



TOWN OF MADISON
CONNECTICUT
06443-2563

MEETING DATE: Wednesday, January 14, 2015
MEETING PLACE: Town Campus - Room A

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

**Charter Review Committee
Public Hearing
Minutes**

Members Present: Joan Walker (Chair), Bill Gladstone, Jim Deephouse, Diane Stadterman, Dotty Bavin (Vice Chair), Scott Scherban and Deb Heinrich.

Others Present: Alma Carroll, Director of Town Services; Dave Anderson, Town Planner; Mike Ott, Director of Public Works; Nancy Martucci, Town Clerk;

Roughly 30 members of the public.

The Public Hearing of the Charter Review Committee was called to order at approximately 7:30 p.m. Chairwoman Joan Walker reviewed the order of the meeting and stated that the committee was going to listen to the comments from the public. She asked those present to limit their comments to 3 minutes and to discuss the two specific items first, before commenting on other Charter matters.

The committee members introduced themselves, and Ms. Heinrich stated the committee's excitement that the room was filled and began a review of the Extended Town Meeting. She reminded those present about the two white papers which were published prior to this meeting. She stated that every 10 years the Town empowers a committee to review the Charter with the input of the public. The process began with a Public Hearing and concerns were brought forth about communication from the residents. Along these lines, the concept of Extended Town Meeting has been discussed by the committee. She stated that the committee would now like input from the public. Ms. Heinrich also informed those present that the committee had discussions about changing the form of town government but the committee felt the same, Town Meeting form should be kept, but that there should be a shift to more encompassing form of Town Meeting government. The concept of Extended Town

Meeting was one way of making the Town Meeting form more accessible to residents by extending the time period for voting. She stated that there are fewer people participating in Town Meetings as it currently proceeds (one night, one time). Ms. Heinrich provided an example of how extending the voting time by 4 business days from the meeting night, as follows:

A Town Meeting is called, those who are able to attend, do. Those in attendance have the choice of voting at the meeting or during the next 4 business days at the Town Clerk's office. Those unable to attend can also vote at the Town Clerk's office during the extended voting time. For one of these voting days, the Town Clerk's office will be open past normal business hours.

Ms. Heinrich also stated that the information she was relaying was slightly different than what was published because of feedback received about the white paper. The voting time has changed and the call to Extended Town Meeting at every meeting will be implemented.

She stated that one of the issues the town faces is not reaching quorum at town meetings and that with this Extended Town Meeting concept, quorum will be counted based on all votes cast during the meeting and the four extended voting days. What will not change is what happens if the meeting does not reach quorum.

If the public and committee decide that they like the Extended Town Meeting, the wording will be changed in the Charter and then the process will be enabled in the Charter. The details of the procedures will be in Ordinance so that it will be easier to revise based on what does / doesn't work.

Mr. Gladstone thanked the public for their attendance at the meeting and presented on the Town Manager position. He stated that the committee was exploring the Town Manager option and the Extended Town Meeting, and have also made other changes to the Charter. These suggestions will next be brought to the Board of Selectmen for refinement and then ultimately the Charter will go to referendum for the public to vote on. He noted that residents watching this meeting from, or those in attendance who had more questions after the meeting ended could go to the Charter Review Committee website on the Madisonct.org page and send the committee their comments. He reminded the public that they can attend any of the committee meetings, the next meeting being January 21, 2014 at 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Gladstone then compared the idea of the Town Manager position to a corporate business model. He stated that current Madison has a Board of Directors, the BoS, and a CEO, the First Selectman. Many businesses are set up where the Chairman of the Board is also the CEO. However, in other businesses there is a separate Chief Executive Officer. The Town Manager takes this CEO role from the First Selectman and it assigns someone else to handle the day-to-day operations of the town. He noted that this is not a change in the policy of the town; policy will still be set through the BoS and the First Selectman.

Some reasons why the town would want to consider this position is because the Town Manager is a trained professional with degree(s) in a related field and they are not elected. They would have a longer term view than the First Selectman. By reducing the responsibilities for the First Selectman it would also open the role to a broader pool of candidates.

The meeting was then opened to Public Comment as follows:

Tom Lilburn of Laurel Crest Road asked if the chain of command for town Department Heads would be different than it is currently?

Mr. Gladstone responded that the Department Heads would report to the Town Manager, the Town Manager would report to the BoS. The Town Manager with the help of the Department Heads would hire other staff for the town. The Town Manager discussion pertains to the executive portion of town government whereas the Extended Town Meeting discussion pertains to the policy side.

Ms. Heinrich also stated that one of the things the committee has been working on is to reduce the number of Town Meetings. The thresholds have been changed and language for special appropriations has changed to ensure that Town Meetings are necessary and meaningful.

John Dean of Milestone Lane asked Mr. Gladstone if the position of Town Manager is elected or appointed. Mr. Gladstone stated that this is an appointed position by the Board of Selectman. Mr. Dean stated; "since this would be an appointed position the voters would not have direct control over the selection process of this important position"

Ms. Walker also added that this process is commensurate with the Board of Education's hiring practice for the Superintendent of Schools. Mr. Dean stated that many years ago the State Board of Education designed this practice and that is why the local voters do not have any direct control over the selection of the Superintendent.

Don Williams of Scotland Road stated that he assumed the Extended Town Meeting concept is not a new idea and questioned that other towns must have this form implemented and it must be working.

Ms. Heinrich stated that this is actually a new concept. She has spoken with the Secretary of State's office in detail about this concept and they are very excited about the idea, and other towns are watching Madison. She also stated that there is a similar make-up in Wilton, but it is different enough that it can't be compared to what the committee is trying to accomplish. We are on the cutting edge of considering what we might do to improve our form of government.

Thomas Burland of Ridge Road stated that he thought the Extended Town Meeting was a great idea. It is a measured step toward trying to improve participation and he liked

the fact that the committee was not changing quorum. The one suggestion he had was that as the ballot process is done, the ballot should ask the resident if they attended the town meeting, watched the video online, etc. It should look for feedback on the voting process. Also, one concern is that the town is taking this step to improve participation but it will be 10 years until the next Charter review, so if the Extended Town Meeting doesn't work, Madison will be stuck in this process 10 years. He stated that he would strongly advocate that the committee input a trigger that upon a 2 – 3 year review, if participation does not meet the threshold, then the Charter could be opened to consider revisions.

Jim Matteson of Green Hill Road questioned how the budgeting process works with the Town Manager position. He also asked what the role of the BoF would be in the budget process as compared to the current role. Regarding the Extended Town Meeting, he asked when the committee planned to go to referendum to approve these changes. He also stated that he hoped the committee would consider a separate vote for each of these Charter items at the referendum; one item for Extended Town Meeting, one item for Town Manager position and one item for the general clean-up of the Charter. He stated that this way the acceptance of the Extended Town Meeting does not signify acceptance of the Town Manager position. Mr. Matteson further stated that he liked the idea of the Extended Town Meeting. The detail on the constraints / parameters on which a Town Meeting is held would be important to know and he stated that he would like to see these threshold changes on a white paper publication or the committee meeting minutes.

Ms. Walker responded that the vote at referendum is expected to be in November 2015.

Mr. Gladstone responded that the budget would be set the same way that it is now. The Town Manager would have a role similar or in concert with the Finance Director in trying to address the needs of the town and addressing budget issues. The budgeting authority would remain as it is today. Budgeting is policy and the policy side will not change. The town has been fortunate that the most recent string of First Selectmen have been very effective day-to-day managers, but that might not be something we can count on forever. The everyday challenges are also getting more difficult with the growth of the town, growth of the budget, etc. This discussion centers on if a Town Manager will address these changes more efficiently.

Joe Maco of Randi Drive stated that he believed the Police Chief was not an elected official and that the town has had some bad Police Chiefs. He questioned that if the town now hires a Town Manager and they are not effective, then how would the town terminate this employee. He also stated that he liked the current form of government but thought that it needed to be tweaked. He suggested that perhaps the First Selectman could be elected for a 4-year term instead of a 2-year term. He also stated that other towns in Connecticut have hired a Town Manager and that this hiring has been disastrous for other towns. He stated that he felt the Town Meeting and Selectmen process is fine for Madison and that he didn't think this form needed to be changed.

John Schwartz of Crestview Drive asked if there was an impact on the budget by going to the Town Manager position. He stated that he was also concerned regarding the retention of this employee, as he thought the Town Manager must be a Madison resident. He also questioned what would happen if the employee left for a position with another town.

Ms. Walker clarified that the town cannot force someone to live in Madison and the town cannot pull candidates from just within Madison. The pool would be open, nationwide. Obviously someone from Madison may or may not have leg up on other candidates.

Henry Owen of Wellsweep Drive stated that the Town Manager has their own accreditation system and their own professional standards, but asked what language would be put in the Charter to protect them if they chose to be a "whistleblower" and speak out against the BoS. He stated his concern that the Town Manager would have more knowledge as compared to other town employees and therefore would have the onus of reporting if the BoS was not doing the right thing for the town.

Mr. Gladstone stated that this was an interesting question. But that is also a question that we could have today regarding any town employee who feels that there is a problem which they should be protected under.

Herb Gram. 287 Boston Post Road, asked if the Town Manager did something that is considered out of the normal scope of work, how would this person be terminated? Will it cost as much as some of the problems at the Police Department that the town had experienced in the past?

Mr. Gladstone stated that this was a matter of contracting and it is a Human Resource question. It would have to be addressed carefully and the town would have to find the right job description model to protect the employee and to also ensure that they followed the policy of the BoS. If they are not executing the policy of the BoS then the BoS would have the authority to terminate this employee.

Ms. Heinrich also stated that the committee had a presentation from the Town Manager and Mayor of Mansfield and that that particular Town Manager was an at-will employee.

Ms. Walker added that this means that they could be terminated at any time with a super majority vote of the BoS.

Art Symonds of Bartlett Drive stated that with the Extended Town Meeting concept, the committee is becoming more democratic, but with the Town Manager concept they are becoming less democratic. His concern about the Extended Town Meeting concept is that people benefit from attending the Town Meeting and hearing the discussion. He stated that he has had his mind changed by listening to discussion at Town Meeting. He also stated that there is a lot of communication about the meetings and residents could do better about attending Town Meetings, even with the current constraints.

Democracy is a civic duty, it is not necessarily easy. The Extended Town Meeting has more positive than negative attributes, however. He stated that in contrast he was totally opposed to the Town Manager position. He also didn't like the budgetary impact of paying for both positions. He also thought that if something wasn't broken, it shouldn't be fixed. He stated that he liked that BoS members could be voted out of office very 2 years. Also, other towns have gone through many Town Managers, and in some cases it has been hard for them to terminate the position. He stated that he didn't see the towns around Madison, which are larger than Madison, using a Town Manager position. The current professional staff is extremely qualified to handle the concerns of the town.

Ms. Walker stated that the committee has taken into consideration the number of town Department Heads who will be retiring within the next few years. There is a loss of continuity that needs to be addressed and the committee has considered the Town Manager position will address this issue.

Ms. Stadterman stated that the committee has been discussing the Extended Town Meeting and how to make the information presented after the meeting. One of the things the committee is trying to do with the Charter is to make it a constitution-like document and then the actual governance happens through Ordinance. We will empower the Extended Town Meeting in the Charter but the rules will be governed by Ordinance so that they can be revised based on what works. We are looking at ensuring that the notice about the call to meeting and the discussion of the Town Meeting is presented to the public before they vote.

Janet Niccolini of Madison Ave. questioned if it was possible to conduct voting for the Extended Town Meeting online. And if this was not possible, then she wanted to know why. She noted the technological advances available to the town. She also stated that she was in favor of a Town Manager but that the position must be filled by the right person. The salary will be worth it if it is someone who will oversee all town departments. If that position is given clear goals then it could be a good thing for the town financially. But she also wanted to know what would happen to the First Selectman salary.

Ms. Heinrich responded that the committee also wanted to empower online voting, but that the Sec. of State's office informed the committee that there is a state statute which defines legal ways to vote and online voting is not allowed under that state statute. Because it is not in that statute, the committee cannot implement online voting.

Ms. Walker stated that the committee initially thought that the First Selectman position would become part-time. This person would still set policy, direct the BoS, and be the public face of the town.

Barbara Davis of Stone Road stated that she found the Extended Town Meeting to be a very good idea and she looked forward to having a great deal of information come out prior to future Town Meetings so that residents would have knowledge beforehand. With regard to the Town Manager position she stated that she was not at all comfortable with

this concept because of the constrictions in terminating an employee who is not performing well. She stated that it seemed that the current structure, if the residents don't like the way that the First Selectman is conducting business then the residents can vote them out in 2 years. However, with the Town Manager position, the residents would have to vote out 3 Selectmen who supported the Town Manager. The employment of the Town Manager seems to be more in the hands of the BoS only. Also, she wasn't sure that the residents have had enough time to study and digest the idea of the Town Manager. She stated that she attended the informational meeting with the Town Manager of Mansfield, but of the 169 towns in Connecticut, only 24 have Town Managers. 102 towns have the Town Meeting form of government. She stated that she also wasn't sure if the committee had carefully reviewed the Town Manager in towns other than Mansfield as a reference. If the committee had talked to 10 – 15 other towns where the Town Manager was effective, then she would feel more comfortable with the idea of Madison implementing this position.

Ms. Walker clarified that of the towns in Connecticut listed as having a Town Meeting form of government, some of these also have a Town Manager. There is another coalition of executives and it goes beyond the Town Manager / Town Council form of government. There are towns that have a First Selectman and have a Town Manager and are considered the Town Meeting form of government.

Ms. Stadterman stated that the committee is further along with the idea of the Extended Town Meeting rather than the Town Manager. If the committee gets a general feeling that the townspeople are interested in implementing the Town Manager, then they will go forward with this due diligence. There is a lot of homework to be done.

Anne Pember stated that she did not agree with the concept of the Town Manager and that she was also concerned about additional cost in the budget. There is the inevitability to lose the senior staff that may be retiring, but town should ensure that the new hires for these department positions have the characteristics of what the town is looking for in a Town Manager. The town should hire and promote Department Heads that are better qualified versus adding one position at an additional fixed cost. She also stated that the Extended Town Meeting will be great process with the additional voting hours. She expressed that although she understood the information will be available and the voting will be extended, if people still don't show up for town meetings, then how will voting improve. She used the example of the young family who doesn't have time to attend to the Town Meeting and questioned how they would receive the information. She stated that overall, the town needs to make the information more interesting to reach residents who are not currently participating.

Ms. Heinrich responded that Ms. Pember may be right. What the town knows now is that the current process is not getting the participation we need. The other options available were to drastically change our form of government. She also stated that the town will include the ways to communicate the information in Ordinance. As the committee goes through the Charter revision they are trying to keep the Charter streamlined, but we are very concerned about what you are saying.

Helen Burland of Ridge Road stated that she thought, if coupled with some of the adjustments the committee is talking about concerning the calling of Town Meeting, the Extended Town Meeting might be more successful in increasing participation. Over the last 10 years there have been more town meetings held and the urgency to attend them has lessened. She disagreed with the concept that motivation will get residents to the meeting. For instance, she had a work commitment on Monday night during the last Town Meeting and the reality is that not everyone works in town, or is retired and they can't always attend town meetings. The ability to extend the voting period would help those who are active but not able to attend every meeting. It will also protect against special interest groups. This is always what the town ought to be looking for. Extending the voting item protects the town in the long run.

Bettina Braisted of Boston Post Road questioned the salary range for the Town Manager position, and also how long it would take to reach a decision to empower the Town Manager position.

Ms. Stadterman stated that the committee needs to design the positon still and then figure out what the requirements would be and the going rate for salary.

Ms. Walker added that the committee is still deliberating and is hoping to receive comments on this concept through February. The committee is trying to make a decision one way or the other. There has been a lot of internal discussion and the committee is hoping for a consensus by February to present their suggestions to the BoS. If the committee does not come to a decision then they will request to extend the charge or the Town Manager position gets left out. Also, salary would not be in the Charter. The job of the committee is to say that this is a needed decision and there will be more pieces that will happen after the designation of the position in the Charter. For reference, Ms. Walker also noted that the First Selectman salary is not in the Charter, either.

Ms. Stadterman stated that if the committee goes in this direction it is not this commission that would put together the details of the Town Manager job description or the implementation date. The Charter would allow for the positon and the implementation / job description / interview committee information would not be decided on by the Charter Review Committee.

Jim Ball of Overbrook Road stated that North Branford has a Town Manager and asked the committee if they spoke with a representative from this town. He noted that this is Madison's closest neighbor that employs this position. He urged the committee to look into the North Branford Charter and to meet with someone from North Branford.

Nancy Martucci of Boston Post Road and also the Town Clerk stated that she personally feels the town needs to provide more information in advance of a meeting so that residents have accurate information before the Town Meeting is held. Many people think they are attending the Town Meeting to get information and will vote later, but they are placing the vote at the Town Meeting. She stated that she has also heard that residents want information without having to search for it. They are looking for

information to be sent to their homes, via electronic devices, etc. As some residents are not updated with technology yet, email, telephone robo-call and/or mailings to notice residents of the meeting could work. Also there should be a link on the website for more information on the Town Meeting, perhaps a narrative explaining everything, then the notice could give this information instead of residents having to search out the information in the BOS / BOF minutes. She stated that the town wants to get the facts out to everyone but that the town has no control over what goes in a newspaper article or editorial. The only thing the town has control over is putting in a legal notice which people don't always see. She stated that as far as the Extended Town Meeting was concerned, she wasn't sure how it would really work. She has a lot of questions about the balloting process (i.e. putting together the actual ballot, how we secure the ballot box, how we ensure residents only vote once, etc.). But that the town needs a procedure at the beginning and end of the Extended Town Meeting to make it work. When there is an issue that is important, people come out. When they feel it is something positive and it will pass, they don't come out to vote. The town also has to consider the budget for the Extended Town Meeting. There will probably be more man hours needed and therefore an increase in cost to the town. Change is inevitable and it can be good. Whichever way this goes, the Town Clerk's Office will do what it needs to do to make sure that everything is done efficiently.

Ms. Walker added that any resident can sign up on the town website to get emails from the Town. The BoS has made it a point to ensure that any town meeting is noticed through the email system. There are only a little over 1000 members now signed up to receive town emails.

Susan Glantz of Green Hill Road stated that she thought the Town Manager was a great idea that would take the day-to-day execution away from the First Selectman, and de-politicize these duties. She asked the committee to clarify the salary issue as she didn't totally understand the previous answer about the cost to the town. If the First Selectman would have a change in salary then would there be an increase in cost overall for the Town Manager position? Also, she asked if the other Selectmen receive a salary now.

Mr. Gladstone responded that the First Selectman would likely be paid less, but that pay differential would not cover the cost of the Town Manager. The cost of the Town Manager would be covered through a more efficient operation of town government. The better your management, the more efficient the output. He also confirmed that the other Selectmen were not paid a salary.

Barbara Yeager of River Road thanked the committee for the information which they have already published on the website. She stated that she liked the idea of a sectional vote on the overall Charter changes and thought it would eliminate a positive change being nixed because of one negative change. She also loved the idea of the Extended Town Meeting. She was enthusiastic about the Town Meeting, but concerned about continuity and hiring and firing, although she liked the idea of a leader of the general staff that doesn't change every 2 years.

Ron Hick of Hamilton Dirve stated that the Extended Town Meeting is a great idea. One of the problems Madison has now is that people don't attend the Town Meeting. Most of the items the Selectmen propose are wanted. For instance, the town wants better security in the schools, etc. and residents don't feel the need to go to the meeting to get it approved, because if there isn't a quorum it will pass anyway. He also stated his hope that one day voting will be done online through state statute and thought that if every resident was given a special ID number, they could use that information to cast their vote electronically. He stated that he was a resident of Avon for 20+ years and the Town Manager did a good job of controlling the department heads in this town.

Peter Manko of Lawson Drive stated that the Extended Town Meeting was a great idea. There may be some logistic issue but the openness of the process is a plus. Most of the issue with attendance is content. He also stated that he thought the efficiencies, continuity and the professionalism of the Town Manager position outweighs the concerns. He also addressed prior comment regarding past issues with the Police Chief and said that the Town Manager does not have the same protection that a Police Chief does. He also stated that the town should not be totally consumed with how to terminate this employee. He also liked the idea of politically opening up the role of the First Selectman to a wider array of candidates. He stated that history shows that it is a full-time job and it is hard to take on a First Selectman position if you're in the middle of your career. He therefore strongly encouraged the committee to adopt the Town Manager positon. He also stated that the committee should look into the idea of segmented voting on the Charter revisions as he wasn't sure it was allowed in state statutes.

Joe Maco of Randi Drive stated that residents know the first Tuesday in November is election day, and suggested that the same principle be applied to all Town Meetings. For instance, he stated that Town Meetings can always be held the third Thursday of every third month so that residents will always be aware of a Town Meeting being called. He also stated that the extended voting is nice but the "devil is in the detail". He questioned if the extended voting could be run the same way as absentee balloting and warned that the town should be very careful on how the votes will be counted.

Ms. Stadterman responded that the BoS has less notification of when a Town Meeting is needed for a Special Appropriation. It may not be appropriate or prudent to wait up to three months for the next Town Meeting when there is a time-sensitive matter to vote on.

Herbert Gram of Boston Post Road stated that one concern of his was that residents don't attend Town Meeting when they know an item will pass by default. If people aren't attending meetings now, then the Extended Town Meeting is not the encouragement they need to get them to meetings in the future. He therefore suggested that no item should pass at Town Meeting without a quorum vote. This would mean that the BOS would have to be motivated to get the attendance needed for voting. Mr. Gram provided the committee with a list of his suggestions and noted that he proposed that if a quorum isn't reached, then another meeting will be held and no item shall pass or fail until a vote is counted. Mr. Gram also provided a document to the Committee which calls for

an Ethics Commission to be elected by the residents. He stated his concern about the use of LOCAP Funds. He also requested that these handouts be included to with the minutes of this meeting and asked the committee to ensure that the document he provided at the last Public Hearing was attached to those minutes. A copy of Mr. Gram's documents is attached to these minutes.

Chip Hemberger, Warpas Road – asked that if when an Extended Meeting is called there would be a way for residents to look and see if someone had made a comment during the extended voting time. He also asked for clarification on the language of whether the meeting ran for 4 days, or if the meeting ran for one day and the extended voting ran for 4 days. Regarding the changes to the First Selectman position with the implementation of a Town Manager, he cautioned the committee to consider who would want to take on the First Selectman role if it was part time.

Ms. Heinrich explained that the guidelines for what is allowed or published during the extension was something that would be considered in the Ordinance. She also clarified that the reason this concept is called Extended Town Meeting is because the laws that surround our form of government state that once the meeting is over, the voting is over. That's why the meeting is considered extended.

John Schwartz of Crestview Drive stated that he thought the conversation showed that the Extended Town Meeting concept could be added to the Charter, but that it will be governed by Ordinance to learn what does / doesn't work, but he also suggested that the committee consider holding less Town Meetings. He stated that prior to living in Madison he lived in New Hampshire, and his former town had more meaningful town meetings and therefore greater attendance.

Art Symonds of Bartlett Drive told the committee that he had learned a lot in this discussion. He also stated that he understood that times have changed and many residents can't always make the Town Meetings. He asked the committee if they knew how many of the past Town Meetings had reached quorum, and questioned if other towns were having the same issue with lack of attendance. He also asked the committee what they were attempting to change with regard to special appropriations and voiced strong support for changes that reduced the number of Town Meetings needed.

Ms. Heinrich stated that other towns are struggling with attendance as well.

Ms. Stadterman also stated that the committee has tried to re-write the language about what a Special Appropriation is, and have changed the threshold to call a Town Meeting to reference a percentage of the budget versus a dollar limit. This makes it more dynamic.

Ms. Walker added that another critical detail is that a Special Appropriation has to be unanticipated at the time of the original budget request. If expenditure is known, it needs to be in the budget.

Gus Horvath of Aylesbury Circle stated that the paragraph we have in the Charter that deals with legislative / finance roles is very vague. He stated that he had recently sent via email a copy of the Glastonbury Town Charter for the committee to use as a reference. They are a mayor / Town Council form of government. He also noted the lack of participation in Madison where there are over 13,000 members of Town Meeting but the quorum is only 75 and it is not frequently met. He also stated that he felt the Town Manager position could save money, but that an estimate of the budget change would be helpful. He suggested that perhaps someone from the BoF could put together a sample of the budget increase or savings with the change from full time to part time First Selectman and the addition of the Town Manager salary. He warned the committee to be careful that the other Charter changes don't sink based on this one item.

Thomas Burland of Ridge Road added that he agreed with the idea of allowing public comment before an Extended Town Meeting and also that he hoped the voting would be administered the same way as absentee ballots are and that there is no running tally. He stated his support for a Town Manager and noted that he has spoken to prior First Selectman who have advocated for this position as well. If former First Selectman see a need for a Town Manager then it must be important to consider. However, he stated that to enable the position in the Charter is great but wanted to know what triggered the filling of the position. He questioned why the voters wouldn't have this authority, as opposed to a BOS. He warned that a First Selectman will probably not vote to reduce their salary and go part time.

Janet Niccolini of Madison Ave. stated that Wethersfield has a Town Manager and on their website he has laid out a lot of information, including budget information. She suggested that the committee and other residents might see the value of this position by reviewing the website. She also stated that the salary needed for a well-qualified Town Manager, in her opinion, is roughly between \$150k - \$200k. She stated that perhaps if other residents looked at the work Town Managers are doing in other towns, then they would see the value of this expenditure. Because the town is changing, I don't know if an elected First Selectman for 2 years is in a position to think about and build the future of the town. Madison doesn't have a rising grand list but there are rising expenses every year. The home owners can't continue to shoulder the increase in property taxes every year. The town should still strive to keep its character intact, but there are things the town can look at to determine how we can do things better in the future.

Barbara Davis of Stone Road suggested that the committee only input one line into the Charter to reference the Town Manager position, for instance something that says, "if the town so votes, the BOS shall start the process to hire a Town Manager". She stated that making a drastic change in how the government operates should be separate from the votes on the revision of the Charter. She also applauded the efforts of the Charter Review Committee and thanked them for holding the Public Hearing as well as the documents beforehand for residents to review.

John Dean of Milestone way stated that the residents should be able to vote in the employee to fill this positon. This town has run for many years on an elected basis. If we are going to make this change, it should be on the ballot.

Mr. Gladstone stated that there was a time when the town didn't have a Director of Finance or a Human Resources Manager, but that the town had addressed the need for these positions. The committee was now questioning whether the town should adopt a similar model for the Town Manager.

There being no objections, Chairwoman Joan Walker thanked the public for their attendance and adjourned the meeting at 9:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Rhines
Recording Secretary