

**CITY OF NORWALK  
CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
APRIL 29, 2025**

**ATTENDANCE:** Tyler Fairbairn, Chair; John Levin, Douglas Hempstead, (6:50 p.m.)

Via Zoom: Atty. Ed Camacho; Jim Clark, Carl Dickens, Jo Bennett  
(7:00 p.m.)

**OTHERS:** Steven Mednick, consultant; Jared Schmitt, Finance Director;  
Greg Helm

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Fairbairn called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

The roll was called. A quorum was present.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no one from the public who wished to comment at this time.

**ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

**• April 15, 2025**

**\*\* MR. CLARK MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 15, 2025.**

The following correction was made:

Need to remove seconds from all the votes in the minutes because the Norwalk Common Council Committees follow Mason Rules, which does not require a second on a motion.

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 15, 2025 AS CORRECTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Fairbairn said that there were a number of items that they would review. Atty. Mednick directed everyone to the Article X. All the definitions will be consolidated in the Definitions Section rather than at the beginning of the sections.

Atty. Mednick went on to summarize the remaining subsections changes, relocations and new language.

Mr. Clark asked if the “Chief Financial Officer” was in the definitions. Atty. Mednick said that it was not. Atty. Camacho pointed out that there was only one CFO. The CFO was defined in the Department Head section.

The discussion moved to the presentation of the budget to the Board of Estimate and Taxation and the Council by the Mayor on the same day. Mr. Schmitt said that he expected that the budget would be sent out to the appropriate groups and then a presentation would follow. Atty. Mednick said that this was just a common date for submission.

*Mr. Hempstead joined the meeting at 6:50 p.m.*

Atty. Mednick then reviewed the clarification changes for grants and additional changes in Article X. Discussion followed.

Mr. Hempstead asked what would happen if they were not to get enough votes to pass the budget. Atty. Mednick said that the Mayor’s budget is effectively setting a cap. Discussion followed. It was agreed that if they can’t set a cap, then the Mayor’s budget is approved.

The discussion moved to 10-8c changes. Mr. Dickens asked if that had ever happened. Mr. Schmitt said that it had.

Atty. Mednick said the major changes are included in the Capital Budget. He reviewed those changes with the Commission.

Section 10-13 focuses on Planning and Zoning and clarifies that the focus of this review is the budget. Their vision should be in line with the Plan of Conservation and Development. They transmit the Capital Budget and the POC report by March 5th. Atty. Mednick then spoke about some recommendations including a Public Hearing and transmitting their recommendations to the Council.

*Ms. Bennett joined the meeting at 7:00 p.m.*

He added that there was some draconian language about the BET not presenting their recommendation in writing to the Council. Atty. Camacho said that he did not believe that there had ever been a situation when the recommendations were not presented to the Council.

Ms. Bennett asked about the guard rails that had been previously discussed. Mr. Clark pointed out that there were numerous references to documents being transmitted, which seems to indicate that the document had to be in writing. Discussion followed about the definition of transmission. Atty. Mednick said that he would remove the last sentence at the end of “c”.

The discussion moved to the word “re-instatement” and Atty. Mednick said that the Council has the ability to move funding from the Capital budget to the Operating fund and can also move funding back which clarified re-instatement”.

Mr. Hempstead asked for clarification on 15a and suggested a change in the language. Discussion followed about line item vetoes. Mr. Hempstead said that he was speaking about setting the cap. Atty. Mednick said that the Mayor proposes the cap, but the BET and the Council can’t go higher than that number. Mr. Clark said that 1-16a, on page 133 states that the Mayor sets the cap.

The discussion moved back to the reinstatement concept. If the BET removes something from the Capital budget, the Council should be able to return that money back to the Capital budget.

The discussion returned to 10-15 and whether the Council could transfer funds that might increase one of the budgets over the cap. Atty. Mednick said that he would draft it in to the Charter based on the consensus of Commission. This was agreeable to all.

The Commission then reviewed page 147 at the bottom, where there was sunset language.

There were no additional questions on this section. Mr. Schmitt thanked the Commission for their time and work on this section. He said that he appreciated this and it would make the City financially stronger.

Atty. Mednick said that in Section 9, there was provision regarding having a Charter Revision every five years. He recommended that they start a 10 year cycle. The provision simply makes it mandatory for the Revision every 10 years, but the Council can establish a Charter Revision whenever it wants. Discussion followed about the fact that the Council can change the dates but not the process.

Atty. Mednick then directed everyone to the beginning of the document and reviewed the various changes with the Commission including the errata changes. Atty. Camacho said that there was an issue about a resident who originally was a Representative Town Committee for a District and the District lines changed, the individual could continue to represent the District until they needed to run from re-election. Since this is a local issue and not a State issue, this would be permissible.

The discussion moved to page 44, the appeals provision under the Common Council. It addresses the payment of a land owner when the City takes their land. He continued to review the additional changes that the Commission had already approved.

Atty. Mednick said that he wished to confirm that they had decided to leave the section on the constables alone. Both Mr. Levin and Mr. Dickens said that most of their work was dictated by the attorneys.

He noted that the rules requiring attendance at meetings would be set by the Council but if there is no policy, the individual board would determine this. He went on to review the requirements for record keeping.

Page 91 addresses the creation of the model for the Districts to have representation on the Board of Estimate and Taxation. Atty. Mednick then noted that this was working out well due to upcoming elections where one District has two members on the Board, so when the election comes up, they can adjust this on the ballot. Discussion followed about the Mayor's appointments of BET members. This item was voted on at the April 15th meeting.

Atty. Mednick said that they had discussed the Police and Fire Commission and these are coterminous terms.

On page 92, Atty. Mednick said that he had removed the term "unclassified", which is not used in Norwalk.

On page 96, deals with appointees of the Council, Atty. Mednick cleaned up some language in the section.

On page 97 under Corporation Counsel, Atty. Mednick reviewed the changes in the section. He said that he would have some additional language changes in 8-4, which he just received earlier in the day.

The discussion moved to the Controller. Atty. Mednick said that they don't have time to make some changes but they should discuss these issues with the Department heads. Some of the language is unnecessary.

Atty. Mednick indicated where there was additional sections added. He spoke about the historic transitions for Public Works which has unnecessary. Atty. Mednick will discuss this with the Department heads.

Atty. Mednick said that if any of the Committee had questions, they should email both Mr. Fairbairn and to him.

Mr. Fairbairn said that the May 6th meeting may have to be rescheduled. There may also be some conflicts with the Chambers on the 13th. Mr. Fairbairn said that he would send out an email with some potential dates. The Public Hearing is scheduled for May 20th.

Mr. Fairbairn said that he had spoken with Ms. Noor about the Library Director being included in the Charter and he will discuss this with Atty. Mednick. He also mentioned the four year term and said that they had discussed having a four year term starting with the 2029 election. He said that he would like to address that issue this time around.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* MR. CLARK MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services