



First land deed from the Indians
April 12th 1659

TOWN OF WOODBURY

Office of the First Selectman

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"Board of Selectmen Public Hearing for the 2013-Established Charter Revision Commission"

MINUTES

Thursday, April 30, 2015

7:00 p.m.

Senior Community Center

PRESENT: First Selectman Butterly, Selectman Martin Overton, Selectman Barbara Perkinson, Chairman William Drakeley with commission members, approximately six residents, one reporter

First Selectman Butterly opened the hearing, at 7:00 p.m., by reading aloud the posted legal notice pursuant to Section 204 of the Woodbury Charter, providing the history of charter revision since 2000, and giving the timeline that would result in the proposed revisions being included on the November 2015 municipal election ballot. He then invited comments on the proposed revisions that were made available at the door and on the website.

Mrs. Michelle Ecsedy, 18 Old Middle Road Turnpike: Former Selectman Ecsedy referred to Section 302 A. stating that she does not oppose it, but quoted from CGS 9-188. She proposed adding "electors can now vote for two selectmen. Her question: Can the Town Committees now be able to propose two selectmen because it would not interfere with minority representation?"

Answer, Chairman Drakeley: CRC discussed extensively the possibilities that Michelle brought up in CGS 9-188—can have two votes, one for First Selectman and one for Selectman, does not restrict number of candidates running. Selectman Overton asked for the downside: Answer, Chairman Drakeley: No downside but it is not necessary. Selectman Overton: expressed his opinion: there may the feeling was that I never voted for this guy; saw change as a step forward.

Mr. Paul Hinckley, 135 Cat Swamp Road: Former First Selectman (and CRC member) commented that by voting for two Board of Selectmen you are placing two bets, pick the two people who would serve the best; he would amend it further.

Ms. Lesa Peters, 155 Good Hill Road: Ms. Peters stated that each political party can only nominate one First Selectman candidate and one Selectman candidate—you are assuming you will have petitioning candidates. She disagreed with Selectman Overton that you could put two candidates forward—no change First Selectman takes all and loser does not change how many people are nominated.

Mrs. Michelle Ecsedy was asked to read from CGS Sec. 9-188 aloud: "an elector shall not vote for more candidates for the office of selectman than a political party can elect pursuant to section 9-167a." and reiterated her proposal, two cannot vote for in one party—nominate one, petition one.

Mr. Richard Snider, 33 Gate Post Lane: Mr. Snider, CRC member, emphasized that if each political party nominates one candidate each for First Selectman one for Selectman, and there is no petitioning candidate

running, the charter would not change state statute because each political party could only nominate one candidate for First Selectman and one candidate for Selectman; it becomes more of a contest if there are petitioning candidates.

Chairman Drakeley: Responded fact that in the First Selectman contest, the losing candidate does not drop down to Selectman.

Mrs. Ecsedy: Supports the change, giving electors the choice to pick two people out of the candidate group is the right way to go.

Mr. Bob Clarke, 153 Barn Hill Road: Expressed his opinion regarding Section 302. H *Zoning Commission:* Charter Revision Commission neglected to include the Aquifer Protection Agency, which is a state mandated land use agency, and pointed out that the Planning Commission section includes the Water Pollution Control Agency. Selectman Overton agreed that it should be added and confirmed with Mr. Clarke that he wanted the Aquifer Protection Agency added to Section H. Zoning Commission. Mr. Clarke continued by referring to land use boards in expressing his disagreement with the addition of “The chairman shall not serve for more than five consecutive years as chairman.” and pointed out his disagreement had also been shared with the Charter Revision Commission at their hearing. His rationale, keeping the land use boards in mind, was based on valuable experience and the fact that the chairman is up for election each by the individual board, who should know best who should be the chairman for that particular board.

Ms. Lesa Peters: Agreed with Mr. Clarke that there should not be any terms limits on chairmen especially since some land use board members may not have the time to work with the Land Use office.

Mr. Paul Hinckley: Gave commission insight of “sharing the load”--developing other members to be chairman.

Chairman Drakeley: People expressed to the commission they want to see a change; this change would give constituents a chance to speak publically whether they want the change or not.

Frank Sherer, 63 Judson Avenue: Mr. Sherer, CRC member, stated that the topic of term limits was discussed by the commission, and he does not view this topic as term limits. He expressed his opinion that this topic is more about succession planning and that the chairman is re-elected automatically.

Selectmen Overton: Asked about when the “five years” would start, asked if the CRC considered effective immediately, and if the chairman would get five more years or effective date could be two years.

Chairman Drakeley: Responded when the charter is approved and CRC talked about a three-year limit.

Selectman Overton: Pointed out that the effective date of this provision could be January 2017 for example. Chairman Drakeley: Stated not correct. Mr. Clarke: Pointed out that if Selectman Overton’s suggestion was followed, they would have one chairman that would be out twice, for example, for Inland-Wetlands Commission. Mr. Snider: Interjected that it is not advisable to make exceptions here and there and the revisions would go into effect thirty days after approval; in January boards and commissions would elect their chairmen and that would be year one. Mr. Clarke: Spoke of in January, boards nominate chairman, vice chairman and secretary for election—the board has already identified the successor in electing the vice chairman. He proposed that this topic be voted on separately. Mr. Hinckley: Shared that he

supported this proposal because when he was First Selectman, he requested that one of the land use board chairmen share responsibilities on the board, and this suggestion was not taken.

Ms. Sharon Botelle-Sherman, 17 South Meadows: Ms. Sherman expressed her concern because if this topic goes into effect, liability to the town could increase if an inexperienced chairman is in place. First Selectman Butterly stated that would not be the case--the volunteer board/commission chairman would not be liable in matters handled by employees and attorneys.

Mr. Snider: Stated that those running for elected office should be familiar with regulations, etc., be prepared, and be responsible in the position.

Selectman Perkinson: Pointed out that the "Guide for Boards/Commissions/Committees" emphasized, as a requirement, that members become familiar with regulations, etc. once elected.

Mr. Alex DeSorbo, 22 Forest Ridge Road: Thanked the CRC for their hard work and referred to page 15, Section 502 Duties. B. 5.a. "current". He expressed his opinion that he was not sure "current" was necessary and thought it could lead to HR issues--asked that "current" be defined or leave it alone. Also he referred to page 19, 702 C. d. and spoke against the Board of Finance setting salaries for the First Selectman and the Selectmen based on his belief that the Board of Finance is not in the personnel business--suggested appointing a committee. He emphasized that the Pay Plan be kept in the charter so that no one could touch the Selectmen's ability to manage administration and compensation for personnel. Also, page 20, 702 C. 2c. was not in when he spoke to the CRC--CRC removed "Woodbury's share of Regional School District 14 budget". He questioned the need to see Region 14 listed in the budget for the taxpayer even though the budget completely obviates seventy percent of the budget. Also, page 23, Section 710, disagreed with language that Board of Finance "contract with" explaining that Board of Finance cannot sign contracts. Response from Ms. Deborah Fuller, CRC member: it is in there because of a past Board of Finance auditor problem with the Selectman. Also, 302. A. expressed his opinion that although the situation has happened the procedure was followed and this proposed language does not seem to be in the spirit of elections. Also, page 21, Section 701 A. 2. Mr. DeSorbo stated that he spoke to the CRC about changing the "exceed twenty hundredths of one percent (.0020) of the total Annual Budget" and they went into the opposite direction. He expressed his concern, that although we are trying to get budgets precise, a situation like the one experienced by the Public Works Department being short did not have to be brought before a Town Meeting. The proposed change could lead to inflated budgets. He recommended since there is no case law for making it \$20,000. just leave it as is. Regarding board chairman limits, members may not be interested in taking the job if they are up for re-election the following year.

Ms. Kathy Doyle, 35 Washington Rd.: Ms. Doyle referred to page 6, 205. C. 2c. and inquired if the fourteen days was enough time due to unpredictable time restrictions such as the blue mailer, locking of voting machines, and other budget referenda. She suggested "up to twenty-one days". Also, page 7, Tax Collector, Ms. Doyle questioned why the Tax Collector section did not contain "shall have all the powers and duties conferred upon him, and shall perform all the duties required of him, by law" as did the other elected positions such as the Town Clerk. Commission members responded that it was an oversight. Also Ms. Doyle suggested that "current" (shown on page 15) be taken out or add "review every five years."

Mr. Bob Clarke: Further made his case for deleting the sentence added to Section 306. regarding "the chairman shall not serve for more than five consecutive years as chairman."--referred to Section 302. H. Zoning Commission: showing "alternate commissioners", that are brought along by learning at meetings,

run with an interest since their participation depends on member attendance—they could be voted out of office.

Ms. Lesa Peters: Ms. Peters referred back to Section 302. A. and inquired of the CRC, the reason for this language—was it because of what happened in 2013 when the First Selectman, who lost, did not agree to become a member of the Board of Selectmen. Response from Chairman Drakeley: it had a lot to do with it and also, it came from public input at the hearing. Ms. Peters expressed her opinion that it seemed like a very large change, could take votes away, and does not serve the voters well. First Selectman Butterly interjected that he felt it would be harder to do if the Selectman was an incumbent. Mr. Snider stated that the CRC Public Hearing last year happened around the time of the May Special Election, and some comments were that “I voted for First Selectman, I did not want that person to move down to Selectman”. He emphasized that the CRC tried to make it clearer.

Ms. Debra Tietz, 40 Bethwood Lane: Ms. Tietz, CRC member, reiterated Mr. Snider’s comments in that the CRC gave a way to voters to clearly understand who they were voting for. Chairman Drakeley: Commented that the CRC put forth language that they thought was best for the town--to educate, and not because of the position that the two town committees would be in if the language were approved.

Ms. Deborah Fuller, 64 Woodbury Hill: Ms. Fuller, CRC member, stated that we had people in this position before and it was awkward; if the loser is sore, it could be destructive to a board of three.

First Selectman Butterly brought up the Assessor’s concern to have a three-person board with two alternates to make it easier for a quorum--five could be intimidating. CRC members voiced their opinions to change it as she requested.

Chairman Drakeley: Brought up the transfer issue which led to a lot of confusion this past winter season regarding how the Town of Southbury handled it whereas they went to Town Meeting authorizing approximately \$190,000. Chairman Drakeley made inquiry to the Town of Southbury about Southbury’s transfer procedure and was told they were operating under the old charter--but in the new charter it has been changed to \$5000 interdepartmentally, as Woodbury has.

Mr. Bob Clarke: Questioned if there is a change in State Statute, what is the process for adding the change to our charter? First Selectman Butterly: Stated he would check with Town Attorney.

First Selectman Butterly closed the public hearing at 8:19 p.m.

Submitted by: Jan Krampitz
Jan Krampitz, Secretary to the Selectmen

RECEIVED & FILED
IN WOODBURY, CT

This 8 day of May 2015
at 2:40 o'clock 7 M

Janice S. Clark
Town Clerk