

## **CHARTER REVISION SUGGESTIONS**

### **Director of Planning & Development - Heidi Samokar:**

**D-1 - Definitions:** Charter defines “Non-Registered Voter” but do not see the term used in the bylaws. Definition for “public hearing” states that residents and non-resident voters are given opportunity to testify. Based on the definitions of residents and voters, this implies that others are not supposed to speak at a public hearing including students. This may not be the intention. See also C10-1 regarding who speaks at public hearings.

**C3-3 - Planning and Zoning Commission:** Suggest removing “for a two-year term” in reference to the Zoning Enforcement Officer. State statute is clear that the Commission decides manner of enforcement and does not set term limits. Should the 2-year limit ever escape the Commission’s mind, this is a concern that enforcement decisions could be overturned by a court. Since the ZEO is appointed by the Commission they can always unappoint at any time should there be an issue.

Change “Town plan of development” to “Town Plan of Conservation and Development”.

**C4-4:** Change “Town plan of development” to “Town Plan of Conservation and Development”.

**C4-5:** Refers to “daily” newspaper. Journal Inquirer may not be a daily newspaper.

**C5-7:** Remove requirement that director of health is a physician.

**Global:** Make gender neutral. Section C6-1 refers to he and his.

### **Building Official – Jim Paquin:**

**Section C5-7:** Reads the Director of Health shall be a physician. We currently use EHHD.

### **Human Services Director – Bev Bellody:**

**Section C4-5 - Public Hearings:** “Notice of the time, place and purpose of such public hearings shall be advertised in a daily newspaper having a general circulation within the Town at least five (5) days prior to such public hearings”.

There may be state regulation or town ordinance that may require public hearings be advertised in the newspaper. CCM was trying to reduce the financial burden of having to publish legal notices in newspapers. If that were to pass, should the Charter have some language that would allow the town “if not required by state regulation or town ordinance public notice shall be published on Town Website, and or DAS?”

### **Planning & Zoning Commission – Sue Errickson:**

- 1) Move the Budget Referendum to June, in hopes that the State Budget would be finalized by then.
- 2) Limit the number of referendum votes for the Town Budget to three, with the Town Council deciding the final Budget, should it go past three rounds of voting.

- 3) *Stagger both the BOE and Council member terms: include 2-3 members with two-year terms, the other four year terms should be staggered. This will give continuity (you will always have "seasoned" members and it will allow for new people to "get their feet wet" in two year terms.*
- 4) *Consider reducing the number of BOE members to 7.*

**Town Manager – Steve Werbner:**

*Section C3-1: Consideration of staggered terms.*

*Section C3-2: Consideration of staggered terms.*

*Section C4-3: Consider deleting the last sentence.*

*Section C4-5: Consider deleting the last sentence.*

*Section C5-2: Consider a provision to automatically terminate appointments of individuals who do not attend board or commission meetings for three consecutive months.*

*Section C5-7: Consider removal of the section based on participation in a regional Health District.*

*Section C7-3: Consider removal of the provision.*

*Sections C9-2-C9-10: Review all dates mentioned for consistency.*

*Section C9-4: Review the requirement for the Town Manager to call and attend a joint meeting of the Town Council and Board of Education for the purpose of discussing the appropriation request of the BOE and following that meeting the ability of the BOE to present its finalized appropriation request no later than the Councils budget public hearing.*

*Section C9-10: Consider moving the first budget referendum to the third Tuesday of the month of May. Allow the Council to schedule subsequent referendums if needed provided that they will not be less than two weeks apart. Consider establishing a cutoff in terms of the number of consecutive referendums that can be held and once that cutoff is reached allow the Council to adopt a budget that is not subject to the referendum. Also consider a provision that to have a referendum you need a certain percentage of voters to sign a petition and for the vote to be effective you need to have a certain percentage of voters vote.*

*Section C9-14: Consider increasing the \$40,000 threshold for additional appropriations without holding a public hearing.*

**Fire Chief – John Littell:**

*Section C7-3: Review residency requirements.*

**Finance & Records Director – Lisa Hancock:**

*Section C3-2: Consideration of staggered terms. Possibly consider reducing the number of members from 9 to 7.*

**Section C4-6:** *If the State Statute allows publishing of ordinances electronically rather than newspaper add language that allows for this.*

**Section C4-10:** *Include multi-year approval of auditor if State Statute permits.*

**Section C5-6 - Town Attorney:** *Remove “purchase order” and replace with “contract”.*

**Section 9-1 - Fiscal Year:** *Add language that allows for the fiscal year to change if State Statute changes the fiscal year requirements.*

**Sections C9-2-C9-10:** *Review all dates mentioned for consistency. Include language that allows dates to be changed if State Statute changes fiscal year requirements.*

**Section C9-5 - Capital Improvement Plan:** *Consider it being part of Section C9-4 budget process.*

**Section C9-6:** *Consider eliminating and just include as part of Section C9-4 as “a budget recommendation for capital projects to be undertaken for the ensuing fiscal year and a total of 5 years, together with an estimate of cost and method of financing the capital improvement plan.*

**Section C9-8:** *Consider elimination and have a part of the general fund budget process.*

**Section C9-14:** *Consider increasing the \$40,000 threshold to \$250,000 or as a percentage of the general fund budget for additional appropriations without holding a public hearing and only for funds that have legally adopted appropriations. Consider changing some of the language relating to the use of the Manager and Chairperson of the Council to the positions that relate more for specific oversight or treasury duties. Remove limitation for transfers from debt service and other statutory charges. Change the lapse of appropriations of 3 years for capital outlay and projects but also state that the expenditures must comply with any bonding spend-down requirements. Possibly consider authorizing the Town Manager to have authority to transfer funds between departments up to a certain dollar value.*

**Section C9-16 - Borrowing:** *Consider increasing the non-referendum limit to 10% of the current tax levy and also clarify existing language per bond counsel suggestions.*

**Section C10-1 - Power to Petition:** *May want to review the percentage of required voter signatures and timing for Council response in order to allow time for proper research or legal reviews.*

**Section C10-3 - Sale of Real Estate:** *Consider increasing the percentage for the referendum requirement for the purchase or sale of land.*