

Town of East Windsor Charter Revision Commission

Organized March 2008

Connecticut General Statutes require
review of Charter at least every 5
years.

More frequent reviews can be held at
the discretion of Towns.

Current Charter Revision Membership

George Butenkoff – Co-Chairman – Citizen at large

John Matthews – Co-Chairman – Citizen at large

Don Arcari – Citizen at large

Claire Badstubner – Citizen at large

Ed Farrell – Represents Board of Selectman

Karen Gaudreau – Represents Town Administration

Joyce Phillips – Citizen at large

Scott Riach - Citizen at large

Charles Riggott – Citizen at large

Madeline Thompson – Citizen at large

Bonnie Yosky – Citizen at large

Objectives of CRC

- Maintain current form of government.
 - Selectman, Town Meeting
- Respect 241 year tradition that has evolved since our incorporation (1768).
- Improve government efficiency while affirming and strengthening voter's rights.
- Improve language to reduce ambiguities.

Some Charter Facts

- Towns are granted their powers by the State Legislature
- Authorized by Connecticut General Statutes.
 - Towns are authorized to select their form of government.
 - And to have certain functions as outlined by Connecticut General Statutes but may adopt statutes with limitations.
 - The charter can defer Town enabling legislation to Town Ordinances.

Our Charter

- Our charter chooses to have
 - A Selectman / Town Meeting form of government.
 - The selectmen are the executive branch.
 - They have limited powers.
 - Develop budget and bonding
 - Negotiate contracts
 - Administer departments, commissions
 - Manage the Approved Budget
 - Propose ordinances
 - Share power with some commissions (Board of Finance, Board of Ed, P&Z, Police Commission)

Our Charter Continued

- Approximately 100 towns in Connecticut have this form of government
 - Direct (Pure) Democracy on large issues.
 - Larger towns (populations of 25,000 or more) tend to be governed by elected representatives to decide larger issues, but may still be subject to referendum.

Proposed Changes

1. Replace the Annual Town Budget Meeting with Referendum.
 - Gives more electors a chance to participate.
 - If the 3rd referendum fails, then we return to the last year's Approved Budget (current budget).
 - Process ends by June 15th.
 - Government continues uninterrupted.
 - Tax bills are sent out by July 1.
 - Bond ratings are not degraded due to uncertainty that would occur with unlimited referendums.

Proposed Changes Continued

2. Improve flexibility of government by moving enabling process to ordinance and away from Charter.
 - Less time required to change organizations and duties of departments and commissions.
 - To make changes to the charter, the process is about 18 months long.

Proposed Changes Continued

3. Increase spending limit on Added Appropriations to \$30,000 from \$20,000 without Town Meeting approval.
4. Affirm that all appropriations are subject to the Approved Annual Budget or Added Appropriation process.

Proposed Changes Continued

5. Include narrative of reasons for significant changes in budget from prior year's budget.
6. Remove budget milestones from Charter and requires BOS to set these at beginning of annual budget process.
7. BOS and BOE will hold public hearings at the beginning of the budget process.

Proposed Changes Continued

8. Define employees as “at will” employees. Limit all personnel contracts to three years and the Approved Annual Budget.

9. Technical changes to comply with Connecticut General Statutes and collective bargaining agreements and to clarify ambiguities and format.

Charter Revision Calendar

- 1st Meeting – April 17, 2008
- 1st Public Hearing – May 22, 2008
- Public Hearing on Draft Report – March 26, 2009
- Draft of Charter to Board of Selectman by April 9, 2009
- BOS hold Public Hearing within 45 days of draft submitted by May 23, 2009.

Calendar Continued

- BOS recommends changes to CRC by June 7.
 - They have 15 days from public hearing
- CRC Final Report to BOS by July 7, 2009
 - 30 days from when BOS makes recommended changes
- BOS approves or rejects proposed charter by July 26.

Charter Calendar Continued

- CRC publishes changes by Sept. 3, 2009
- BOS gives approval for charter to go to voters by Sept. 16, 2009.
- Absentee ballots available on October 2, 2009.
- **Vote on Charter on Election Day – Tuesday, November 3.**
 - Approval - Charter revision requires approval by majority of voting electors.

Next Steps

- Carefully consider comments from public and stakeholders at this Public Hearing.
- After due consideration of all comments. Revise draft and submit to BOS by April 9, 2009.