRED EMPLOYEES

ASSESSMENT APPEALS

These items were all handled together. Information on the items was provided in a packet for those present. Chair Fairbairn said they would not be acting on these items and would be using the time between now and the next meeting to look them over. Atty. Mednick reviewed the proposed changes for this item and drew attention to several of them such as items number 4 and 9. Chair Fairbairn said they would also need to decide what to do with the four-year term. Mr. Levin asked if there was a difference between ‘controller’ and ‘comptroller’. He was told that they were similar.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** MR. LEVIN MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** MR. CLARK SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted
Telesco Secretarial Services