



TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY

Charter Revision Commission

MINUTES

Public Hearing of the Charter Revision Commission

Monday, May 4, 2020
VIA ZOOM

Present: Diana Anton
Paul Bialobrzeski
Curt Bosco
John A. Jenusaitis
Tom King
Natrajan Kuppuraj
Michael McVerry, Chairman

Also Present: Barbara Whitaker, Recording Clerk
Joyce Berger
Betty Jane Blick
Linda Zukauskas, Reporter - Voices

Call to Order with Pledge of Allegiance

The Chairman opened the Public Hearing with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Discussion & Consideraion

Chairman McVerry explained that the Charter Revision Commission has held seven meetings over the past several months and that the last public hearing was held on March 16, 2020.

The attached recommended changes are found in the following Sections of the current Town Charter:

Section 202
Section 202H
Section 208
Section 709
Section 212
Section 301
Section 306
Section 702
Section 702 d
Section 901

The Chairman added that the attached note from the Town Clerk suggesting that the length of terms be specified and that the Commission needs to be presented under minority representation.

Curt Bosco said that a provision was made that both the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance shall vote on a budget. In the event that the annual budget fails to adopt on the first try, the Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen should revise the budget.

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The Chairman advised the Commission that there would be a meeting on Monday, May 11, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom to finalize the proposal to the Town Clerk.

Mr. Bosco added that the Commission failed to address a clarification needed in Section 212. Mr. Bosco explained that If someone from the U or I is elected to office and that position is vacated, there is no Town party representing either of these two parties. Under this proposed scenario there would be no way to fill this vacancy.

Public Comments

At this time the Chairman requested public comments on what had been discussed.

Joe Drauss asked if electors were citizens? The Chairman affirmed and explained that the nominees for First Selectman would be on a separate line. Each party nominate one candidate for First Selectman, unless there is a third party running.

Joe Drauss asked if Region 15 budget passes and the town budget does not, does it revert back to referendum, the Chairman affirmed.

Joyce Berger disagrees with changing the term from two years to four years without any limitation on the terms. She explained that most small towns have a two year term. Middlebury is a small town and she doesn't feel that it is necessary at this time.

Betty Jane Blick said that she was confused about how the First Selectman and two Selectmen nominees run for office. Sometimes the losing First Selectman would have enough votes to obtain one of the other positions on the Board of Selectmen. In November 2021 all three candidates will run together next year; after two years the other two selectmen

Curt Bosco said that under the Charter said that the Board of Selectmen choose who will be the second and third Selectmen. The second and third is only if someone vacates the position not for authority. Betty Jane Blick feels that the Charter Commission is over complicating the process. Typically the presidential election has the largest turnout. It is unfortunate with the current climate that it is what it is.

BJ Blick inquired on how the change was brought forward to the Commission. The Chairman said that in March 2020 the First Selectman discussed the request with the Commission and expanded upon by the Commission. Tom King added that this suggestion was brought up because the learning curve; and the constant need for campaigning and running an election. Once you get into the position and start to learn, you are campaigning again for the next election cycle. BJ Blick said that she disagrees.

The Chairman restated that the Commission will meet next week to finalize the changes and present it to the Town Clerk. Once it is presented to the Board of Selectmen there will be another public hearing. Curt Bosco added that in November 2020 the biggest vote is going to be the electors, they will make the ultimate decision.

Joe Drauss asked if this will be voted on with individual questions or by ballot? The Chairman said that this was to be decided by the Board of Selectmen.

John Jenusaitis MOTIONED to ADJOURN the public hearing, SECONDED by Tom King.

These minutes are submitted subject to approval.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara J. Whitaker

Barbara J. Whitaker
Recording Clerk