



TOWN OF MADISON
CONNECTICUT 06443

MEETING DATE:

Tuesday, February 2, 2021

MEETING PLACE:

Zoom

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

**Charter Review Commission
Minutes**

Members Present: Joe MacDougald (Chair), Liz Daly, Matthew Gordon, Noreen Kokoruda, Robert O'Connor, David Ostermann, Joan Walker

Others Present: Lauren Rhines, Town Services Coordinator / Risk Manager

The committee convened at approximately 5:03 p.m.

1. Public Comment.
None.

2. Review and take action to approve prior meeting minutes.

MOVED by Joan Walker and seconded by Noreen Kokoruda to approve the Minutes of January 26, 2021 with the following amendment:

Item 3. Motion to reflect second by Robert O'Connor.

VOTE: the motion was passed unanimously.

3. Review suggestions and comments from Board of Selectmen.

Selectman Goldberg stated that he had 9 issues he has observed over the years to help government work better than it currently does. He proposed that the Committee should consider the following questions:

1. Would the Executive branch operate more effectively with a full-time professional Town Manager?
2. Legislative branch (Town Meeting) currently suffers from a lack of participation. How can we remedy this in order to increase public involvement?
3. What should be the quorum requirement for the Town Meeting?
4. Is the term length for Selectmen sufficient to carry out initiatives?
5. Should the Town government implement an Ethics Commission and/or a Public Health Council?

6. Does the role of the Board of Finance need to be further clarified?
What is the regulatory authority of the BOF?
7. Should the voting window requirements for Town meetings be relaxed?
8. How can the silos of Town Boards and Commissions be better coordinated?
9. What are other mechanisms for nominating applicants for Boards and Commissions?

Selectman Wilson stated that he felt the following items were important for the Committee to consider:

- The CIP assumes a Board of Selectmen that does not take on enough budget work.
- The roles of Board of Finance / Board of Selectmen should be clarified.
- The committee should also look for ways to "future proof" the document, especially considering ramifications of the COVID pandemic.
- Create pathway for unaffiliated voters
- Selectman Wilson said that he was less interested in form of government and management of government. He cautioned this may not be an opportunity to retry the question of a Town Manager.
- Also, in general, it should be hard to spend taxpayers' money. Lack of attendance at Town Meeting is a function of the hurdle of making sure funds are spent appropriately.

Selectman Murphy stated that he felt the following items were important for the Committee to consider:

- He stated that the committee may also be able to break the process into phases - one for the clean-up and one for more substantial changes with two different referendum dates.
- Role clarity for elected boards was very important.
- Consistency of elected official terms should be considered; the BOF and BOE have 4-year terms but the BOS has 2 year terms.
- Explore Town Manager / Town Administrator to drive separation of political arm and operational arm
- Making Charter more open for future changes. He emphasized flexibility but also stated that the Committee should clarify some grey areas.
- Consider how to better use website or other means to garner volunteers for town service

Matthew Gordon questioned the thought behind an Ethics Commission. Selectman Goldberg stated that an Ethics Commission helps to define the corridor of acceptable behavior for elected and appointive officials. It also provides point of contact for members of the public, the government or the staff to report something they feel should be reported.

The Committee asked for clarity on term lengths for Board of Selectmen and also for appointing unaffiliated voters. The Committee reviewed that the current process may be held too much with the two town parties. The Committee also considered whether all boards and commissions should be reviewed for inclusion into the Charter and how the Charter impacts the established boards and commissions.

4. Public Comment.
None.
5. Adjourn.

There being no objections, the Committee adjourned at 6:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lauren Rhines
Town Services Coordinator / Risk Manager