



TOWN OF KILLINGLY

TOWN MANAGER'S OFFICE

172 Main Street, Killingly, CT 06239
Tel: 860-779-5335 Fax: 860-779-5382

TOWN OF KILLINGLY

CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

Special Meeting

Wednesday, January 16, 2019

7:00 p.m.

Town Meeting Room

172 Main Street

Killingly, CT

Commission Members:

Donald Aubrey	Elizabeth Hayden
Teresa Barton	Dan Rovero
Jonathan Blake	Keith Thurlow
Benjamin Chase	

MINUTES

1. Call to Order by Chair, Elizabeth Hayden at 7:05 p.m.
2. Roll Call: E. Hayden; D. Aubrey; B. Chase; D. Rovero. J. Blake; K. Thurlow.
T. Barton was absent with notice.

Also Present: Paul Hopkins, Acting Town Manager; Kevin Kerttula, Town Council Liaison.

3. Citizen Participation

Janice Thurlow, 600 Chestnut Hill, Killingly Registrar of Voters, asked that the Commission consider the following:

- She agrees that having a whole new Council every two years sometimes is not very productive. Regarding staggering, she would suggest four-year terms rather than three (because three would run into Presidential elections). She is also in favor of leaving it as two-year terms.
- A few years ago, there was an election where all five districts voted at one polling place (High School), and she stated that she has received positive feedback over the years. She is in favor of this for elections and budget votes and she stated that it could be easily accomplished by changing the language in the Charter. She explained that they would still tally results and report by the five Districts.

Motion was made by D. Rovero to add discussion/review of a Meeting Schedule to the Agenda.
Second by J. Blake. Motion carried unanimously (6-0-0).

4. Adoption of Minutes: November 29, 2018.

Motion was made by D. Rovero to adopt the Minutes of the Special Meeting of November 29, 2018.
Second by J. Blake. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-1). K. Thurlow abstained.

5. New Business:

a) Discussion of various chapters of the Charter

Chapter 1 – No changes were discussed.

Chapter 2 – Residency requirements had been previously discussed.

- Discussion regarding Section 202 Voting Districts. It was clarified that the current language states that a person from one district can vote in another district as long as the two districts are adjoining (Statutory).

There was discussion regarding having one polling place.

Suggested language: “One suitable polling place for the entire Town.” There was discussion regarding the distance for some voters.

Suggested language for a polling location in each District, “A suitable polling place in each District.” And eliminate, “As required by General Statute.”

There was discussion regarding cost difference. There isn’t a large cost difference because the same number of poll workers would still be needed. It would just be the rental of a facility (if needed) and phone lines.

- Consensus for no change to this item.

- Discussion regarding filling Town Council vacancies (Section 206). There was a suggestion to add more explicit language to address filling vacancies of At-Large Council Members.
- Section 203 Eligibility - Discussion regarding how many family members serving on the same Council/Committee. The Town Attorney advises leaving this (Council) for the residents voting. Discussion continued. It was suggested that the Charter could contain a brief definition for an Ethics Commission (number of members and the terms) and leave it for the Ordinance Sub-Committee to define the duties of the Ethics Commission. The Ordinance Sub-Committee would be responsible to set ground rules for disciplinary actions for ethical violations. It was suggested that the Ethics Commission be independent with the authority to act (separate from Council).
 - There was consensus in favor of having an Ethics Commission.

Chapter 3 – Elections (Section 302)

- There was a suggestion and discussion regarding four-year terms for Districts and 2-year terms for At-Large. There was discussion regarding Re-Call and it was suggested that the Town Attorney could write language regarding Re-Call. There was disagreement regarding Re-Call. There was discussion/disagreement regarding concern for the potential for a completely new Council being elected at the same time. Mr. Rovero feels that Killingly has been very fortunate to have had (and will have) knowledgeable Town Managers who know what is going on and he would not be worried if there were an entirely new Council. He feels the Town of Killingly would still run very well. Mr. Aubrey stated that he agreed with that, but he would still rather see staggered 4-year terms.
- There was discussion regarding electing Constables (which was clarified as formerly being meant as Emergency Management Staff with emergency response duties). Mr. Hopkins explained that this language is no longer necessary since we now have full-time, Emergency Management Staff.

Chapter 4 – No changes.

Chapter 5 – Section 501.

- There was discussion regarding conflict of interest.
- There was a suggestion to provide stipends for members of Boards and Commissions to help generate interest to fill vacancies. Disagreement was expressed. This would best be left to the Ordinance Sub-Committee.
- Discussion regarding Section 501 (Salary for Town Council Members): It had been suggested and there was discussion regarding a stipend for attendance at Regular and one Special Council meeting per month and for meetings where they are the liaison to the Board or Commission. There was a suggestion and discussion regarding a flat salary of \$1,000 to \$1,500. There was a suggestion that Council has the ability to increase their salary as long as it takes effect after the next election. Mary Calorio, Killingly's incoming Town Manager (seated in the audience) was asked for her opinion and she explained that, although she understands the methodology for the stipends, however, from the operational logistics, she feels that the flat compensation rate is significantly easier. There was discussion regarding accountability.
 - Consensus was for a flat salary of \$1,500 per year and also to leave in the language that Council can change it if they want to.

There was discussion regarding how the public will react. There was discussion with Ms. Calorio regarding the process for Charter revision. Ms. Calorio explained that, in Putnam, the Selectmens' salary is not mentioned in the Charter – it is budgetary.

- Section 502 – The following additional language was suggested as sentence #3: “The Chairperson of the Town Council upon appointment shall inherit the title of Mayor for the duration of their term.” It was also suggested that there be no change in salary. There was discussion with Mary Calorio regarding the possibility of implementing a Mayor. Ms. Calorio feels that the titles of Town Council Chair, Town Manager and Mayor all garner the same ability for interaction. People now recognize professional management, so they understand the roles.
- Sections 302 and 502 - There was a suggestion and discussion regarding the Council Chair/Mayor be elected by the townspeople as At-Large rather than being appointed by just the members of the Council. It was also suggested that this title not carry any power/authority.

There was discussion regarding the professionalism and guidance that a Town Manager brings to the Town vs. the Town Council. Ms. Calorio explained that the long-term goals for the Town are achieved through the professional management and that the Town Manager guides the Town Council regarding the bigger capital projects/goals and topics that are important to the townspeople. There needs to be a balanced relationship between the two. There were varying opinions regarding having a Mayor and discussion continued.

 - Consensus was to stay with the title of Council Chair, no Mayor.
 - Consensus was to update Section 302 to remove an At-Large position for one to run for the Council Chair position and to

update Section 502 for the change regarding appointment of the Council Chair.

- Consensus was for not allowing a person to run for both their district and for the At-Large Chair position.

There was discussion regarding filling the vacancy for the At-Large Chair position. It was explained that, currently, it would go back to the Party for a nomination and it would be voted on by Council.

- Consensus for no change to filling the vacancy for the At-Large Chair position.
- Consensus was not to change the current power structure/distribution.

Town Council to consist of: one member from each District; three members At-Large; one member to run for Council Chair.

Paul Hopkins will prepare draft language regarding the At-Large Council Chair position for the next meeting.

There were no changes to the remaining procedural items in Chapter 5.

Chapter 6 - Consensus had been reached previously regarding the issue of Town Manager residency. The following language had been voted on: “The Manager shall devote his/her full time to the duties of the Office of Town Manager. Residency within the Town of Killingly shall be preferred or within 25 miles of said Town.”

Discussion regarding adding the Assistant Town Manager position (would be Section 601c). J. Blake read an outline of responsibilities provided by Town Council: “The purpose of this position is to assess and administering and managing the operations, services and projects of the Town. She/he has a primary responsibility to assist in human resource management and labor relations, budget implementation and preparation, and facilities management. She/he may be assigned responsibilities for operational oversight of specific Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Library services, projects, and may work on other special projects, grants or studies. The Assistant Town Manager serves as an administrative liaison to various Boards and Commissions and may serve as Acting Town Manager in the absence of and at the pleasure of the Town Manger.” Ms. Calorio was asked for her opinion and she does not feel that the Charter should dictate every position. She feels that this is a human resource/management function. Mr. Hopkins explained that having an Assistant Town Manager holds the Town Manager more accountable (checks and balances) and to have someone who can fill the position in the case that the Town Manager is removed. Discussion continued and it was suggested that the Assistant Town Manager be under the direction of the Town Manager, not Council. Mr. Hopkins suggested that if the position is added to the Charter, that it be moved to Chapter 9. Discussion continued. If it is included, it doesn't mean that there will continuously be an Assistant Town Manager, but it would be there if the Town Manager wants an Assistant.

- This item was tabled.

Motion was made by K. Thurlow to review Chapters 7 through 9 (pages 10 – 17) at the next meeting. Second by D. Rovero. Motion carried unanimously (6-0-0).

There was discussion regarding setting meetings dates. It was decided to meet on the first and third Wednesdays of each month. Next month's meetings scheduled for February 6th and 20th. In the case that the Town Meeting Room is not available, the Commission will meet in Room 102.

Motion was made by D. Rovero to meet on the first and third Wednesdays of each month. Second by K. Thurlow. Motion carried unanimously (6-0-0).

It was decided to meet at 6:30 p.m. and, if needed, it can be modified.

b) Discussion of members' priority list – No discussion.

6. Other – No Discussion.

7. Adjournment

Motion was made by D. Rovero to adjourn at 9:31 p.m. Second by J. Blake.

Discussion: It was requested that Agendas be e-mailed to the Commission Members in advance of the meetings.

Motion carried unanimously (6-0-0).

Respectfully submitted,

J.S. Perreault
Recording Secretary