

~AD HOC REPORT~

Charter Revision

Tuesday, June 19, 2007

35

Hon. Mark D. Boughton, Mayor
Common Council Members

Chairman Charles Trombetta called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. on Tuesday, June 19, 2007, in the Caucus Room, 3rd Floor, Danbury City Hall, 155 Deer Hill Avenue. Present were Committee members Colleen Stanley and Paul Rotello. Ex Officio members: Jane Diggs, Pauline Basso, Duane Perkins and Benjamin Chianese. Also present were Mayor Mark Boughton, Corporation Counsel Laszlo L. Pinter and Warren Levy.

Chairman Trombetta introduced everyone in the room. Chairman Trombetta explained the purpose of the evening's meeting was to consider a possible commission to review the City's Charter and make any recommendations for possible changes.

Chairman Trombetta asked Mayor Boughton to elaborate. Mayor Boughton recommended a complete review of the Charter with recommendations for changes. The goal is to have the recommendations for revision brought before the voters for the 2008 elections. The Council's responsibility would be to adopt a resolution to begin the process and then adopt a resolution which would name the members of the commission. A 9-member commission is being recommended (3 Republicans, 3 Democrats and 3 Unaffiliated). Once the commission has been established, they would review the Charter, obtain public input and then come before the Common Council with their recommendations for revision. The Council will then make the determination to either adopt all of the recommendations or some of the recommendations and then the matter would go before the voters for adoption or rejection. Mayor Boughton pointed out that a complete Charter revision has not been done since 1977 (a small revision was done in 1990). Mayor Boughton informed the Committee of additional points of the process whereby individual Council members could come before the commission and make recommendations, public hearings would be conducted to gain input and the commission would take recommendations on the City's website. Of importance is gaining as much public input as possible so that the needs of the community are taken into consideration during the revision process. Chairman Trombetta asked Mayor Boughton to explain how the commission would determine what changes should be made. Mayor Boughton explained that a starting point would be to put together a list of the challenges in the Charter such as financial issues and the mechanics in the way the City is run in the present day, job titles and job responsibilities. Mayor Boughton has offered to put together a list of suggestions which he will provide the Common Council with. The commission can consider anything that is brought before them. They are not limited in what they can consider with regard to changes to the Charter.

Corporation Counsel Pinter provided the Committee with a handout (*attached hereto*) which he explained was a summary to help make the beginning of the process as straightforward as possible. He reviewed the steps with the Committee. *Step One:* May 1st action of the Common Council to receive the Mayor's request to establish a Charter Revision Commission. The process is very statutory specific. The Charter is the organic law of any municipality and the intent of the Statutes is to go about the process very carefully. *Step Two:* The Ad Hoc Committee. The Committee was charged to review the proposed resolution and bring back a recommendation to the whole Council. The Committee is to recommend to the whole Council a resolution that would begin the process. At the next Council meeting, the Council would adopt the resolution to establish the designation of the members of the commission, provide identification of the issues that the Common Council considers appropriate for consideration in the revision process, the establishment of a general timeline for the revision process and establish a deadline for a submission of the draft. *Step Three:* The Common Council will receive the Committee's report at their July 3rd meeting, adopts Resolution No. 1. *Step Four:* 30 days after July 3rd, the

Common Council is to adopt Resolution No. 2. *Step Five:* The beginning of the commission's process. From this point, a series of time-sensitive meetings schedules will occur (i.e., public hearings, commission meetings, draft report schedules, etc.). Corporation Council Pinter reviewed the main points he highlighted at the bottom of the attached document.

Chairman Trombetta opened up the meeting for questions. Councilman Rotello expressed concern with the 16-month timeframe, he felt it was not enough time to accomplish the task at hand. Corporation Council Pinter pointed out that a draft report needed to be adopted within the 16-month timeframe, the timeframe for a final report was a longer period of time. Corporation Counsel Pinter reminded everyone that there will be a number of opportunities for input whether from the public or the Council members.

With the assistance of Corporation Counsel Pinter, Councilwoman Stanley offered the following motion:

A motion was made by Councilwoman Stanley and seconded by Councilman Rotello that the Committee recommend to the Common Council that they adopt the Resolution to initiate the process of Charter revision by a two-thirds vote of all of its members and in accordance with State Statutes. The motion carried unanimously.

A motion to adjourn was made by Councilwoman Stanley and seconded by Councilman Rotello. The motion carried unanimously at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Trombetta, Chairman

Colleen Stanley

Paul Rotello

RESOLUTION

CITY OF DANBURY, STATE OF CONNECTICUT



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RESOLVED by the Common Council of the City of Danbury:

WHEREAS, pursuant to the provisions of Section 7-188 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Common Council of the City of Danbury is authorized to initiate the process of charter revision by a two-thirds vote of all of its members; and

WHEREAS, the last revisions to the Danbury Municipal Charter were approved by the electors of the City of Danbury on November 6, 1990; and

WHEREAS, during the intervening time the City of Danbury has grown and evolved in a manner that makes review and revision of the Danbury Municipal Charter appropriate and in the best interests of the people of the City of Danbury;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DANBURY THAT the process of charter revision, as provided for in chapter 99 of the Connecticut General Statutes, be and hereby is initiated and that within the next 30 days the Common Council shall designate the members of a charter revision commission, shall identify those issues that the common council considers appropriate for consideration by the commission and shall establish the timetable for consideration of all issues related to charter revision and a deadline for submission of a draft report by the commission.