



TOWN OF MADISON
CONNECTICUT 06443

MEETING DATE:

Monday, November 8, 2021

MEETING PLACE:

Zoom

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

**Charter Review Commission
Public Hearing Minutes**

Members Present: Joe MacDougald (Chair), Liz Daly, Matt Gordon, Robert O'Connor, David Osterman, Joan Walker

Others Present: Lauren Rhines, Town Coordinator / Risk Manager

The committee convened at approximately 6:00 p.m.

Chairman Joe MacDougald provided a PowerPoint presentation which is attached to these minutes.

Public Comment:

Justin Murphy asked to see a redline copy and the Committee confirmed that it was on the website at www.madisonct.org/CharterReview. He added that the Charter should not prohibit the implementation of a Town Manager. Also, perhaps the Charter could allow for the four-year term of the Board of Selectmen but the implementation could be via Town Meeting. The Committee added that the Charter could be revised sooner than 10 years from now and that an Organizational Manager could be established outside of the Charter. The Charter would only need to change the form of government.

Resident Chuck Venter stated that he was in favor of four-year terms for the Board of Selectmen. He added that the Committee could reach out to Clinton and Cheshire to see how their change to Town Manager has been going. He added that he was in favor of a Town Manager and a desire to have consistency in oversight outside of the political sphere. He also stated that the Town Meeting form of government can be difficult to solicit involvement from the public.

Rob Marzitelli of Robs Mill Circle stated that he recently became involved in town government and he questioned that the Charter should address the Affordable Housing regulations of CGS 8-30g. The Committee felt that the Charter may not be the place to include this information; perhaps the Plan of Conservation and Development or Planning & Zoning regulations. Mr. Marzitelli stated that he thought other towns included some reference and guideline language to 8-30g. The Committee asked him to provide these samples for them to consider.

Gus Horvath of Aylesbury Circle stated that a Town Manager does indicate a different form of government. He added that in Clinton, the Charter was presented in two forms; one to maintain the same form of government and one for the Town Manager so that either way the Charter was updated and moved forward.

Jack Dobson of Horsepond Rd stated that he was interested in an RTM form of government in particular. He also questioned how the final draft would be presented to the public and whether the Committee was moving forward with a Town Manager. The Committee reviewed that the Charter could be presented in several questions so that the existing Charter cannot be moved forward again. Then, the Board could muster another committee to consider the Town Manager position separately.

Selectman Bruce Wilson thanked the Committee for their work. He added that he liked that the Committee was considering more ways to encourage unaffiliated voters. He questioned if the state gave any guidance to towns. The Committee responded that restructuring the nominations process, restructuring committee composition to balance representation from all types of voters, etc. are being considered. He stated that loosening up spending thresholds for Special Town Meetings is not always a good idea; but perhaps a super majority or unanimous vote of Special Appropriations could bypass the triggering of a Town Meeting instead of changing the thresholds of spending requests.

Gus Horvath stated that for many years it has been noted that unaffiliated voters comprise the bulk of registered voters. He stated that they could petition to be on the major boards so that the composition was opened up to more diversity.

There being no objections, the Public Hearing adjourned at 6:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lauren Rhines
Town Coordinator / Risk Manager