

**ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING OF THE CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION
OCTOBER 16, 2024
HYBRID, COMMON COUNCIL CHAMBERS AND VIA ZOOM**

To allow public access, anyone may access a meeting by telephone and or Zoom, or a recording in the City of Norwalk YouTube channel. Specific instructions and links can be found at www.norwalkct.gov/meetings

Members of the public may call in to participate. Callers will not be able to see the meeting participants. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, dial *9 on the phone and you will be called on by the host of the meeting during the public comment section.

All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda, and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.

Members of the public who wish to provide "live comments" may also use the Zoom meeting platform. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, click the "raise your hand indicator" and you will be called by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above. Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via email in advance of the meeting.

For these comments to be included into the record, they must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. Please email Esther Murillo at emurillo@norwalkct.gov with the subject line "Public Comment" to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

ATTENDANCE: Richard McQuaid, Town Clerk; Jo Bennett; Ed Camacho; James Clark; Carl Dickens; Tyler Fairbairn; Douglas Hempstead; John Levin; Tanya Small-Rhodes

STAFF: Esther Murillo, Assistant City Clerk; Thomas Livingston, Chief of Staff

OTHER: Steve Mednick, Commission Counsel

I. CALL TO ORDER BY TOWN CLERK

Mr. McQuaid called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Mr. McQuaid called the Roll as indicated above.

III. INTRODUCTION OF COMMISSION MEMBERS AND COUNSEL

Mr. McQuaid welcomed everyone to the meeting and offered welcoming remarks. He urged everyone to ask questions and work together as a team.

Mr. McQuaid introduced Attorney Melnick who guided the Commission through the past Charter Revision.

IV. ELECTION OF OFFICERS: Town Clerk presides through election of Chair

A. NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF CHAIR

Mr. Mednick noted the entire membership of the Commission was present this evening.

Mr. Mednick described the role of the Chair.

**** MR. DICKENS NOMINATED MR. FAIRBAIRN AS CHAIR**

Mr. Dickens spoke in support of the nomination.

**** MR. CAMACHO SECONDED THE NOMINATION**

Mr. Fairbairn reviewed his background and accomplishments.

Mr. Dickens also reviewed Mr. Fairbairn's accomplishments when he served on the previous Charter Review Commission.

Mr. McQuaid called three times for other nominations. Hearing none, the nominations were closed

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

As the newly elected Chair, Mr. Fairbairn took over for Mr. McQuaid and presided over the meeting.

B. NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR – Chair

**** MR. MCQUAID NOMINATED MR. HEMPSTEAD AS VICE CHAIR**

Organizational Meeting of
The Charter Revision Commission
October 16, 2024
Hybrid, Common Council Chambers And Via Zoom
Page 2

Mr. McQuaid reviewed Mr. Hempstead's background and accomplishments.

**** MR. DICKENS SECONDED**

Mr. Hempstead reviewed his accomplishments related to Norwalk.

Mr. Fairbairn called three times for other nominations. Hearing none, the nominations were closed

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

V. OVERVIEW – PART I: Attorney Steven G. Mednick, Counsel to the Commission

A. ROLE OF THE COMMISSION

Mr. Mednick said he was pleased to work with Mr. Fairbairn again and said he had heard great things about Mr. Hempstead. He said he is looking forward to working with everyone.

B. THE LAW OF HOME RULE AND MUNICIPAL CHARTERS

Mr. Mednick shared his screen and presented power point slides defining Home Rule.

C. 2024-2025 CHARTER PROJECT

Mr. Mednick reviewed changes that were made during the last Charter Review. He described the timeline for the current Charter Review project. He urged the leadership of this Commission to work closely with the Common Council and the Mayor's office during this process. He explained the Charter revisions have to go through the Common Council to get in the ballot.

Mr. Mednick reviewed his role which is to help with legal advice, prep for meetings and facilitate deliberations. He added that all of the work needs to be done in public sessions and cautioned the Commission about off line discussions and not conducting business by e-mail.

**** MR. MCQUAID MOVED THAT THE COMMISSION CONDUCT THEIR MEETINGS FOLLOWING MASONS RULES**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: 3 Minutes each speaker.

Public participation comments are not verbatim and represent a summarization of statements unless otherwise noted. Speakers are Norwalk residents unless otherwise noted.

Ms. Diane Cece asked if Mr. Mednick's presentation could be posted on the Commission's website tomorrow. She also requested that the meeting materials be posted prior to the meeting.

Ms. Diane Lauricella asked the Commission members to think about items that were skipped last time. She said she would like to see the Commission consider expanding the number of Common Council members from 15 to at least 21. Ms. Lauricella added that for diversity sake, the Charter should consider requiring boards and commissions to be represented by at least 50% of residents (based on the last census). Ms. Lauricella also offered that every meeting must have a public participation portion.

VII. SELECTION AND APPROVAL OF 2024-2025 MEETING SCHEDULE

The Commissioners discussed the upcoming schedule.

**** MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING SCHEDULE:**

OCTOBER 29, 2024 – 7:00 P.M. – PUBLIC HEARING

NOVEMBER 19, 2024 – 6:30 P.M.

DECEMBER 3, 2024 – 6:30 P.M.

DECEMBER 17, 2024 – 6:30 P.M.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

VIII. FURTHER DISCUSSION AND QUESTIONS - Members

Mr. Mednick said he will send his presentation to the members of the Commission tomorrow.

X. ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. DICKENS MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business, and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services