



City of Bristol
 Charter Revision Commission
 Regular Meeting, Tuesday, April 16, 2019, 6:30 pm
 City Hall Council Chambers, 111 North Main St., Bristol
 Minutes

Attendees: Chair Jon FitzGerald, Commissioners Harold Kilby, John Krampitz, Jonathan Mace, Michele Roalf

Absent: Laurie Scotti, Isaiah Miller

Staff: Attorney Wyland Dale Clift
 Attorney Jeffrey Steeg
 Attorney Tom Conlin
 Attorney Richard Lacey
 Mayor Zoppo-Sassu
 Chief Brian Gould
 Superintendent Robert Longo

1. Chair Jon FitzGerald called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
2. Introduction of Commissioners – the Commissioners introduced themselves.
3. Discuss and approve the minutes of the regular meeting of March 26, 2019 and take any action as necessary.

Commissioner Roalf made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of March 26, 2019, Commissioner Kilby seconded the motion, all voted in favor and the minutes were approved.

4. Public participation regarding revisions to the Charter.

Cheryl Thibeault: Cheryl Thibeault read a prepared statement from the Republican Town Committee pertaining to Item 5: "After reviewing the proposal to eliminate the elected Treasurer position in the City of Bristol as per the Charter, the Executive Board of the Republican Town Committee has no immediate objections to this proposal. We have discussed with the current elected official, as well as others who have had similar roles in other communities and although he does possess (we're gifted here in Bristol with an individual with) strong qualifications and that as to the level of the performance of our portfolio we feel that the current and future deputy treasurer would be more than capable of handling the duties currently and has full oversight. We do strongly caution that we are not supportive that this position becomes appointed – that it becomes a paid position within the city. We don't feel that it would add a tremendous (unintelligible) in that sense. We tend to be fiscally conservative in that nature."

5. Discuss the duties and status of the city treasurer, including whether the position should remain elected, become appointed by the mayor and city council or be eliminated and take any action as necessary.

At the last meeting, Corporation Counsel was asked to look into what comparable towns do. Information received was as follows:

- New Britain elects a treasurer

- Hamden, the Comptroller does the duties
- Meriden, the Director of Finance (comparable to our Comptroller)
- Manchester, the Comptroller
- West Haven, elected

Discussion. There are 3 choices: 1) leave this as it is currently-elected, 2) make it appointed – and an appointment process would have to be established, and 3) eliminate the position – and presumably assign the duties to somebody else (Comptroller). Discussion.

Attorney Clift suggested that if you want to eliminate the position then you would want to hear from the Comptroller as to how it affects our audits.

Diane Waldron spoke. In many communities there is a Director of Finance who also serves as Treasurer. She said that you would want to have the internal controls – she provided information on the procedures as they are done currently. You would still want to have dual signatures on the checks.

There should be internal oversight and yes, in most communities it is the Comptroller or the Director of Finance who serves as Treasurer. An appointed position might work well but you do need a deputy in the office fulltime. Someone also needs to know the rules and regulations. Discussion.

Commissioner Krampitz made a motion to change the position of Treasurer from elected to appointed. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kilby. All present voted in favor and the motion passed. Corporation Counsel will assist the Chair with what needs to be done regarding the appointment process.

6. Discuss possible revisions to Section 45 (Police department and board of police commissioners) and to Section 53(d) of the charter and take any action as necessary.

Commissioner FitzGerald asked Attorney Clift to summarize what is being proposed.

The Mayor spoke about why the Charter needs updating. They are running into some conflicts with current policy and procedures and need clarifications. Other towns are also antiquated. Some items in the Charter are not being done currently.

- In section 45(a) they are removing the connotation that police commissioners are running the police department which they are not. They are a policy and advisory board and that should be made clear.
- With regard to item (f) this is what they do not do. They don't make rules and regulations for the police department including the suspension and removal of members of such department as otherwise provided in this charter. That is an internal operational issue that is handled by paid staff.
- Section (g) is to be concurrent with current contracts and "for just cause" is being added.

They are simply trying to modernize the language in Section 45 to better reflect the Police Commission and eliminate any possible liability or misunderstandings.

Commissioner Kilby asked for clarification in item (a). A comma is needed after "Council". It should read "...member of the city council, and the mayor..." OR – it should consist of seven members, etc.

Commissioner FitzGerald said that this would be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

7. Discuss possible revisions to Section 46A (Police department – Merit system) of the charter and take any action as necessary.

Commissioner FitzGerald said that they will wait until the Chief can come and speak.

8. Discuss possible revisions to Section 46B (Chief of police) of the charter and take any action as necessary.

Attorney Clift clarified the possible changes.

- Proposed elimination of numbers (1) and (2). Then begin with "The chief of police...." The underlined portion on the handout.
- #3 would move to Ordinance.
- #4 would move to Ordinance.
- #5 would be eliminated. This is part of the application process.

Attorney Clift read the new language. This puts the job qualifications to Ordinance rather than Charter. Discussion. Chief Gould answered questions.

This item will be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

7. (46A). See above.

Chief Gould explained the changes. The word of "Captain" would be removed in the two places indicated on the handout. They need to come up with a more appropriate term as this term does not allow the department to grow. He would like to recommend to change this to a non-bargaining position so it can be re-titled.

Other changes are: change of Director of Personnel to Director of Human Resources. The examination portion - a & b (50% and 50%) remain the same.

9. Discuss possible revisions to Section 48A (Water department - - Sewage Treatment) of the charter and take any action as necessary.

Mayor Zoppo-Sassu spoke. This change passed in November and they have been meeting to discuss the implementation which is quite complicated. Corporation Counsel has been working on the actual logistics on what it means to get the Water Department what they need from an operational standpoint, balancing it out against the needs of the Comptroller's office and the financial controls that need to be in place. This involves the Water Department which is an enterprise fund, the Public Works Department which has overseen water pollution control, and a Sewer Committee that handled constituent issues. Also the Comptroller's office oversees the special revenue fund on the water pollution control side. They have come up with language which would benefit all of them and is not confusing. There are still some issues to be worked through – some examples provided. This is still a work in progress and this will come up again at the next meeting.

Attorney Clift reviewed the draft that was distributed at this meeting and reviewed the proposed changes:

- c. Gender issues changes.
- f. This has substantial changes which he reviewed. There is one additional change: After the word "water" add "pollution control."

He explained where this came from – it mirrors language in the Water Pollution Control. Superintendent Longo said he agrees with what is written and has met with Corporation Counsel and the Mayor today. Diane Waldron stated that she also agrees with these changes.

Commissioner FitzGerald asked Attorney Clift to come back with more specific changes in the next draft. Attorney Clift will provide a new proposal. He was asked to prepare this as the Town Clerk would like to see it.

7. (46A). See above.

Attorney Clift handed in additional references to 46A. He read them aloud and gave a copy to Commissioner FitzGerald. Chief Gould explained the reasons for the changes. It is cleanup language and also cleanup language on the board of police commissioners. He referred to 46A-Section 4 – this has to do with how they promote within the Police Department. Commissioner FitzGerald will send out sub-sections 4 & 9 to the commissioners

10. Discuss comments and potential topics for charter revision raised during public participation and take any action as necessary.

There was none.

11. Discuss the charter and proposed charter revisions raised by the commissioners of the charter revision commission and take any action as necessary.

There was none.

12. Old business.

There was no old business.

13. New business.

There was no new business.

14. Discuss meeting dates and agendas and take any action as necessary.

The next meeting is on May 7th in the Staff Lounge. The Commission hopes to finish the substantive work at this meeting.

15. Adjourn

Commissioner Kilby made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Mace. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Cooper
Recording Secretary