

TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS/MICROSOFT "TEAMS"

740 MAIN STREET

EAST HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

MAY 17, 2022

PUBLIC HEARING- Charter Revision Commission Report of Recommendations

PRESENT Chair Richard F. Kehoe, Vice Chair Donald Bell, Jr., Majority Leader Sebrina Wilson, Minority Leader John Morrison, Councillors Angie Parkinson (via Teams), Awet Tsegai, Thomas Rup and Harry O. Amadasun, Jr.

ABSENT Travis Simpson

The following is a copy of the legal notice published in the East Hartford Gazette on May 5, 2022 and May 12, 2022

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LEGAL NOTICE

Public notice is hereby given that the Town of East Hartford Charter Revision Commission will hold a public hearing on May 17, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Council Chambers, 740 Main Street, East Hartford, Connecticut and via Microsoft Teams to hear public comment on the Charter Revision Commission Report of Recommendations as provided to the Town Council Chair Richard Kehoe in a memo from Town Clerk Robert Pasek dated April 27, 2022.

Any person(s) wishing to express an opinion on this matter may do so at this meeting.

Jason Marshall- Town Council Clerk

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Chair Kehoe called the public hearing to order at 7:05 pm.

The Chair stated that the purpose of this meeting is to hear public comment on the Charter Revision Commission's recommendations for changes to the Town Charter. The Charter was originally adopted in 1968. Since then, there have been two previous Charter Revision Commissions. Last year, the Council recommended a Commission be formed to evaluate the Charter to propose changes to allow for improved governance. The Charter provides an overview of the powers and duties of the Mayor, Council, and town departments, referendum procedure, as well as ordinance setting procedure among other things. The Council established the Charter Revision Commission and appointed the nine members in July, 2021.

Councillor Bell, Chair of the Charter Revision Commission, spoke briefly on the Commission's development of recommendations through a series of meetings and on April 26<sup>th</sup>, the Commission unanimously approved a report of recommendations provided to the Council. The Councillor acknowledged the efforts of the Commissioners and their dedication and service to the town. Three main issues for consideration were given to the Commission by the Council: whether there should be a "professional person" assisting the Mayor with day to day town operations; whether there should be additional flexibility within town departments without revisions to the Charter; and whether there should be additional job security protections for town directors. A number of additional issues were considered including the countersigning of checks to considering term changes for elected offices.

The substantive recommendations made by the Commission include the appointment of a Chief Administrative Officer as an additional layer of support to the Mayor, a recommendation for flexibility

with Council approval for the administration to merge or shift department responsibilities as necessary, term of office remains at two years for Mayor and Town Council, and the removal of the minimum voter turnout of 20% for referendum questions to be considered valid.

After this hearing, the Council will vote to send their recommendations to the Commission for approval, and then the Commission and Council are required by statute to confer before the Commission finalizes its report. The public will have the opportunity to vote on the proposed changes during the November election.

The Chair then opened up the meeting for public comment. No one came forward to speak.

#### ADJOURNMENT

MOTION        By John Morrison  
                     seconded by Don Bell  
                     to adjourn at 7:15 p.m.  
                     Motion carried 8/0

Attest \_\_\_\_\_  
                     Jason Marshall  
                     Town Council Clerk