

**TOWN OF MANCHESTER, CONNECTICUT
CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
MAY 22, 2008 – 7:00 P.M.
LINCOLN CENTER HEARING ROOM**

PRESENT: Chairman Stephen Penny, Vice-Chairman Robert Schneider, Commission Members William Bayer, John Backer, Joseph Diminico, Margaret Hackett, Edward Joy, Lewellyn Pelletier, and James Stevenson

ALSO: Town Attorney Geoffrey Naab and Budget and Research Officer Julian Freund

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

The May 22, 2008 meeting of the Charter Revision Commission was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Chairman Penny.

COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications brought forward at this time.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETINGS

a. May 8, 2008

MOTION: Mr. Joy moved to accept the minutes of May 8, 2008 as written. Mr. Stevenson seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

PUBLIC HEARING

Joseph Hachey, 91 Diane Drive, congratulated the Commission on its work, especially on the items concerning the election of the Mayor and a budget referendum.

Robert Shanbaum, 99 Hartford Road, thanked the Commission for its reasonable proposal concerning a budget referendum. He thinks those people pushing for a budget referendum will not be happy with the Commission's proposal. The overall proposal drafted by the Commission is a rational approach.

Rudy Kissmann, 60 Carpenter Road, commended the Charter Revision Commission and agrees with its proposal. He feels the Commission made good decisions on the Town Treasurer position, the increase in compensation for Board of Director members, appointment of Planning and Zoning Commission members, the responsibilities of the Mayor, the election of the Town Clerk, and the plan for a budget referendum.

Jack Thompson, 190D Oak Grove Street, thanked the Commission members for their efforts. He supports the decisions made retaining the Council-Manager form of government, the changes to the Treasurer position, the compensation for Board of Director members, and the direct election of the Mayor. He spoke about the community coming together through the creation of the Community College in Manchester, welfare reform and the use of MARC, Inc.'s job coach model, and the IOH Pool.

Joe Tyler, 165 Oak Forest Drive, noted that although he is on the Board of Directors for the Eighth Utilities District, he would be expressing his personal opinion, not representing the Board in any way. He expressed concerns about the referendum, including the wording, the hidden costs, the possible effect on the Town's bond rating, the number of signatures required to petition for a referendum, as well as the percentage of voter turnout needed.

Jason Doucette, 86 Stephanie's Way, thanked the Commission for its work on its long and arduous task. He supports the Commission's recommendations on the budget referendum. To base a referendum on the CPI will cause too many questions about what should be accepted, measured, and considered. The petition process gives the power to the taxpayers because they initiate the process.

Lisa O'Neill, 109 Autumn Street, thanked Commission members for their service and their thoughtful, considerate comments. She addressed the budget referendum by stating that the Board of Directors is elected for a two-year term and that is a defacto referendum. By not holding a referendum, about \$30,000 could be saved, which equals the salary for another position. She recommends increasing the number of signatures required to petition for a referendum if that is the route chosen.

Michael Morrell, 58 Chestnut Street, suggested the petition for budget referendum indicate an increase or decrease. Based on research he is engaged in at UCONN, he suggested the ballot include a second line that says the budget is too low or too high, giving the Board more information on which to base their adjustments.

APPROVAL OF DRAFT REPORT TO BE SUBMITTED TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MOTION: Mr. Stevenson moved to approve the draft report to the Board of Directors.
Ms. Hackett seconded the motion.

Commission members debated whether to include the 5-4 vote on the budget referendum in the draft report to the Board of Directors. Some felt the reference to back-up documentation provided enough information for the Board of Directors, while others wanted the votes recorded directly in the report. After much debate, Chairman Penny suggested the following: The presentation to the Board of Directors should focus on substance; all minutes will be attached to the final report to the Board of Directors; all votes will be set forth in an understandable fashion. He also suggested Mr. Freund prepare a final draft to send to all Commission members via e-mail for final, informal, approval. It was the consensus of the Commission to accept Mr. Penny's suggestions and all agreed to rely on e-mail for the final product.

Mr. Penny called for a vote and all members voted in favor of approval.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS TO PROPERLY COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION

There was no other business brought before the Commission at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

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APPROVED:

Stephen Penny, Chairperson