

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION  
SPECIAL MEETING  
FEBRUARY 16, 2012**

**ATTENDANCE:** George Estrada, Vice Chair; Florisca Carter, Secretary;  
Rev. William Marshall, Ruben Felipe, Harry Weichsel,  
Cathleen Simpson (5:55 p.m.); Charles Valentino (6:30 p.m.)

**OTHERS:** Atty. Steven Mednick, Atty. Ed Maley, Atty. Mark Anastasi,  
Council Member Angel dePara

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Estrada called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

There were no minutes to discuss at this time.

**EDIT, REVIEW, REDLINE AND DISCUSSION OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE  
CHARTER.**

The Commission reviewed Chapter 8, the Department of Finance on pg. 28. The discussion then moved to the issue of separation between the Board of Education and the City in terms of finances. Atty. Mednick reviewed the details of State of Connecticut statutes. He added that he would work on some language that will help with accountability.

The discussion then moved to the qualifications for the Finance Director. Atty. Mednick suggested that the actual requirements be included in the ordinance, but have the mandate for the qualifications in the Charter. Determining which organization would determine the standards was also discussed. Some of the positions, such as the Tax Collector, are under the jurisdiction of the Civil Service Department. Other positions are covered by collective bargaining agreements.

*Ms. Simpson joined the meeting at 5:55 p.m.*

Mr. Felipe spoke about his experience on search committees for City Department Directors during the past few years. By having high qualifications, it eliminated the chances of cronyism. Atty. Anastasi said that when he advertised for a position, it was a non-competitive position that involved interviews and other qualifications, but not a written exam. Atty. Mednick said that there were a number of instances where the rule of three is used and where the Mayor can appoint a candidate, subject to approval via other criteria. Ms. Simpson pointed out that there

were some instances where criteria eliminated candidates that should not have been eliminated. Atty. Anastasi pointed out that if a position was one that the Mayor appointed and staff serves at the pleasure of the Mayor, membership in the collective bargaining unit appears to be an inconsistency. Atty. Mednick said that he would review the collective bargaining agreements regarding this. Discussion followed the appointed positions and inconsistencies with the appointing authority.

The Committee then reviewed the Department of Public Purchasing section. Atty. Anastasi said that this was another instance of a position that should be a noncompetitive position. Having professional qualifications that are reflective for the position would protect the City.

Atty. Mednick asked if the Board of Public Purchases was functioning. Atty. Anastasi said that the Board meets regularly to approve the scoring of responses to RFPs, review of RFQs and procurement purchases. He said that the role of the Board of Public Purchases is outlined in the City Ordinances.

*Mr. Valentino joined the meeting at 6:30 p.m.*

The discussion then moved to the title for those who were the head of boards. It was determined that the head of the Board should have the title of "Chair" rather than the "President".

The budget process is very important to the city. Atty. Anastasi said that he would be very happy if the City could adopt the budget after the State sets their budgets. It was pointed out that the tax bills must be done by July 1st. This should be discussed with the Tax Collector and the Finance Director.

Atty. Anastasi said that the Department heads would be submitting their suggestions to the CAO.

**\*\* MR. FELIPE MOVED TO SEND A WRITTEN REQUEST TO MR. NUNN, THE CAO, ABOUT THE POTENTIAL CHANGE ON THE DATES FOR SETTING THE BUDGET.**

**\*\* MR. VALENTINO SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

It was determined that Ms. Simpson would authorize this email.

Sections 8, 9 & 10 in the Finance Department section, specifically relating to the Enterprise Funds, were the next portions reviewed.

**\*\* MR. VALENTINO MOVED TO REQUEST THE BOND COUNSEL TO REVIEW CHAPTER 10 TO CHANNEL THE INFORMATION BACK TO THE CAO.**

**\*\* REV. MARSHALL SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

There was a question about the Board of Appraisal and Damages. Atty. Anastasi stated that those positions had not been filled for sometime. He said that there was an attempt about a year ago to address this issue by ordinance. Atty. Mednick suggested that having this be mandated by Charter and having the ordinances set the requirements for specific technical skills would be a good move. Discussion followed. It was suggested that a sunset clause might be used and to moved this Code to Ordinances. Atty. Mednick will research how this type of function is done in other towns.

The question arose as to whether Section 11 regarding sewer services to neighboring communities, is needed in the Charter. Atty. Maley said that while the language was clearly from the Special Act, and while the City probably does not need it; it would be wise to leave it in the Charter. Atty. Maley pointed out that the Connecticut General Statutes requires all the municipalities that are working together to have their respective legislative bodies give approval.

The Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) is still a local Board. Atty. Anastasi stated that this Authority had been created by consent decree.

The discussion then moved to a way to communicate the need to have the secondary issues that need further consideration to the Council and others.

### **SCHEDULING OF FUTURE MEETINGS.**

Atty. Mednick explained that the meeting on February 21st will start at 7 p.m. On the February 28th, there will be a department heads meeting. The meeting on March 1st will be with the Council members. Fact finding hearings will be on March 6th, 10th, 13th and the 15th. Atty. Mednick listed the names of the people who would be presenting on the governance of Boards of education. There will also be discussion with residents. The hope is to have a variety of perspectives.

It was pointed out that it might be important to have these at other locations. There will be strong public interest when education is discussed, which will require a larger venue. Mr. Felipe said that he would locate different venues for the meetings. Atty. Anastasi said that frequently the public perceives that these are public hearings when the meetings are held off site. Discussion about how to structure these presentational meetings followed. The schedule will be formalized next Tuesday.

The discussion then moved to whether the Committee should have a short public comment section associated with the topic of the evening. Atty. Anastasi said that it would be critical to have this legally noticed. Concerns were expressed about the tight time frame and the fact that there were more public hearings than required. Discussion followed.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* MR. FELIPE MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* MR. WEICHSEL SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services