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ATTENDANCE: Patsy Brescia, Chair; Carl Dickens; Tyler Fairbairn; Richard McQuaid;  
Benita Watford Raleigh; Michael Witherspoon

OTHERS: Steven Mednick, Commission Counsel

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Brescia called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

### **II. ROLL CALL**

Ms. Brescia called the Roll as indicated above.

### **III. REVIEW OF COUNSEL REVISIONS OF ARTICLES I – III, VI AND IX**

Mr. Mednick gave a re-cap and said he hoped to work on it this week. He described the changes such as moving the taxing districts from the beginning of the Charter to the back. He discussed the importance of the historic context. He said some items are up in the air and is waiting to hear from the Chief Financial Officer to figure out which terms to use.

Mr. Mednick said he will address the issue of the Board of Education's concern with the compliance and cooperation clause. He said that as a general standard in that it calls for everyone to work together.

Mr. Mednick referenced page 18 in holding elections and will talk to the Registrar of Voters. He said it should not be there.

In 3-3, Mr. Mednik eliminated the Treasurer and Selectmen positions, and they will have a sunset provision. These positions will be eliminated with their terms end. He added that a sunset provision has to be included in the Charter.

Regarding the section on the Mayor, this position will become a four year term and will include transition language. Ms. Brescia said it was important to establish training for newly elected officials. F – outlines the restrictions in place during the transition period if the Mayor is not re-elected.

Ms. Brescia asked Mr. Mednick to clarify council districts. Mr. Mednick asked the Commissioners to continue to read and review the documents. He added that he will continue to edit the document until the last minute.

Mr. Mednick addressed the salary for a Councilmember who is acting as temporary Mayor. Mr. Mednick suggested establishing a per diem rate that would go into effect at 30 days, in the event the Mayor is incapable of serving.

Mr. Mednick said he needs to come up with language that would reference “serving at the will of the Mayor”. He will also come up with standards for removal.

Mr. Mednick addressed the section of the Charter related to the Board of Education. He said the compliance and cooperation provision will be eliminated. In addition, there will be a modification that focuses on the multiyear contracts.

The Commissioners discussed article 9-3 where the Board of Education is required to provide monthly reports. Ms. Brescia said they need to find out if they do this. There needs to be a distinction between what is in the Charter and what the Board of Education does.

Article 12 – history will be placed in the back of the documents. Pages 48-52 will be moved into Article 11. Page 53 and beyond are sections that are being repealed.

Ms. Brescia said that the sections on the taxing districts are very confusing and needs to be re-worked. Mr. Mednick explained that this section can't be re-worked. Ms. Brescia said that it does not flow well, the way it is presented. Mr. Mednick said they have to be careful about re-writing special acts. Mr. Witherspoon suggested adding language ...the Taxing Districts are defined in article...

Mr. Mednick reviewed Article 10 regarding the Board of Education's budget. He said that the Board of Education is like any other department. He explained that the Chief Financial Officer provides a report to the departments that play a role in the capital budget and the Board of Education wants to add their name to that. He offered language that the Chief Financial Officer shall send the report to all City departments which will include the Board of Education.

Mr. Mednick explained that the Board of Education wants to be included in the Mayor's budget transmittal that goes to the Board of Estimate and Taxation. He said he rejects that and said that every department has the opportunity to advocate for their department. The Board of Education is not equal to the decision makers. The Board of Education is trying to create an argument that they are different from other City departments.

The Commission recessed at 10:04 a.m.

The meeting resumed at 10:26 a.m.

#### **IV. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS: ARTICLES IV AND V – THE COUNCIL AND MAYOR**

Ms. Brescia said they are still gathering information. Mr. Mednick explained that this Commission is re-forming the document, they are not re-forming the government. They are taking a 1913 document and turning it into a 2023 document.

Mr. Mednick reviewed article 4 – 1 and said it is important to list day to day duties. Ms. Brescia asked if there is language explaining the combining of the Planning and Zoning Commissions. Mr. Mednick explained that was done under an Ordinance. Ms. Brescia said that could potentially change again and she is looking for clarity. Mr. Mednick said the Corporation Counsel has to issue a plan for re-organization. The idea is that they would not have any departments in the Charter except for the ones that operate the government.

Under article 4-7 it was noted that the Mayor can create task forces.

Mr. Mednick discussed the section related to compensation for the Mayor and members of the Common Council. He said that the Mayor's salary is approved in the budget and goes into effect with the next term. He explained that increases for Common Council members have to go to a

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referendum. He suggested placing a recommendation in the Charter that increases are tied to COLA. Ms. Brescia asked if they could add a clause establishing a \$600.00 expense allowance per person. Ms. Mednick said they could do that without the Charter; that would be a reimbursement. Ms. Brescia said it is inconsistent that the Mayor's salary is a budget item and can be changed, but the Common Council is different. Mr. Mednick explained that is the law. Ms. Brescia said that will be part of a litany of things that will need to be discussed in the next Charter revision.

There were no changes under 4-8. Mr. Mednick briefly discussed article 4-11 and said it will remain in the Charter. The Commissioners discussed the section in the Charter related to taxing districts.

The Commissioners briefly discussed the section related to Boards and Commissions. He said he was surprised that the Library Board was not in the Charter. He also discussed the Police Benefit Fund and the Fireman's' Benefit Fund. He said he will find out if they have both been supplanted by the Pension Fund.

Ms. Brescia asked about the Chief position and said she did not know when that structure went into place. She was told that was done by Ordinance.

The bond issue is about to be resolved. Most communities do not bond, but rather prosecute.

#### **V. DISCUSSION OF BOARD EDUCATION REQUESTS RE- CAPITAL BUDGET PROCESS**

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

#### **VI. COUNSEL PREVIEW: ARTICLES VII AND VIII – BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS; AND DEPARTMENTS AND DEPARTMENT HEADS**

These items were discussed earlier in the meeting.

#### **VII. NEXT STEPS: REVIEW OF MEETING SCHEDULE**

Ms. Brescia reviewed next steps and said she will ask for public comments on Wednesday. Mr. Mednick suggested directing the public to look at the website to see the changes.

Mr. Mednick reviewed the changes that will be presented on Wednesday, including changing the Mayor's term from two years to a four year term. The Mayor will take office on the first business day in January following the election. Capital budget reports will go to all departments and they will talk about the compliance and cooperation clause.

VIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* MS. WASUNNA MOVED TO ADJOURN**  
**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business, and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 12:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi  
Telesco Secretarial Services