



**CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
MARCH 6, 2025
6:30 PM TOWN HALL, SCITICO ROOM**

ROLL CALL

<i>Commissioners</i>	<i>Present</i>
Nikki Ann Price	Yes
Philip R. Dumond	No
Annemarie Nasuta	Yes
Thomas Cremona	Yes
Rob Anderson	Yes
Zachary P. Zannoni	Yes
Lewis S. Fiore	No
Lora Rae Anderson	Yes @ 6:35pm
Ken Nelson Jr.	Yes
Robert Cressotti	Yes
Michael Ludwick	Yes

APPROVAL of MINUTES – February 27, 2025 Regular Meeting

Motion: Commissioner Zannoni

Second: Commissioner Nasuta

Unanimous Consent

SPECIAL GUEST - John Wilcox, Director of Finance

- Town Clerk Bailey reviewed the sample budget timeline and clarified that the Town Council budget increase would be what triggers a referendum.
- Finance Director Wilcox stated that the earlier the town begins the budget process, the more uncertainty we introduce because we won't have firm numbers from departments or the state. The proposed budget timeline is workable. Chair Nelson asked what the drop-dead date would be for the budget finalization in order to produce the tax bills on time. Director Wilcox responded that the tax file is sent to our vendor in early June and bills are mailed by June 20th.
- Commissioner Cressotti stated that it appears that if this were adopted, the budget process would be completed around March 20th. Director Wilcox stated that if no referendum were held the budget would be approved by the Council in the first half of April.

Commissioner L. Anderson left the meeting at 7:00pm and returned 7:20pm.

- Commissioner Ludwick supports the budget process being completed earlier and asked if we would be required to conduct early voting. Clerk Bailey responded yes, four days. Clerk Bailey reiterated that given the budget timeline, within twenty days from the public hearing the Council approves the budget and sets the mill rate. If the percentage increase is greater than 7%, at that same meeting the Council would need to approve the question and authorize the issuance of explanatory text.
- Commissioners discussed that the 7% trigger would be defined as greater than a 7% increase in the general fund expenditure budget.
- Clerk Bailey stated that the Commission voted to include five years of actuals in the budget. Director Wilcox responded that that could be difficult to read due to the budget layout. They discussed revising some of the columns, printing landscape, or putting a separate report in the appendix.
- Director Wilcox asked what would happen if the Council proposed an 8% increase that failed at referendum, how would the cuts be made. Chair Nelson responded that the budget would be set at 7% and would come back to the Council for the Council to make cuts.
- Commissioner Zannoni asked when the last time was the town had a greater than 7% increase in the general fund expenditure budget and Director Wilcox responded that it has not happened in the fifteen years he has been employed by the town. Director Wilcox explained how a resident could have a greater than 7% increase in their taxes due to revaluations even when the general fund expenditure budget did not increase by greater than 7%.
- Commissioner Zannoni asked if Director Wilcox knew of a potential alternative that could better address the issue of capping the amount of tax increase or assessment increase that could be levied against a resident. Director Wilcox responded that Connecticut does not allow towns to have a separate mill rate for residential vs. commercial real estate.

Director Wilcox left the meeting at 7:56pm.

TOWN ATTORNEY CORRESPONDENCE

Chapter V, Section 2 – Planning and Zoning Commission – Town Council to act as Zoning Authority.

- Town Attorney's email stated that those towns who act as the Zoning Authority by state statute are either towns of less the 5,000, have enacted a local charter provision or ordinance prior to 1974, or prior to 1987 were given powers by special act of the legislature.

Unanimous Consent to remove from consideration

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Chapter II, Section 2 – Serving One Elected Position at a Time

- Town Attorney opinion that the town has no statutory authority to prohibit a councilor from running for state office and the council seat is not one of the state's incompatible offices. The town could only prohibit a councilor from running for another elected municipal office.

Consent to remove from consideration - 9 in favor, 1 against – Commissioner Ludwick

Chapter II, Section 3 – Eligibility

NOTE: Move to Chapter III Section 12 – The Town Council – Removal from Office

- Town Attorney opinion
 - Cannot use the term “guilty” as it applies only to criminal guilt
 - Ethics Ordinance is already established and does not and should not be codified in the Charter
 - Ethics Ordinance already prohibits the disclosure of confidential information.
 - Charter already prohibits Councilors from directing staff

Suggested language “Any Town Council member who violates the provisions of this charter or who the Ethics Commission has found to be in violation of the Ethics Ordinance shall be removed from office by a unanimous vote of the Town Council members seated and present, excluding the subject member(s).”

Note: If adopted, Chapter III Section 9 would also need to be changed for consistency.

Unanimous Consent

Chapter II, Section 4 – Vacancies

- Suggested language *“Notwithstanding any provisions of this Charter, including, but not necessarily limited to the six affirmative vote requirement set forth in Chapter III, Section 4, herein, any vacancy in any elective Town office, including the Board of Education, from whatever cause arising, shall be filled by an appointment by the party of the member who had held such office within sixty (60) days of the date of the vacancy for the unexpired portion of the term or until the next biennial municipal election, whichever shall be sooner. However, in the event that such member who held such office was either an unaffiliated voter or the only member of a minor party, the vacancy will be filled by a vote of the remaining members of the applicable elective body.”*
- Commissioner Cremona asked if the first two lines carved out an exception to the six-vote rule. Clerk Bailey stated that she believed that was the intent. Clerk Bailey will ask for confirmation from the attorney.
- Commissioners clarified that they did not intend to give the Board of Education the authority to fill their own vacancies, only that vacancies on the Board of Education were not subject to hindrance from the other party. Clerk Bailey will ask for review from the attorney.

NEW BUSINESS

CHAPTER 6 – Finance and Taxation

- Clerk Bailey stated that the budget timelines will be redlined in the Charter, however, the Commission needed to agree on the verbiage for the referendum requirement. Commissioners agreed to send this to the Town Attorney to write. Commissioners gave consensus for Clerk to enter redlined suggestions for budget timeline dates, referendum date and budget verbiage in the Charter for the Commission’s review.

Unanimous Consent

- Clerk Bailey suggested that Commissioners may want to set a date for the Commission's second public hearing at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to Adjourn, 8:32pm: Commissioner L. Anderson

Second: Commissioner Cressotti

Unanimous consent to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila M. Bailey

Town Clerk

Enfield Charter Revision Commission