



CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

MEETING

Tuesday, February 22, 2005

The meeting for the Charter Revision Commission was called to order by Paul DiMauro at 7:04 P.M. in Room 104 at Shelton City Hall.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Attending: Paul DiMauro
Michael Davis
Irene Smith
Gary Cahill
Joe Konner
Ann Dougherty
Steve Bellis

Absent: Bob Lally
Sue Coyle
Charles Carroll

There was no one from the public that wanted to address the Commission. Chairman DiMauro concluded the public portion at 7:04 pm.

Gary Cahill motioned to accept the minutes from January 18 through February 8. Irene Smith second the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Representatives from the CARE Group were the invited guests at this evening's meeting.

Paul DiMauro: Now we can meet with CARE. You could come up, sit, bring more chairs to the table, whatever way you're comfortable. I'd like you to introduce yourselves, start with you Irving and then counter clockwise. We're going to have you sign in anyway so that she's got the correct spelling and information.

Irving Steiner: I'm Irving Steiner and I live at 23 Partridge Lane.

Randy York: Randy York, 10 Longview Road.

Walter Sofian: Walter Sofian, 7 Andrew Drive in Shelton.

Paul DiMauro: There's a lot of ground to cover and I'd like to try and go through it. In many instances, and I think that you're all aware of many of the changes have already been made in the Charter and are redlined on our copy.

Walter Sofian: Yes Mr. Chairman, I am aware

Paul DiMauro: Good, so that we don't have to waste a lot of time with those issues.

Walter Sofian: And there's a lot of issues where we're talking about grammar and I don't want to get

Paul DiMauro: And that's fine, that's already being taken care of. We have one more gentleman coming in, please introduce yourself.

Richard Widomski: Richard Widomski

Paul DiMauro: So I'm going to go through our Charter and then tell you what the changes are. Alright, section 2, we've already handled the Registrar of Voters changed from the Mayor, that's been done. Did we clarify the amount of days that we need? This is 2.2. The first place you had a comment was to change the Mayor to the Registrar of Voters and we had already done that the last time and we already had it incorporated that in our changes, just so you're aware of it.

Walter Sofian: But that's not our recommendation 1.

Randy York: No

Paul DiMauro: Where's your recommendation 1? You had one before that?

Walter Sofian: Oh yeah.

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: I'm going for specific then we can go back to the first sheet. 2.2 we've already done that. You've got 31 days, I don't know where you got that. We have a response from Jack Bashar who is the Registrar of Voters who has comments as it concerns to the statutes, and he gave us the amount of days, so we will have to incorporate that. We're just going to follow State Statute rules from Jack Bashar.

Randy York: So what was it, how many?

Paul DiMauro: I'm not even sure how many days it is

Joe Konner: I think 15 days

Walter Sofian: Ok, because the current Charter says 7 and we opened it up to 31. The intent was to open it up

Paul DiMauro: But we have to follow State Statute

Walter Sofian: Ok

Paul DiMauro: The Registrar of Voters has given us direction is what State Statute is on that so we're going to incorporate his comments into it to follow State Statute.

Walter Sofian: So it's going to be 15 days.

Ann Dougherty: Not more than 15 and less than 5

Michael Davis: So that means you would prefer the 15?

Paul DiMauro: We really have to follow State Statute.

Inaudible

Michael Davis: Paul, these comments they have in front, are you just going to engage when we come across them

Walter Sofian: Those are the first recommendations that we made and they are key recommendations that tend to cross a lot of the other, so like it keeps coming up about the number of terms

Paul DiMauro: But it has to be done by section

Michael Davis: So would you, the first time these things come up that relates to this, would you bring it up? As soon as one of these items come up on here, like here you're talking about getting rid of the alternates, as soon as we see an alternate

Walter Sofian: But why not address recommendation 1 first because that's our recommendation 1

Paul DiMauro: Because we're following it by Chapter 1, Chapter 2. We don't really want to bounce around.

Walter Sofian: But I don't want to miss

Michael Davis: Oh no, we're all looking at it, but I think that we should all engage that is we see something on here speak out.

Paul DiMauro: Next one I see that we have nothing on 2.3?

Walter Sofian: Yes

Paul DiMauro: Such ordinances consistently discharge, that's a matter of semantics. I don't really believe not inconsistent is any different than

Walter Sofian: Well it's a double negative, but it's not important

Paul DiMauro: I'm going to leave that to the grammar expert

Irene Smith: We decided that it was acceptable

Ann Dougherty: We did?

Paul DiMauro: We did.

Walter Sofian: You're going to leave it as not inconsistent?

Paul DiMauro: Not inconsistent

Ann Dougherty: I asked a couple of lawyers about that

Paul DiMauro: And what did they say?

Ann Dougherty: Everyone has a different view

Gary Cahill: There could be a difference, I mean there are court cases that actually has come up

Paul DiMauro: So what's the purpose

Gary Cahill: In this one sentence, it doesn't make a difference

Ann Dougherty: It appears two or three times later on

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: We just thought that (inaudible)

Randy York: I think not inconsistent can open up a few doors (inaudible)

Michael Davis: Why don't we ask legal what they would suggest?

Walter Sofian: That's fine. We put some of these things in, in the beginning

Paul DiMauro: I don't see changing it

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: Is that it for that page? Speak up is I haven't covered something

Walter Sofian: 2.4.1 is the first time that the first set of recommendations come in. 2.4.1. where you're talking about Board of Education, Library Board and P&Z based on the rationale, you could see that we're basically going back to recommendation 1 which talks to the number of what terms should be and not having alternates and no staggered terms and that kind of thing. That's the heart of the thing, and term limits of which that we decided it wasn't upon us to determine for the Commission what those term limits might be if you decided to go that way,

Paul DiMauro: I feel strongly about having alternates, especially on Planning and Zoning because it's proven to be very worthwhile endeavor in that people sitting as alternates get to understand the ins and outs, then hopefully at some point they get elected to the full position and they've got at least some experience going with them, and quite honestly I wasn't there at that meeting with Planning and Zoning, did they endorse the idea of having alternates?

Joe Konner: Most definitely

Walter Sofian: P&Z wanted everything the way they wanted it

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: they wanted everything the way they wanted it, except they wanted four year terms instead of two

Paul DiMauro: Well we're not changing one term for the other

Walter Sofian: My point on the alternates, our feeling was that we felt that the attendance and the participation would be better if everybody was a full member. A lot of people felt that they didn't have to come to meetings because the alternate is always there, that's one. The other thing is what you're saying is not true for our Board of Aldermen. We don't have alternates there. The argument that you're giving about a training period, learning how its done

Paul DiMauro: It's a legislative position

Randy York: Some of the Planning and Zoning Commissioners are elected correct?

Paul DiMauro: Most definitely they are

Randy York: And the alternates are elected?

Paul DiMauro: They are elected as alternates

Gary Cahill: The whole board is elected

Paul DiMauro: The whole board is elected, and I'll tell you it's worked well for the last ten years or more. The one thing that we haven't heard of is how the alternates works or feel about it (inaudible)

Walter Sofian: It's secondary to the concept of term limits

Paul DiMauro: And I understand that, and remember the ZBA by State Statute has alternates built into their statute

Walter Sofian: Do they, by State Statute?

Paul DiMauro: By State Statute. We didn't put it in there. We tried to change their terms and we couldn't because of State Statute

Gary Cahill: I think a lot of purpose of the alternates is when you have people in town especially in P&Z and people want to do building, you may have someone that may have a conflict and ask to step down, I mean if you have a general board, you want to increase it to 9, what happens if 3 democrats have to step down because they know the builder (inaudible)

Randy York: Historically we're looking at in reality what's happened in our P&Z, in reality we've had many instances where 1 or more of the Commissioners have had to recuse themselves repeatedly because of conflict of interest and as citizens what we fell as maybe an awful lot of involvement by alternates as opposed to regular committee members

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: The problem, Mr., Chairman is that the full board members aren't there at every meeting and there are numerous absentees at P&Z

Randy York: If you look at the planners codes of ethics, anyone that misses more than 20% of the meetings should be forced to resign. But our understanding is that that has to come from within the board itself

Gary Cahill: But they're elected

Paul DiMauro: Not on an elected position

Randy York: I think that we as citizens have looked at the different commissions and especially P&Z and realized that we see somewhat of a problem with absenteeism

Paul DiMauro: And I agree with you, I think you have to make that thing known. It's that simple, we can't solve every problem in the Charter

Joe Konner: If your problem is with absenteeism on the Board, then wouldn't it strengthen the position by having alternates to compensate for the absenteeism?

Walter Sofian: Our thinking was to make the full commissioners that get elected to that position to step up to the plate and do their job

Joe Konner: They all are now

Walter Sofian: I'm not talking about all elected, I'm talking about stepping up to the plate

Joe Konner: But if you eliminate the alternates, how does that strengthen that position?

Randy York: Well we're not, we're looking at all the boards and commissions, and we're trying to simplify the whole system and really make it easier for all of us to understand because it's really confusing.

Irving Steiner: If you go from 6 to 8 members without alternates you increase the size of the majority required to pass an approval. Which is one objective.

Paul DiMauro: Is that true or if there are only 6 there what happens?

Michael Davis: Well then Robert's Rule says

Walter Sofian: You need 5 votes to pass it

Paul DiMauro: Always? 8 member board (inaudible) a quorum is 5, what would you (Inaudible)

Walter Sofian: that's another change we like to see changed Mr. Chairman, is that a quorum for votes should be the full board, majority of the full board not the majority of those attending, where you get 3-2

Paul DiMauro: That's what I'm afraid of

Irving Steiner: (inaudible) on Split Rock was a 3-2 vote for approval

Paul DiMauro: And that approved?

Irving Steiner: It approved

(Inaudible)

Gary Cahill: Is that because they had 5 members in attendance?

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: So normally, if you said it the way before, they would need at least 4 votes, that Split Rock thing would not have passed. Isn't that a better approach saying that they must have a majority of the number of members of the P&Z to pass any action?

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: the Board of Aldermen had that in many important issues

Walter Sofian: That's what we're saying

Paul DiMauro: I'm saying put aside the 8, I'm saying that if the membership is 6, whether an alternate is sitting there or not, isn't the right change to make that any action required the majority of the full board (inaudible) so we said it takes 4 to pass a vote, then that solves the problem. I would rather see that and still keep the two alternates

Irving Steiner: That would definitely be an improvement

Paul DiMauro: It's going to stop the issue that happened before, I personally think that it's wrong if you have 6 and then you

Michael Davis: I'd like to speak for a second, because I'd like to tell you what at least one member of this committee wants. I want 12 Aldermen, I want 8 members of the Board of Apportionment and Taxation, I want 12 on the Board of Ed, and I want 9 on Planning & Zoning.

Walter Sofian: That's an increase of Aldermen?

Michael Davis: Yes

Walter Sofian: We're not against that

Michael Davis: So I'm just telling you what I'm for. I'm only 1 person on this group. But by clearly that the population is growing in this community would give it some more credibility, get some new bodies in there and hopefully something that the Charter would totally pass, because people would see that hey this change is happening, so we could keep talking and we should, but I just want to be clear that what's written on my sheet

Walter Sofian: In the direction that you're coming, one of the recommendations is that there should be no commission or board that's less than 5, for instance, the Ethics panel is 3 it should be 5 and no less than 5. 9 is fine, 10 is fine, 12 is fine for the Board of Aldermen

Michael Davis: Again I'm just one member on a very large committee here, but I don't know exactly where you're coming from but I thought it would be nice for your to hear what one of the members on this committee is going in that direction

Joe Konner: Mike, let me follow up on your question if I would ok? With those numbers that you're suggesting, what would your position be on term limits?

Michael Davis: I wouldn't have term limits. And again if you went term limits then maybe I would debate. This is under the premise of no term limits

Joe Konner: Ok, that was my question

Michael Davis: But that's a very good question

Walter Sofian: As long as you've let that cat out of the bag and began to talk about the term limits, that's a very important issue, particularly for a land use board. Ok, when we were out there, when the Charter Revision Commission reformed again to make this latest try, we were out at the time petitioning for term limits, to get the CRC to come in work, I don't know the legality but somehow we had to go through the CRC to request term limits and another thing was sale of land less than 5 acres, and the thinking, we had gotten 2200 signatures and we quit when the CRC formed, we could have gotten another 2200, we could have gotten at least another 4 or 5000 signatures. So what I'm saying to you is if you're not talking term limits across the board like we are, at least for land use boards I think you have to consider it because

Michael Davis: I think that everything is going to be considered

Walter Sofian: But let me finish, the land use boards in particular, when you have people on the land use board for 26 years and what have you, you develop a certain familiarity with the developers, a certain closeness, a certain comfort level with the developer and that's not a good situation. That's a situation for a lot of the stud that we have going on in the town in terms of development that may be suspect. I mean, to us, I'm just saying that you can go with which way you want, but tem limits are a very important issue to us, particularly on land use boards

Randy York: I do think that you would be supported by the people on tem limits. They are very in favor of it.

Walter Sofian: But like I said, you could make term limits, so that someone that gets in knows that there is a finite end to the service, and is not there 26 years. But we do have someone that's been on there for 26 years.

Michael Davis: It's a large committee, and maybe there will be someone else that will have a focus on term limits. I was focusing on increasing and expanding the population of these groups, bringing in additional bodies in with new perspectives, new intelligence and the demand on the City has grown over the past few years, the amount of issues, the speed of the City has grown and let's throw more intellect, let's throw more bodies

Walter Sofian: You're only throwing in one more body on the P&Z. You said 9.

Michael Davis: Planning & Zoning is 6 right now.

Inaudible

Michael Davis: I've got three more bodies, plus

Inaudible

Michael Davis: You would have 9 members, and still 2 alternates

Walter Sofian: I got you now.

Inaudible

Michael Davis: No, we'd still have the alternates on top of it.

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: I need to ask, how does the CRC about the staggered term business because there again, we felt that it was unnecessary that people could come in, certainly the Board of Aldermen which is the most important post in the town, they don't come in staggered. They come in for a term of two years.

Paul DiMauro: The thought process of course there, and what we've always been told was that you always have someone sitting there (inaudible). It's not easy, I'll admit for a Mayor to come in, Michael is here with a whole new Board of Aldermen. I mean it's tough to get a whole new board (inaudible)

Irving Steiner: If I may, one point for the elimination of the alternates, the alternate is obligated to be there if they can, and if they come and they can't get involved, whereas if they are not alternates and they are there as full members it increases the number for the voting, it ensures a bigger spread of intellect in evaluating the application, because the 2 alternates may then vote, and I think that difference right there is worth considering elimination of the alternate. Their presence is required, they're asked to be there and yet they are not really totally involved in the process. Whereas if they are totally involved in the process, it also increases the majority, the number that is

required to pass legislation. And this waters down or decreases the possibility of influence that could be occurring on a smaller group, it's more difficult with a larger group of commissioners to sway their vote.

Paul DiMauro: And that's hard to argue with, and certainly to say that 3 people could make a decision that may not be, and you know what, I don't know if anyone in the room here knows who the 3 were that voted on it (inaudible), that seems to me that a decision of that nature probably should have required

Walter Sofian: Well Scinto's Tower was also decided

Paul DiMauro: Oh please, don't even talk about that

Walter Sofian: But that was also 3-2.

Irving Steiner: The two Democrats voted against it

Walter Sofian: They were both alternates, weren't they?

Inaudible

Irving Steiner: and 3 Republicans voted for it

Walter Sofian: But those are the 2 major, major, major programs in the City that have recently been accepted by P&Z

Paul DiMauro: The bigger problem that we haven't heard, is the way we put P&Z members up for election or the Board of Education. I mean they're basically up there once they've been nominated by the respective Town Committee. They only put up the number that they can fill, so maybe one person can swing one way or the other. I mean that's a big problem. That's minority representation.

Walter Sofian: In the last election, Mr. Chairman, they had two names come to town and guess who lost? The two new names. They got the lowest vote count and the P&Z, same old, same old came in.

Richard Widomski: Don't you think that by eliminating staggered terms that would solve the problem (inaudible), in the case of staggered terms

Paul DiMauro: That's a very good point too

Richard Widomski: You eliminate that aspect of it, with 8 or 9 members you automatically eliminate, sitting here right now, it seems that we solved two problems just by the simple change to the Charter to 8 or 9 members and you eliminated 3 problems in 15 minutes.

Paul DiMauro: (inaudible), the Chairman of the Board of Education used to run

Richard Widomski: (inaudible) talking P&Z

Paul DiMauro: I know, but it's the same thing. I'm sorry you could say P&Z all you want, I'm going to tell you there's a parallel between P&Z

Audience: You're right

Paul DiMauro: You talk about one, you talk about the other, it's the same (inaudible)

Walter Sofian: So staggered terms, you're still considering it?

Paul DiMauro: I don't know. To be quite honest with you I never thought about it, you got me thinking about it as far as staggered terms, I don't like term limitations, I think it's undemocratic and against everything that we, in fact term limitation is the vote, I really do. I mean where are you going to start and where are you going to stop it. Should the Mayor be able to run

Walter Sofian: I mean we put them in across the board but I'm saying as far as, I personally am concerned ok, to me it's very important that land use boards

Paul DiMauro: Inland Wetlands and P&Z is what you're talking about?

Walter Sofian: That's correct, those are our land use boards and to me those are very important. Board of Education doesn't make a difference

Steve Bellis: What's the rationale, I'm sorry I was a little late

Walter Sofian: Of term limits?

Steve Bellis: For term limits yes.

Walter Sofian: So you don't have people there for 26 years sitting on a land use board becoming very familiar over decades with developers, and you also give new people a chance to come in and it could 4 or 5 terms

Paul DiMauro: Someone could be very close with a developer for 20 years and then go on a board, you can't prevent that, I mean that just happens

Inaudible

Steve Bellis: I still don't understand the need for the term limits because of the perception of the situation, the voting public

Irving Steiner: Well there has been a ground swell for term limits because the two petitions have shown that

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: Recognition goes a long way, if you're on the ballot and that's part of the problem, you're on the ballot you're almost guaranteed constant reelection

Steve Bellis: But isn't the argument also that if you have a good person who's very knowledgeable and doing very well for the town that by kicking him off, you're not really helping the town

Walter Sofian: There are lots of people in this town that would love to have the chance to

Inaudible

Steve Bellis: I've been 20 years and I remember scrounging for candidates for many many elections

Paul DiMauro: 30 years ago it was easy to get candidates for Board of Aldermen, Joe you were there, it was easy. Guess what? It's not easy, it really is not easy to get qualified people to come in and run for these positions and it gets more and more difficult as we get

Rich Widomski: That's not true

Paul DiMauro: Why is it not true?

Richard Widomski: Let me tell you why, you've been around long enough to know how the parties choose their candidates. Now you know that when the Town Committee (inaudible)

Richard Widomski: The party does not allow new people in that we're talking about right now, because wait, the party wants to win, and you know that you're going to have 4 and 2. The 4 people that they want and the 2 on the other ticket get the two highest votes

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: Wait a second, we're being redundant. We always said that staggered terms would be the thing to take care of that particular problem. We were talking about term limitations, that has nothing to do with term limitations

Richard Widomski: this does

Paul DiMauro: How could it?

Richard Widomski: because you put into this year after year, they'd be staying for and continuously put them on the ticket

Inaudible

Richard Widomski: (inaudible) it's a good idea to get a turnover. I mean industry does it every time. We need a turnover, we can't have the same people stay on it year after year because of the familiarity and you know it happens and gets a lackadaisical sort of attitude on the board

Inaudible

Joe Konner: The point that he made before was that maybe the way that we select the people that run for these boards should be examined and looked more than anything else, rather than the other way. You change the selection process where you'd have to put up 6 instead of 4, maybe that should be looked at

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: That doesn't get handled in the Charter

Randy York: I want to ask a problem. Does this commission have the authority to put term limits

Paul DiMauro: Of course

Joe Konner: We could recommend it to the Board of Aldermen

Paul DiMauro: We could recommend it to the Aldermen

Randy York: But if you could recommend it, so obviously that's a right that's given to citizens, it's not anti-democratic. Obviously if we recommend to have term limits in here, it's not anti-democratic to do it or we wouldn't be allowed to do it. That's number 1 and number 2 we could sit here and talk till the cows come home about what a great job our commissioners are doing regardless of what board s they sit on, but that's a judgment call. I may agree with it and you may not agree with me on whether or nor someone is doing a good job or not. I'm going to give you the citizen's perspective on it because that's what is being brought to the table, we're coming to the table to try and let you know what the buzz around town is and what's going on in the community. I'm going to tell you point blank, there aren't too many people out there that think that P&Z is doing a great job.

Steve Bellis: A lot of them don't understand what P&Z does because they're not familiar with how to submit a sub-division

Randy York: So then they're not qualified to make a, to vote for that person

Inaudible

Randy York: (inaudible) then we can make an impact by putting term limits in here. Because on one hand you're saying that people are voting for these people, it should be taken care of at the polls and on the other hand you're saying well they don't agree with the job because they don't understand what it means to be a commissioner. I think the thing is that this a new thing, it's controversial, it's obviously not going to fly too well but I think it's what the people want and I think this board, we're just giving it to you to chew on

Paul DiMauro: We are going to do that, but I will tell you that I think that the idea of no staggered terms probably has a larger impact on it, increasing the number has a very positive impact, I don't know about term limitations, I think that the issue you are missing is what I said before that the Town Committee nomination, if there is a way to circumvent that and get around that, that would be great. It would help a lot and probably what's that the Plan and Development District or whatever, is probably the biggest downfall or biggest controversial and gave the most power to P&Z without zoning. Remember, years ago we never had a problem. We had Kozack, and others that were there for years and years, nobody ever said oh those guys have been on there too long. They've been too cozy with the developers. People didn't start to talk about that until we got Planning, PPD whatever it is, which basically says throw away the zoning book we'll tell you what you could do. You could build on that land, you could do it this way

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: That's the root of the problem

Randy York: Nobody said term limits was the root of the problem, what we're simply saying is it might be a solution to what we have going on right now and for the next ten years as long as the new Charter you know flies, let's try and

Paul DiMauro: With all due respect, they all come out of the same mold. With all due respect, all are elected officials. They come out of the same groups so to think you're going to switch me with him or with him, we're all talking together as the same ok, if you're within that group, so that really doesn't solve the problem, what solves the problem is looking at the items behind it that have a written clause in it, we give too much power, I think, to P&Z and I work for a developer, not in Shelton, we haven't done development in Shelton in 30 years and that's commercial, but we did it all by zoning. There was no PPD when we got our approvals, we did it all by the book, by zoning. This is how many units you could put in by zoning, that's what we put in. That's the way it should be. That particular case (inaudible)

Paul DiMauro: And I'll probably take a lot of flack for saying what I said about that. But I'll tell you that's the root of the problem.

Walter Sofian: Split Rock is being challenged by a private party

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: I thought that the Kelly Mart was instituting a suit against them.

Michael Davis: Let me ask a question, do I hear you correctly that if you gave the public a choice of saying the committee size the way it is now stays, but they may be able to only lift 3 terms or maybe 4 terms, they'd be more happy with that than expanding the population of these committees right away. So I have a choice right away, I can get 25%, or I can wait 2 years, 4 years, 8 years, 12 years, I'd be happier with that.

Walter Sofian: Our committee hasn't had a chance to chew on it

Inaudible

Ann Dougherty: But Paul, I think this Charter Revision Commission needs to be objective and open-minded

Paul DiMauro: We are

Ann Dougherty: And maybe take some new ideas that have not been changed in the past, send it to the full Board of Aldermen. They're the representatives of the people. We're an appointed commission.

Paul DiMauro: Mike's got me convinced, thinking about staggered terms. I think staggered terms may have worked in reverse for us because you get less people out there each time, and making more of them run might be a better answer to it.

Steve Bellis: The other thing

Inaudible

Steve Bellis: If I could say this, I think it's always a good idea when new people come to town to get involved in the political process either on Democratic or Republican parties and then get selected by those groups and get put on boards and commissions because then these people have some familiarity, to get to see what they're like, so I don't understand why these new groups or people that have concerns either with zoning or land use boards don't become more involved. I know the Democratic Party and the Republican Party are always looking for people. I mean they're always looking for new people that are energetic and that want to get involved. That's the way it used to work and that's the way it should work.

Paul DiMauro: Mike, do you allow visitors to come to your meeting?

Michael Pawcota: Yes

Paul DiMauro: So they could come and start attending your meetings and introduce themselves, get to know people, they don't have to be members of the Democratic/Republic party to become involved with that parties activities and get to know the people that are involved. So if somebody wants to run for an office and they get to know everybody and everybody knows who they are, they could.

Inaudible

Irving Steiner: If I may, I think Paul you hit the nail on the head and it's the old faces that are appearing on the slate and somehow the CRC has got to make some change to the Charter to allow and encourage new faces to be candidates. Now, we suggested term limits, because that would force them definitely but, if there is another option, that would in effect force the political Town Committees to bring in new faces, I don't know whether that's possible. But it should be considered.

Michael Davis: Can I ask a question then, I said it about a half an hour ago, I asked again, is the CARE Group in favor of the population expansion as a way of getting new blood or new faces onto these committees or are you drawing a line in the sand saying I want the term limits and I'm going to tell the public that I'm going to get new blood for you but it's going to take 4 years, it's going to take 8 years, it's going to take 12 years. Is it a or b?

Walter Sofian: I'm not sure. We like the idea a, we need to mull over b.

Inaudible

Richard Widomski: (inaudible) most people like term limits

Michael Davis: I think I'm addressing the issue. The issue is that they want new blood, the City is growing, the complexity of the City has grown. We like more intellect, I'm not saying everyone on these commissions are doing a really good job but why not add more intellect, why not add more force power to help us out?

Irving Steiner: The boat cannot be swayed as easily with a larger number of

Randy York: And we're getting at the intent of what this is all about (inaudible)

Paul DiMauro: So we could move on?

Walter Sofian: Were you looking at, when you were doing section 2.4.1. were you looking at recommendation 4 or 4a?

Inaudible

Irving Steiner: 4a was the one that I sent you, that I emailed to you, yes I got that

Walter Sofian: Basically the difference is that minority representation in the wards

Inaudibility

Randy York: It had red on it

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: Do you want me to give you mine?

Paul DiMauro: No I have mine.

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: So 4a is

Walter Sofian: Everything is the way you had it we just discussed, it just what's in red has been added for

Inaudible

Irving Steiner: The 4a states that each ward must be represented by a minimum of 1 commissioner, who resides in the ward that he represents, regardless of political affiliation. The second commissioner from each ward must be selected primarily to make up minority representation required and secondly by a vote count.

Paul DiMauro: You're saying this has happened Planning & Zoning elected by ward?

Irving Steiner: Correct

Paul DiMauro: Similar to the Board of Aldermen

Irving Steiner: The rationale is that the City of Shelton, you have ward and minority representation, board issues and decisions are geographically centered. We have in many situations where most of the Planning & Zoning Commissioners are located in the area of downtown except the 2 or 3 and none in the third ward. Most of the activity that has created WeR1 is in the third ward. It's a situation where is a ward, where a Planning & Zoning Commissioner lives in a ward that's being impacted by an application he is more inclined to really get into it and observe it. I know that this occurs with the Board of Aldermen, for instance the Cranberry application was not challenged at all putting dense housing in a totally R1 area, whereas the Toll Farm, that hit close to the Chairman of the Board of Aldermen, and he did make an effort

and stood up in front of the Planning & Zoning Commission and stated who he was and said that this would not be allowed. This is what we call it's closer to home. I could not yet

END SIDE 1 – TAPE 1

Inaudible

Irving Steiner: There was no involvement of the part of my ward people on the Cranberry, even though it was cluster housing in the middle of an R1 (inaudible) I feel that a Planning & Zoning, if it was ward sensible would be much more effective in dealing with the various applications.

Paul DiMauro: We'll think about it

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: 2.6. there's nothing major there. Recommendation 6, section 2.9. If the Charter fails at regular election, the Board of Aldermen shall automatically reconvene a CRC within 60 days of the time in which the Charter Revision failed for the purpose of general Charter Revision to be voted on at the next general election.

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: This way Mr. Chairman you can kind of like have something to do for the next 40 years

Paul DiMauro: this Charter has gone down for all the wrong reasons, both times. I'm not doing it again, and I'll tell you something when there are issues, if term limits gets to the ballot, it will get to the ballot as a separate question, and you can go out and campaign for it, people won't want to go out and campaign for it, it's not going to get muddied up in the waters here. Not in my opinion. We're not going to let the Charter go down because one group, and you may represent 5000 people, I don't know. The other guy tells me he represents 6, so who am I supposed to know who's coming back with the input? Sorry, but I've been around this a long time

Walter Sofian: Is there a mechanism for that? There's a mechanism for the Charter Revision coming in one way and still allowing a referendum?

Paul DiMauro: Not a referendum

Walter Sofian: But you said put it to the voters.

Paul DiMauro: What would happen would be this, you say here are the Charter with the changes, as a separate question you would say vote on

Walter Sofian: So let me ask you, that would be allowed?

Joe Konner: Sure

Paul DiMauro: Of course, that's why I said

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: Some people think that's the right thing. You may convince me about term limits, we may be wrong.

Inaudible

Irving Steiner: No, we attempted to put this to the voters as a public initiative, but the Charter Revision Commission reactivated

Paul DiMauro: You don't need to though, you don't need to. We can separate 1 or 2 separate questions for those issues that we all feel strongly or were divided on the board, or we're in conflict with the Board of Aldermen

Joe Konner: Paul, let me just clarify something, that could be presented as Charter issues, people are going to vote on Charter Revision and you could separate the Charter out into different points

Paul DiMauro: Absolutely, yes. The overall Charter and then there's in addition to that

Joe Konner: No. Yes, you could vote on 95% of the Charter on one question, and you could separate 1 question out on the Charter to another question.

Paul DiMauro: Absolutely

Michael Davis: But I would just ask that this Commission tries really really hard to not have those exceptions. I'd hate to see this Charter be 80% and be 60 questions left

Inaudible

Michael Davis: I would think that we make every effort to not have any exceptions

Inaudible

Michael Davis: I would just ask that the Committee work really hard to not have any of those and get it into the Charter

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: One second, since you've raised an interesting point. Mr. Chairman, when we talked about the petition that we were running, ok, the rules of engagement and the rules of the game currently call for 15% of the electorate, we think that is way to stringent and that it should be 10% limitation. I don't remember exactly which one

Paul DiMauro: Well if we jump around we'll never finish

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: Alright, where were we?

Walter Sofian: I think that we're on 7

Paul DiMauro: 3.2 is it? Recommendation #8, which is 3.2

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: No later than October 1 for budget.

Gary Cahill: We have no later than after the close of fiscal year. We don't have October 1st, we just have no later than after the close

Joe Konner: And fiscal year is what?

Paul DiMauro: Fiscal year is July 1st to June 30th.

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: You're talking about the budget here someplace.

Walter Sofian: This is the budget

Paul DiMauro: I don't know where that belongs but it's not on 3.2

Gary Cahill: On the annual City Report.

Paul DiMauro: Report, that's not the budget.

Inaudible

Gary Cahill: It's got to be later, this is just the annual report

Paul DiMauro: Ok, your next comment and you know that we've made other changes

Michael Davis: But all these areas that we have staggered terms, you're against every area where there is staggered terms?

Walter Sofian: we don't think staggered terms are a great idea.

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: 4.1 we've already done as determined by ordinance

Irving Steiner: 4.1.1 is where the 10% change from 15% comes in.

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: 4.1. is done and we added as determined by ordinance to our comments. That's done. It's consistent with what you thought.

Paul DiMauro: Number 10 is 4.3.3

Gary Cahill: Change the or to and?

Walter Sofian: We just thought that the City/Town Clerk should have a copy of it.

Paul DiMauro: Of what?

Walter Sofian: Of the journal.

Paul DiMauro: They do.

Walter Sofian: This one says the Clerk of the Board shall maintain the journal, all we're saying is that there should be one kept in the City/Town Clerk office.

Paul DiMauro: Shall maintain the journal, or an exact copy shall be kept in the office of the City/Town Clerk.

Walter Sofian: We're saying and

Paul DiMauro: It's in there. Maintain the journal, the clerk of the Board of Aldermen shall maintain the journal, it's the word that's wrong. Or should be changed to and.

Walter Sofian: That's what our recommendation is.

Paul DiMauro: Ok, that's fine.

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: Now on 4.6, we didn't think that it's legal to require that the Board of Aldermen can have the ability to call witnesses. We didn't think that that was enforceable.

Paul DiMauro: Well, you know what, it's been there for a long time

Walter Sofian: I don't see the legality of it, having the Board of Aldermen be forced and compel to testify

Gary Cahill: Have we gotten response from Corporation Council yet on this?

Joe Konner: It's an open item right now, waiting for Corporation Council

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: Alright

Paul DiMauro: I'd feel better if we did that.

Walter Sofian: Ok, then ask this, is just notification ten days in advance. Oh by the way, all of our, it doesn't say it here because we said substantial but every time we see the term substantial circulation, we really think that, that this town should know what their largest newspaper circulation is and that's where the, any notices should be put in the largest circulation.

Michael Davis: Paul you had said the problem is the circulation changes

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: The largest never changes, the largest may change but it's defined

Inaudible

Gary Cahill: Bridgeport Post might have the largest at this point, but maybe three weeks from now

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: But guess what, stop. Huntington Herald probably has the largest circulation but it's only one day

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: Does it say daily circulation?

Gary Cahill: That's ok, because I think circulation means

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: 4.7.2?

Walter Sofian: No, 4.2

Paul DiMauro: 4.2? How did we go backward?

Walter Sofian: Recommendation #13?

Inaudible

Gary Cahill: We don't have recommendation #13.

Walter Sofian: Ok, by the way, on the one we just talked about, recommendation 12, at least ten days prior. Is that a State Statute thing?

Paul DiMauro: 4.7.2

Walter Sofian: We just keep opening up those days because we think that the citizens would be better served with a little notice.

Gary Cahill: No, it's in our 4.7.3 because we added the referral in it.

Steve Bellis: We have 5 days

Gary Cahill: They want 10

Inaudible

Michael Davis: We debated this too, you remember that we said if it was too far away people would forget

Inaudible

Gary Cahill: it's one publication, not 5 publications or 10, it's just 1.

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: the other point was, that if you did it 2 weeks before people would forget it, by having it as close to the hearing as possible it would have people say ok, I've got to go to that

Gary Cahill: Unless you're saying you want 5 publications?

Audience: No

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: Now, we went through 12, what paragraph or what section are you going to next? Just help me with the section.

Michael Davis: We don't have that

Walter Sofian: You don't have that?

Commission: No

Paul DiMauro: What section is it?

Walter Sofian: 4.2

Paul DiMauro: We went backward?

Walter Sofian: Yes, I guess it looks like we backtracked

Gary Cahill: 4.2. is Presiding Officers?

Paul DiMauro: And where do I find 4.2 on yours?

Joe Konner: We don't have it.

Steve Bellis: Just have them tell us.

Paul DiMauro: Alright tell us what it is.

Walter Sofian: Ok, what it is, is it currently when the Board of Aldermen come in they elect one of the members to serve as President and Vice President for the duration of the two year term, we recommend that you do that annually.

Steve Bellis: What's the rationale on that? Why? What's the benefit of that?

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: Basically we're saying that the Chairman of the Board of Education is done that way, it's a weak argument.

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: On the Board of Aldermen, why would you want to change the President mid stream?

Irving Steiner: Doesn't provide a vote of confidence on an annual basis.

Steve Bellis: This isn't Great Britain, we don't have a parliament.

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: We're not making fun of it, just don't understand.

Irving Steiner: Ok, let's say you have, for some reason you have a rogue Chairman, what would be the process of elimination for that

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: I don't like that, number 1

Irving Steiner: I'm just pop corning

Paul DiMauro: No no, I understand and we could go on and on, I mean I don't like the ideas of that personally that the President of the Board of Aldermen automatically becomes the Mayor. Because you didn't elect him as a Mayor, you elected him as an Alderman. And one more, the entire town did not vote for him, only one section of the town voted for him. So if you want to correct something, there's something

Walter Sofian: Alderman at large

Paul DiMauro: Alderman at large and that's the other alternative is an Alderman at large and he becomes the next Mayor. If you want the right way to do it, that's the way.

Inaudible

Steve Bellis: But that's not what he's getting at, he's getting at the yearly Board of Aldermen

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: Anyway, 4.7.2, it's the difference between public hearing held by the committee versus being held by the full Board of Aldermen. We think that public hearings should be held by the full Board of Aldermen

Paul DiMauro: I think that's the way we have it.

Ann Dougherty: They are, the problem is

Walter Sofian: Right now it says committee

Ann Dougherty: the problem is that some people want it changed to say that the committees will be eliminated, in other words every ordinance will not go to committee, skip the committee and go to the full board for a public hearing. I'm totally opposed to that

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: That's not what was said though. They can elect to send it to a committee or they can elect not to send it to a committee each time.

Ann Dougherty: Correct

Paul DiMauro: I'll tell you something, that's one, myself personally, I think Alderman Anglace and Alderman Finn wrestled to try to put something together and they are more better versed on it than anybody in this room. They've lived with it more.

Ann Dougherty: every ordinance needs to go to a committee so it can be discussed, otherwise things could just be slam-dunked through. Because the public hearing is by the full board and if there's no discussion about it

Paul DiMauro: I don't feel strongly about it one way or another.

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: We basically, it says within 35 days after referral to committee

Steve Bellis: We're wrestling with that

Walter Sofian: Alright

Paul DiMauro: Alright, your next section?

Walter Sofian: Is 4.9, there's nothing there. 4.11 Public Initiative

Paul DiMauro: You think 15% is too much

Walter Sofian: That's a lot to ask of public initiative

Michael Davis: How many people can vote in the City of Shelton?

Walter Sofian: I'm not exactly sure, I think it about 25, 26, 28000

Irving Steiner: 28000

Walter Sofian: Somewhere between 25 and 28000

Irving Steiner: I tried to research back and see where 15% came from, I couldn't follow it back. It just appeared and we have missing Charters

Paul DiMauro: We don't

Irving Steiner: I can't find them

Steve Bellis: But we don't want to have too many issues come up right?

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: But I'm saying the way you have it 15%, that would be at 4200

Inaudible

Michael Davis: I don't see an issue with 10%.

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: Ok, what do we have here, 17? Oh wait a minute, Board of A&T. This happens to be 5.1.1.1

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: Just so we all understand we are not negotiating positions, just so we all understand that.

Walter Sofian: Ok, 5.1.1.1. what basically our committee thinks that the Board of A&T has been cut out of the budgetary process and we feel that they should be and have the full authority, they should be the fiscal authority of the town, not the Board of Aldermen. It starts here but there are a lot of different sections that we haven't gotten to yet in the Charter, beyond these sections where it comes up, where it says Board of Aldermen instead of Board of A&T.

Paul DiMauro: Let me address something, this was changed 12 years ago whenever and it was changed for a good reason I thought. The Board of Aldermen are answered to by the public, the entire board is elected by the public

Walter Sofian: Board of A&T is elected also

Paul DiMauro: Not the same way

Steve Bellis: Well they are elected

Walter Sofian: They are elected

Paul DiMauro: By minority representation, so don't tell me they're elected the same as Board of Aldermen

Walter Sofian: I didn't say the same

Paul DiMauro: It's not quite the same. Their names aren't out there as much either, I'll tell you that. Whereas the Board of Aldermen are, they take action. When's the last time someone here has gone to a Board of A&T meeting that they had to? I mean really unless they made a request or something. Nobody goes to the Board of A&T meetings, people go to Board of Aldermen meetings

Michael Davis: Why don't we ask to Board of A&T people to come see us?

Joe Konner: I think, didn't they send us correspondence asking for that?

Gary Cahill: In the last Charter they did

Joe Konner: Oh, in the last Charter they did

Inaudible

Michael Pawcota: The rationality of it that the people don't go to the Board of A&T meetings and because of that you would give more (inaudible), I would guarantee you (inaudible) people would attend more. (inaudible) it's an administrative function that serves to advise the Board of Aldermen on what to do

Paul DiMauro: But that's only for transfer that type of thing. You know now what we did is we put together that they would have a joint meeting for the budget hearing and all that, isn't that a step in bringing everybody together and having the public be able

Michael Pawcota: Not if the group feels the whole fiscal authority should be given to the Board of Apportionment and Taxation. All you've given is a chance to sit down at the table

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: The original thought process was eliminated

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: And you know what, that's quite honestly what the feeling was 12 years ago, but it was that type of thing, and you know what, let's not just discard it (inaudible) and recommend it to the Board of Alderman and I think they do serve a good role. I honestly do

Inaudible

Michael Davis: How do you handle this though if in a lot of cases I would think the Board of Aldermen are going to be leaders of their parties, so they are going to be responsible also for who they are going to appoint, in some respect, so how does it work if you give them greater power, they could find themselves not being appointed from the next time around because how they engaged those Aldermen when they were elected. Say the Republican side are the Aldermen, ok, they're engaged ok it's time to appoint people to run for Apportionment and Taxation, to nominate, well they may not nominate someone that they found difficult to work with so how do we make sure that if we empower them

Michael Pawcota: That's the essence of the democratic process. No one's re-nomination is guaranteed, no one's reelection is guaranteed. See, one of the virtues, I think, to installing fiscal authority to the Board of Apportionment and Taxation is it makes the Aldermen even more so accountable to the budget because someone else is sending that budget. So they cannot legislate at free will knowing that at the same time they can reallocate money with the new spin on legislation. (inaudible) the biggest reason given at that time was the Aldermen felt as though they were (inaudible) because they were there to legislate

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: And that was the main reason why it was changed Mike.

Michael Davis: Who do you empower?

Joe Konner: If you empower the A&T, you really chopped the legs out from under the Board of Aldermen. So it's one or the other

Inaudible

Randy York: Not really, because the way that we worded it they still have the Board of Aldermen still has the final authority

Michael Pawcota: Don't forget, it's not just the duties when they sit at a table organized by full board or committee, most of their work is constituent

Inaudible

Michael Pawcota: I don't think you're chopping anybody's legs off by not allowing them to have the fiscal authority, they're just accountable now for a little bit more to a separate focus by a separate board. It may hold things up a little bit

Inaudible

Joe Konner: I don't see any compelling reasons to change from what it is right now personally. If there was some solid basis of substance that you could point to me and

say this is why it should be done because of abuses here or something or safeguarding, but I don't see any compelling reasons to change it.

Michael Pawcota: (inaudible) the responsibility is enormous and the Aldermen have got their hands full yearly many times with the constituent services and what they do at committee level whether it's Public Health and Safety, so the Board of A&T, instead of expanding the Board of Aldermen from 8 to 12, what you're doing is bringing another Board to close to the same number, except that it would have a check and balance a more stringent check and balance.

Michael Davis: Why don't we get A&T to come in and see us?

Inaudible

Randy York: the impression that I got out of the whole thing was that the A&T people are really the numbers people. The Board of Aldermen are more like, like Mike was saying, you know constituency, there are more big issues people and they need the money to fund the issues, but the A&T people sit there, that's all they're looking at is the numbers. And that's why we thought it was bringing more accountability to the Board of Aldermen to have this, you know accounting arm that really makes sure the numbers are all adding up

Joe Konner: But once that accounting arm starts flexing its muscles then you find you have another power sitting in dealing with another fraction that's going to dictate City policy, because that's what we used to be like 40 years ago.

Ann Dougherty: (inaudible) there are 3 Democrats on A&T and 3 Republicans, and they are elected by a quorum of each Town Committee so each Town Committee could decide who the fiscal authority is in the town

Michael Pawcota: (inaudible) that are elected by the voting public

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: That's the problem.

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: At least now we've got it. Ok next section

Walter Sofian: Recommendation 18,

Paul DiMauro: Just give us the section and we don't

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: We don't have 18-20 or whatever. We don't have copies of those

Walter Sofian: I'll get it to you.

Paul DiMauro: Just get it to us for our record.

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: Basically recommendation 18, well 17 was what we just talked about

Paul DiMauro: 18 is what section?

Walter Sofian: 5.1.4 address3es the P&Z and its covered by if you guys are talking about expanding the

Paul DiMauro: We covered that. Next section

Randy York: 5.2.1

Walter Sofian: 5.2.1 Parks and Recs, again we're saying 2-year cycle

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: No, we're basically saying that terms should be two years, term limits not term limits, the terms should be uni formingly said

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: 20 is 5.2.2, Zoning Board of Appeals talks about again 5 members, no more than 3 from one party and appointed for two years instead of alternates

Paul DiMauro: Can't do it. 5 years. That's by State Statute

Walter Sofian: State Statute states that? Thank you very much. I think those were the ones that you were missing. 5.2.3, we covered 21 basically it again talks about 2 years, eliminating staggered terms same thing with 22, same thing with 23 except we've added here

Paul DiMauro: Give me the section rather than the recommendation number

Walter Sofian: 5.2.6 Inland Wetlands, we thought that the commission itself should decide should add or remove an Inland Wetland Enforcement Officer and any professional people that they need sand it shouldn't be subject to the approval of the Mayor. It's an independent commission

Paul DiMauro: *I think that we've gone through this and from a legalistic standpoint it's not good to have a commission to just be able to decide to fire someone, because it could put the City into a liable situation without understanding the ramifications of it. So there is a problem with that. This does not give the Mayor more power, it's so the Mayor has the administrative authority over*

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: *It's not meant to take away any power away from Wetlands or setting policies for their Wetland Commissioner, that goes without saying, they set their own policy. But as far as whether the person gets disciplined or fired, someone has to follow that, and I put much more trust in our HR office, than the Commission that's doing it part time.*

Michael Davis: *Who manages John Cook? Who's responsible for John Cook?*

Paul DiMauro: *The Inland Wetlands set policies*

Walter Sofian: *He's supposed to be responsible to the Commission*

Paul DiMauro: *they would make a recommendation to fire, and they would go to the Mayor and say look, this guy is not doing his job, this is why boom, boom, boom. It says Mayor, it really is the Human Resources that would really look at it. They would look at it and day ok this is alright, give it to our labor counsel and decide whether it's ok and everything's being done legalistically so that we don't get it slammed back at us. Remember the City is the one that has to answer to all OSHA complaints, all insurance claims, all suits as it pertains to employees being unlawful termination, all that has to be answered by the administration. Being the Mayor's office, HR hears that type of thing, nothing is meant in any of our wording in any of this to diminish the power of the Library Board or anybody else, it's just to cover our butts to make sure we get it done right.*

Michael Pawcota: *It's a very noted exception to Charter though, the Mayor has nothing to say about the administration of the Planning & Zoning. Nothing. The administrator is answerable to the Planning and Zoning Commission and all the employees answer to the administrator. It turns though that seeing that a Commission is going to get sued for legal jeopardy, because there may be decisions all of the time in a qui se judicial setting, if that were the case Paul, you wouldn't have that commission make any decision*

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: *That's supposed to be their expertise, is the Zoning matter, not the labor matter. And who has the authority within that department, the administrator who?*

Michael Pawcota: The administrator, all employees answer to the administrator

Paul DiMauro: And that's how

Michael Pawcota: Answering to the Commission.

Paul DiMauro: So the Chairman really runs the department?

Michael Pawcota: Essentially yes. At least that's how it was 2 Charters ago. When I was Mayor, that's how it worked. And to tell you the truth I never ventured into anything with the Planning & Zoning venue.

Paul DiMauro: No, nor should you, but we're not talking about the Mayor (inaudible)

Michael Pawcota: The Mayor tells the Human Resource department and the Administrative Assistant what to do and if the Mayor wants to begin to influence certain actions on the part of the department whether it be through the volunteered or elected commission (inaudible), because there is leverage. There's a great deal of leverage with the Mayor having the ultimate power over every single employee within the confines of City Hall. This decentralizes it and again adds a little bit of the check and balance, and a little bit of independence (inaudible)

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: Who tracks their vacation? Who does all of that?

Randy York: Are they civil service employees?

Paul DiMauro: Civil service or union

Randy York: Because if that's the case, their personnel problems are covered under that department.

Paul DiMauro: It's not covered under the commission. Because the union is Citywide.

Inaudible

Michael Davis: Do you think by John Cook's position reporting to the Mayor, do you believe that would adjust or change that person's thinking or how they carry out their jobs, whether they report to the Mayor or whether they report to the Commission.

Inaudible

Michael Davis: So it has nothing to do with that, it's just

Inaudible

Michael Pawcota: It's just the fact that it decentralizes some of the power, because the Mayor under this Charter, and other Charter that have been proposed, (inaudible) establish themselves in every single function of City government including, I think in the last Charter, was an attempt to get those tentacles into the Board of Education. There's an attempt here to centralize power.

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: My issue on all of this was the administrative part of it, the day-to-day, watching over the employee making sure he's here, making sure all of the rules are followed. That's all. It was never meant for example to have Jeff Shortell at the Sewer Plant answer to the Mayor. He answers to the Commission. I mean it's that type of situation, they set the policy. I mean, it's just what we're going through with the Fire Commissioners. It's all that's meant Mike, maybe our wording isn't quite right and maybe that could be massaged in such a way to clarify it but it's never been meant to centralize more power to the Mayor's office. That's way beyond why we did all of that. Honestly, nothing to do with that. Maybe someone else is wording it that way, but it's not us.

Walter Sofian: ok, so what do you want to do with 5.2.6?

Paul DiMauro: I don't know, we're going to have to figure it out how we are going to handle that, really we need to figure out how we are going to handle all employees and all commissions

Steve Bellis: We have to decide for all

Paul DiMauro: We have to decide for all of them. I think taking it out of each one of these paragraphs and having a catch all paragraph that says all employees answer to for these reasons will answer to the administrative assistant on a daily whatever, I mean we need something written up and I don't think that we need to put it in every paragraph, I think we take it out of every paragraph completely and say all employees that work for the City shall or these purposes and (inaudible). And I think that's the way to do it, it's really how we handle it (inaudible)

Walter Sofian: Section 5.3.1. is just there are 3 members on the Tax Review and we're basically saying that there should be no boards or commissions less than 5 and the rest is 2 year terms.

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: This would be 5.3.1. recommendation 24. it goes back to we should expand the commissions and boards basically to be 5 members

Paul DiMauro: I would like to pose that question to the Assessor and ask her what she feels and see whether or not she feels it's important. She lives with it

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: 5.3.3 I guess is the same

Joe Konner: Let me just as a side issue for information, and on 5.3.3. I served as a member of the Public Board for I think now 7 years, we've had 1 meeting in 7 years. The point is, you're going to make it 2 years

Walter Sofian: You had terms of 5 years and you had 1 meeting every 7 years?

Joe Konner: I met once in 7 years

Michael Davis: I'm on that Board too

Joe Konner: Once in 7 years

Paul DiMauro: It looks like a good board to be on, you never have to go to meetings

Joe Konner: One meeting in 7 years, now if you want to limit a board that meets every 7 years to 2 years and keep re-appointing those 5 people

Inaudible

Joe Konner: In fact, I didn't even know who's on it.

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: 5.3.4. the Water Pollution Control Authority, we're recommending expansion from 8 members to 9 members, no more than 5 from any one party, and two-year terms. Now there are some people on it that are older than the sewage treatment plant on it

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: Next

Walter Sofian: What do we have. 5.4 Board of Ethics, we had recommended that that be an elected position specifically for pointed out with the current problems that the Board of Ethics is dealing with a complaint against the Mayor who appointed the Board in the first place

Paul DiMauro: Ratified by the Board of Aldermen. It's confirmed by the Board of Aldermen.

Steve Bellis: the members of the Board of Ethics came before us and they didn't like the idea, they said they wouldn't even run if it was political

Walter Sofian: I know, I heard that

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: It's not one of our strongest feelings but you know, I could see what happens with the Board of Ethics, the Mayor is appointing the Board of Ethics whenever they appear and the people that are most likely to get complaints against them are those people in power, like the Mayor

Paul DiMauro: I can't see getting elected.

Richard Widomski: I was going on the website for the Research Report and we have what's happening in the state (inaudible), if there is a minimum of 5 people on the board elected and it makes it very interesting (inaudible), but the point that I'm getting at is it should be (inaudible) with what's going on in the state. If you read into this and I've got a copy

Inaudible

Steve Bellis: Not passed yet

Richard Widomski: It hasn't passed yet

Paul DiMauro: Once it passes, it's going to be required to be accepted

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: It's more wording than what we're going to put in here and we would rely on the Board of Aldermen to do it by ordinance, which they are doing by the way.

Richard Widomski: they can't do it, if that State Statue goes through, it starts with the Board of Ethics themselves to improve their rules and regulations

Paul DiMauro: We understand that

Richard Widomski: Not the Board of Aldermen, so to say that the Board of Aldermen has the authority that's not true. In fact, if you noticed John Anglace (inaudible)

Inaudible

Richard Widomski: there's another area that morals and ethics that you really should start paying attention, there's always a loophole in the law

Inaudible

Steve Bellis: But lawyers will ask the Board of Ethics for an opinion so that we don't get ourselves

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: Well the legislature is going to tell us what to do

Inaudible

Irving Steiner: The state is developing a Code of Ethics to be handed down to the municipalities. How would you cope with that considering you have to come up with something for the Charter?

Steve Bellis: State Statute overrides anything you write in the Charter.

Paul DiMauro: But are we still going to

Irving Steiner: Yes, that's what I'm curious about, how are you going to handle it, are you going to go ahead and then have it changed or necessary

Paul DiMauro: No, we're not going to make a change, because once State Statute comes in or legislature passes, it throws ours right out, it just makes it invalid.

Inaudible

END SIDE 2 – TAPE 1

SIDE 1 – TAPE 2

Irving Steiner: I would only like to mention, I think it's an awesome burden for three people on the Ethics Committee to pass judgment. I think that should be up to

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: Irving, I agree with that, I've said it a dozen times, I think it should be a minimum of 5, I think 5 is a nice number, because remember a lot of sensitive material goes across the desk too

Steve Bellis: Judges do it by themselves

Paul DiMauro: Judges do do that by themselves.

Inaudible

Joe Konner: Paul, if I may, I'd just like to raise a point for everybody and then ask Mike a question too. I want to raise a point and then I want to ask Mike a question maybe to confirm. Now, there are appointed positions by the Mayor where you need 80 bodies to fill these positions, now if we go to a term limit of 2 years, hypothetically if you go 2 years, then in 2 years you have to get 80 people reappointed or new appointees, Mike my question to you is, when you were Mayor, how difficult was it for you to find people to fill positions or did you have some difficulty finding people to serve on these commissions and boards?

Michael Pawcota: I'm not going to say there was difficulty, but you had to take the initiative to search for the people. I found for the most part they were called upon (inaudible)

Joe Konner: They weren't knocking on your door trying to get on a commission in other words?

Michael Pawcota: No, I think a lot of that has to do with them not realizing that the opening is there (inaudible), it seemed that once you approached that they were very receptive

Paul DiMauro: We don't do a good job with that

Joe Konner: The only reason I raise the issue was because it's questionable logistics, I mean we're a town of 40,000 people and there are 28,000 registered voters and that would seem that you would have a big enough pool that you could go and start choosing people, but in reality, it's not always that way. You find somebody once, they'll come out and they'll do it. And that was my case when I got initially into the thing I was asked to do something and I did it. Gary, Parks and Recs Commission member, he serves on the Parks and Recs Commission, there are a lot of people men and women that do it. But I just want you to keep in mind, that when you say you want to raise numbers to a level and you're going to limit their terms to two years that you have to keep in mind there's a pool of manpower or womanpower out there that you have to get to come in and serve the community. It's not going to be an easy task, all the time to do that,

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: I look at Pars and Rec completely different than I look at Zoning or something of that nature. Or more importantly Inland Wetland which is an appointed Board by the way, I look at Inland Wetlands completely different. I don't care if a guy is on Parks and Rec for 40 years, I really don't.

Michael Davis: That's why I keep repeating

Paul DiMauro: *And if they had 5-year terms I couldn't care any less, because he's doing it to help his kids, the kids, it's a different issue. Inlands Wetlands is a different story.*

Irving Steiner: *I think one of the big differences is if you really look at it, P&Z has the ability to determine millions of dollars that flow in the development of the City and therefore it's a big change when you're looking at them and you're saying there is a familiarity that is built up over the course of years. You've got to somehow break that up. And again, you're wrestling with this, maybe the term limits is not a good way to do it, maybe it's at the ballot box, somehow we change that thing, but the fact is that we're dealing with a lot of money and there is also the consideration*

Steve Bellis: *Irv, Irving, that's not the point that Joe's making. The point that Joe's making, and you're missing it, is that there aren't all these people knocking on the doors of the Democratic Town Committee or the Republican Town Committee saying I want to be on the Planning and Zoning, I want to be on Inlands Wetlands, I want to be on the Board of A&T. They're not there.*

Irving Steiner: *I think a lot of that comes from the fact that there's no chance for them to even approach the political bodies and say I would like to*

Steve Bellis: *Why not?*

Irving Steiner: *It's been discouraged. You get a popular vote you leave them in there*

Paul DiMauro: *I don't think so. If I get the Chairman of the Democratic Town Committee and I'll guarantee you he'd invite anybody to come.*

Inaudible

Irving Steiner: *I don't see it, it's not there.*

Steve Bellis: *Are you involved in either party I really don't know.*

Irving Steiner: *I'm not.*

Michael Davis: *Let's back up, the reason for the term limits was people wanted some change, they wanted different blood in there*

Irving Steiner: *Correct*

Michael Davis: *If we increase the population size they achieve their goal and maybe the term limits aren't as critical as it is not knowing that. If you're asking the question without telling them, and again, if I go outside today, and I went on every door and said you want change, you have the choice on getting the change right now on the next election or you can wait 4 years for the change. What are they going to pick? So*

they're probably going to pick, I want change now. So why don't we lighten up a little on the term limits, and focus more on increasing the population

Inaudible

Joe Konner: I raise it because it's an issue we have to address. I know you're expecting some kind of decision from us, and I want to make sure that when I make the decision I made it on the basis that's logical and what's going to be best for the town. And incidentally I'm a citizen too of Shelton

Inaudible

Michael Pawcota: (inaudible) I don't thin we're saying 2 years out, we were just saying everyone serves for two-year terms.

Inaudible

Michael Davis: But at some point those term limits will kick in whether its 2 years, 4 years, 8 years whatever. I kept saying 2,4,8, whatever. At some point it's going to kick out and really what you're looking for is change which it sounds like we are

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: What's the magic number, if someone doesn't turn friendly with a developer until 4.5 years, I mean who the hell knows, like I said, they could be friendly with them before, I don't think that's the answer

Inaudible

Irving Steiner: Another thing that could be considered would be to have a break in the term, in other words

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: We all know why you want to go against it and we understand that, I agree with you on many of the subjects, I just think you're going about it wrong. I have a right to my opinion in thinking that you have to solve the real problem

Irving Steiner: Give me plan B

Paul DiMauro: I'm giving you plan B

Michael Davis: Rally around something that's going to work

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: I think staggered terms makes everybody come up to the plate a little bit more, have to be elected each two years I think that's valid, I think that there's a possibility of floating the Chairman of Board of Education and P&Z or one or the other as an elected official by themselves, has a valid point. You've got a person out there that has to answer to what's going on and you got

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: So let the head of the P&Z, let the Chairman of the Board of Ed run at large. Run for that position, not be elected by his own peers.

Randy York: I'm going to go to the Republican Town Committee and tell them I want to run for Planning and Zoning

Paul DiMauro: You can

Inaudible

Joe Konner: I think you and Irving should both go down

Paul DiMauro: Why don't you run? You could still run because remember minority representation doesn't block you guys. Go as an Independent. Go unaffiliated. You got the best chance of winning.

Inaudible

Paul DiMauro: Alright, what else do you want to discuss tonight, we have to get going.

Michael Davis: I think we had enough today.

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: Before we break, I do want to say one thing, at the last meeting we submitted a recommendation that the Board of Fire Commissioners, that their Chairman not be the one that is appointed by the Mayor. In other words, do you remember the Board of Fire Commissioners?

Paul DiMauro: It had to

Walter Sofian: Wait, wait, wait, let me finish. That night you indicated to me that that's not one of the changes that the firemen were asking for and so on and so forth, alright, and that is true but I have since spoken to the Fire Marshal who is on the Officers' Council, he loves the idea and he's going to bring

Steve Bellis: There is a rift between those

Inaudible

Walter Sofian: Mr. Chairman, what he said basically is they feel that whatever draft they come up with, if the department is happy that you guys are going to be happy with it. So you might see something that, they're looking at it

Paul DiMauro: We're going to consider everything and anything. (Inaudible) One second please, March 8th is our next meeting, we'd like to have you come again to finish.

Randy York: Formally, I mean we'll probably be here but formally would it be the meeting after that?

Paul DiMauro: We're starting to run out of time. Alright, March 22 for CARE.

Randy York: Ok

Inaudible

Irving Steiner: Whatever you need

Thank you all.

The meeting with the CARE Group concluded at 8:45 pm.

There are still open items of the proposed Charter that will have to be addressed at a later time. Many of the open items are due to reviewing other chapters of the Charter as well as awaiting responses. A consensus will be taken at a later date.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 8. It will be a working session. The Charter Revision Commission will be meeting with representatives from the CARE Group again on Tuesday, March 22.

ADJOURNMENT

Joe Konner motioned to adjourn. Gary Cahill second the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Paul DiMauro adjourned the meeting of the Charter Revision Commission at 8:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sophia V. Belade

Sophia V. Belade

Clerk-Charter Revision Commission

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