

Call to order Time: 7 pm By: L Dunn

Larry Dunn, Marge Frank, Jan Knost

Also present: Peter Ruggiero, Tara Welinsky

Approval of draft minutes from July 23, 2018.

Motion to include amendment regarding age of board and commission members. Motion carries.

1. "Shall the Town Charter be amended at Article I, Commissions, Boards and Committees, §C-168 All commissions, boards, and committees, to provide that any member of any Commission, Board or Committee shall be the age of majority to be eligible for appointment and to serve?"

L Dunn read Bill Wilson's comments via email: There are limited instances where a minor would be appointed to a Commission, Board or Committee, but I would commend an effort to get our youth energized and involved in Government. If the Town Charter specifically exempts one group from participating in town government, what will be the next group to be discriminated against?

L Dunn: offers that younger members could be part but may not vote. J Knost: younger people should be welcome in leadership. M Frank: doesn't think they should be able to vote, but they can attend.

Public comments: Michael Chambers: agrees with Knost that younger folks should be able to participate on boards and commissions. Ruth Platner doesn't think there should be an age restriction and they should be able to vote. Ronald Araglotto (sp?): These are advisory boards, it should be allowed to include those less than 18 and allow them to vote. Cheryl Dowdell: study about frontal lobes not being developed, children feel before they think. They can still be involved. Tom Gentz: Don't change the charter on this. Frank Glista: Add an apprentice or internship program for younger people. Tom Carroccia: we eliminate creativity when you eliminate youngsters. JoAnne Stolle: charter change is unnecessary.

Peter Ruggiero: What are the legal implications? Requires parental permission, council approval, can't vote on anything binding for the town.

Motion to disapprove. Knost and Dunn are in favor, Frank opposes.

2. "Shall the Town Charter be amended at Article VI, Town Council, Organization and Election, §C-24 Vacancies, to provide that any vacancies in the membership of the Council which occur one (1) year or less prior to the time for holding an election may, at the discretion of the Council after announcement of the vacancy to solicit applications from interested persons and a public hearing thereon be filled for the unexpired term.?"

Remainder of Section Unchanged, as follows:

For vacancies which occur more than one (1) year prior to the time for holding an election, the Council shall, within thirty (30) days after the vacancy occurs, call a special election for the purpose of filling the vacancy.

Dunn read Bill Wilson's comments via email: The process of, announcing the vacancy then allowing an application period (of unspecified time), then having open public hearings (within no specific time period) would cause delays in filling the vacancy and have the potential for creating conflict within the community. The end result would be unchanged, the Town Council will appoint a like-minded individual of their choice.

Faith and Roe Labossiere's comments via email: Requiring a public hearing to fill a council vacancy may inadvertently create a four person council for extended periods (depending on timing of public notice and public hearing). Further, if the period of vacancy is just a few weeks or months, the council should have the option of filling the vacancy in a reasonable time frame.

Public Comments: Deb Carney: this allows for a more public process as is done for other vacancies in boards and commissions. T Gentz: urges to vote No on this. Councilors have the faith of the voters and should make the decision. If councilors make a bad decision they will be voted out. This is micromanaging. R Platner: It's essentially the same as what is happening now but the charter change would add one month. D Carney: the vacancy last time was not announced. Kim Coulter: doesn't think we have time to wait, when there's a crisis in town, decisions need to be made. Ronald Areglado: no charter change, it only makes that the opening has to be announced. Linda Heinz: don't delay the process. D Carney: make the process more open and transparent. Dunn: supports not making many changes to the Charter. M Frank: is for more transparency. If the change isn't made in the charter, maybe the council can publish rules. Knost: doesn't support change in the Charter. Motion to disapprove: Dunn and Knost favor, Frank opposes. Motion carries.

3. "Shall the Town Charter be amended at Article VI, Town Council, Organization and Election, §C-19 Number: Elections, be amended to provide that the two (2) candidates receiving the largest number of votes shall be elected to a four (4) year term and, that the next three (3) candidates receiving the largest number of votes be elected to a two (2) year term. Thereafter, at each subsequent election, the term of office for a Council member shall be four (4) years."

Public Comments: F Glista: is for this change. T Gentz: please vote No for this change. This allows for too much power to a councilor because they are untouchable for four years. R Platner: voters should be able to replace the majority. Resignations will become more likely. Steve Williams: is in favor of what's here now. He adds that every two years the president should be re-elected. Francis Topping: Learning on the job is ok; staggered terms may not be helpful. Tom Carroccia: this is an insult to the voter; he doesn't agree with this charter change. Leo Mainelli: same as Tom. Voters should get the choice of who's on the council. No change. Bill Coulter: voters put people in place and they should be able to replace them in two years, no change. JoAnne Stolle: Why the change? She is not in support of this change. F Glista:

planning commission has six year staggered terms. F Topping: Planning commission deals with things that go on for a long time. Bill Wilson: One benefit of a two-year term is that if the TC acts contrary to the wishes of the community they can be removed from office quickly. If four-year terms are implemented it would take a minimum of 2 election cycles to effect change. R Platner: planning doesn't have the power like TC, longevity is good. Ronald Areglado: circumstances change in 4 years. Longevity in TC doesn't solve problems. It works well with two years.

M Frank: there are complex issues facing the town now. Sarah St. Laurent spoke about the railroad. Linda Heinz: recommends to stay with two year terms. Motion and second to not bring this forward. All in favor. Motion carries.

Faith and Roe Labossiere's comments via email: We do not agree that the council term should be four years. The public should have the opportunity to vote for change in councilors every two years. Further, it shall become more difficult to find people willing to serve.

4. "Shall the Town Charter be amended at Article XXVI, Financial Referendum §C-86 Date, time and purpose, to provide that any referendum to authorize bonded indebtedness on the Town may only be presented to the voters at a regularly scheduled general election, except for instances which require immediate action to ensure protection of the public's health, safety and/or welfare?"

Dunn read: Faith and Roe Labossiere's comments via email: This amendment would unduly constrain the town in its ability to take advantage of financial opportunities where timing is critical. (Example: Funding and or grants the town wishes to apply for which require matching funding which always have time deadlines.) And Wilson's comments.... There may be instances where a referendum to authorize bond indebtedness at a time other than a general election would be in the best interest of the town. The Town should not be restricted to only those occasions listed, we should trust our elected officials to make responsible decisions, and if they do not vote them out of office.

D Carney: proposed this to make a level playing field. T Gentz: urges a No vote for this Charter change. T Carroccia: don't limit the elected officials, TC should have flexibility. R Platner: has a problem with language. Knost: initiated paving Brookeye Brook with 200 votes. M Frank: Motion to hand back to Town Council. Knost seconds the motion. Dunn believes we have to trust the council, votes against moving this to the council. Dunn opposes. Motions carries.

L Dunn recommends to the TC to revise having a yearly Charter Review. This should be added into the report/minutes.

Meeting adjourned at 845 pm.

This Charter Review Committee is dissolved.

Respectively submitted, Marjorie Frank