



Charter Commission

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Commissioners:

Mark S. Sideris,
Chair

Stephen P. Corbett
Michael Donham
John A. Donohue
Dennis J. Duff
Susan G. Falkoff
Anthony Palomba
Rhiana Kohl
Angeline B. Kounelis
Cecilia Lenk
Pamela Piantedosi
Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr.
John J. Lawn, Jr.
David Siegel
Athelia Tilson

**ADOPTED MINUTES
CHARTER COMMISSION MEETING
TUESDAY, JUNE 15, 2010 @ 7:00 PM
RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO CHAMBER
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING**

- 1. ROLL CALL:** A regular meeting of the Charter Commission was called to order. Present for the meeting were Commissioners Stephen P. Corbett, Michael Donham, Dennis J. Duff, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., David Siegel, Athelia Tilson and Chairman Mark S. Sideris. Commissioners Lawn and Piantedosi arrived after the call of the roll. Commissioners Donohue and Kohl were absent. Also present was the Clerk, Valerie Papas.
- 2. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:** [May 18th](#). Commissioner Kounelis moved the minutes as written, seconded by Commissioner Duff and adopted by voice vote.
- 3. MATTERS OF BUSINESS:**
 - a) Informational Presentation regarding the Charter. Postponed.
 - b) Review of Charter, sections 5 and 6. The Chair opened up discussion regarding section 5 of the Charter. Commissioners Falkoff and Siegel presented [draft language](#) to the section. Commissioner Falkoff moved to accept changes offered by Commissioner Siegel, seconded by Commissioner Palomba. Commissioner Piccirilli read a [statement outlining a process](#) for proposing changes to the Charter.

Commissioner Kounelis spoke against the proposed changes noting that the changes are not policy based but changes in wording.

Commissioner Duff agreed with the overall process outlined by Commissioner Piccirilli.

Commissioner Palomba stated that policy can be defined in many different ways.

The Chair asked that the commission come to an agreement on how to approach the issue of considering proposed changes to the Charter.

The Chair opened up the hearing to the public and recognized Pat Gold, Duff Street who stated that the changes make no sense.

Commissioner Falkoff indicated that her proposed changes were trying to make clear the role of the Council in putting together the budget.

Commissioner Palomba noted that perhaps the Commission needs more time to look at the proposed changes and that the process is not inherently wrong, as the purpose is to hold open discussions.

Commissioner Piccirilli stated that discussion is important, and that is a separate issue; where the Commission is stumbling is on the process for proposing changes. He indicated that the Charter is a unified document and that the proposed changes are not policy changes. He urged the Commission not to make editorial changes but focus on policy.

Commissioner Palomba agreed that public discussion is good and that changes are not for copyediting purposes.

The Chair opened up the hearing to the public and recognized Burt Greenberg, Duff Street who urged the Commission not to add language or embellish.

Commissioner Corbett stated that the Commission should look at the entire article; identify issues; look for consensus; and then get into more detail. He noted that the tedious process is unavoidable.

Commissioner Lawn urged the Commission to find a way to make the process efficient and productive.

The Chair urged the Commission to take a step back and ask; do you want another form of government.

Commissioner Falkoff stated that her proposed change was to firm up the Council's role in the budget process. She withdrew her changes.

Commissioner Donham concurred with the Chair and stated that there seems to be an elephant in the room; he indicated that the real question is do we want to keep this form of government or not.

Commissioner Kounelis stated that we continue to talk about the current form of government. She asked; when is the Commission going to discuss other forms of government.

Commissioner Piccirilli indicated that there are four forms of government: For cities there is the Mayor/City Council form of government and Town Council/Town Manager form of government. He noted that for towns there is Open Meeting and Representative Town Meeting.

He indicated that Watertown cannot go backwards and noted that he had forwarded to everyone a [document](#) which outlined the pros and cons of each government. He urged the Commissioners to read the document.

Commissioner Palomba asked that the document be presented at the next meeting and asked Commissioner Siegel to make an unbiased presentation on the material.

Commissioner Kounelis stated that she would like to hear a review of the material without opinion by the presenter.

The Chair asked that the document be posted on the website.

Commissioner Palomba moved that a meeting be determined for the presentation followed by open discussion at a later meeting, seconded by Commissioner Donham. Commissioner Palomba added a friendly amendment that all documents be posted and that the website be updated. Adopted by voice vote with Commissioner Duff voting Present

The Chair set the next meeting for July 20th. Mr. Manzelli will follow Commissioner Siegel's presentation; with open public discussion to take place on September 21st. The matter was moved by Commissioner Palomba, seconded by Commissioner Lawn and adopted by voice vote. It was noted that a meeting notice will be prepared and posted for the following dates: July 20th, August 17th, September 7th and 21st.

Commissioner Falkoff moved to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Duff. Commissioner Piccirilli urged Commissioners to address the issue of "process".

Commissioner Siegel moved to adopt the process outlined in Commissioner Piccirilli's statement, specifically paragraphs 5, 6, and 7, seconded by Commissioner Piantedosi and adopted by voice vote.

Commissioner Falkoff moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 pm, seconded by Commissioner Piccirilli and adopted by voice vote.

For a complete transcript of the meeting, a dvd is available upon request.

I hereby certify that the minutes for June 15, 2010 were adopted on August 17, 2010 by voice vote as amended; with

Commissioners Stephen P. Corbett, Michael Donham, Dennis J. Duff, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., Pamela Piantedosi, David Siegel, Athelia Tilson and Chairman Mark S. Sideris voting in favor.

Mark S. Sideris, Chair