



**CITY OF SHELTON  
CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION  
WORKSHOP MINUTES  
March 2, 2020  
Room 104, City Hall**

Commissioners Present: Gary DeFilippo  
Ruth Ann Dunford  
Ruth Parkins  
David Presutto  
Darlissa Ritter  
Donald Sheehy

Excused: Dan Debicella

- CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman DeFilippo called the workshop to order at 7:02 pm.

- PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- GENERAL DISCUSSION

Commission was forward correspondence received via email. (attached)

Commission discussed sections of Charter that has been addressed in previous meetings or correspondence received. Attached is the running List of Ideas that the Commission is using.

Commission is continuing to receive correspondence and will be meeting with the Purchasing Agent, Finance Director, the Mayor, BOA President and BOE Vice Chair.

Next workshop is scheduled for Thursday, March 12, 2020 at 3:00 pm in Room 104 at City Hall.

Commissioner Ritter motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Dunford second the motion.

A voice vote was taken; motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

*Sophia V Belade*

Sophia V Belade  
Charter Revision Commission Clerk



Dan Debicella &lt;sheltoncharter2020@gmail.com&gt;

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**Revision request**

3 messages

**Ron Herrick** <r.herrick@cityofshelton.org>

Fri, Feb 21, 2020 at 12:49 PM

To: "sheltoncharter2020@gmail.com" &lt;sheltoncharter2020@gmail.com&gt;

Hi Dan,

Hope all is going well. As a department head I would like to submit something for consideration with the charter revision. Presently the figure to get written quotes is \$2,000 and \$7,500 is the figure to go out to bid. I am requesting to bump those amounts up a bit. \$3,000 for the 3 written quotes and \$8,500 to go out to bid. Costs for supplies and equipment continue to go up and we spend quite a bit of time seeking prices. I feel our department heads have the City's best interests in mind and look to get the best prices they can. I surveyed a few other towns and found the following.

Ansonia - Quotes at \$5,000

Orange – Quotes at \$5,000 and bid at \$10,000

Fairfield – Quotes at \$3,000 and bid at \$15,000

Trumbull – Quotes at \$1,000 and bid at \$10,000

Monroe – Bid at \$5,000 appears no quotes below that amount

Southbury is discussing upping their figures to \$7,500 for quotes and \$15,000 for bids.

Gene Sullivan, our purchasing agent, could probably find out further information.

Thank you for your considerations.

Ron Herrick,

Director, Shelton Parks and Recreation Dept.

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**Dan Debicella** <sheltoncharter2020@gmail.com>

Mon, Feb 24, 2020 at 12:30 PM

To: Ron Herrick &lt;r.herrick@cityofshelton.org&gt;

Thanks Ron! First off, I hope everything has been going well for you and your family! We definitely have this on our list, as Gene has proposed raising the limits as well. I will add in your support to our discussions, and know we will be addressing this in the next few meetings.

All my best,

--Dan

[Quoted text hidden]

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**Ron Herrick** <r.herrick@cityofshelton.org>

Mon, Feb 24, 2020 at 1:50 PM

To: Dan Debicella &lt;sheltoncharter2020@gmail.com&gt;

Thanks Dan. Things are going well. Hoping this is something that may have a chance. Appreciate any help you can give us.

**Shelton Charter Revision 2020**  
**Full List of Ideas – 3/2/20**

**Appointments**

Idea	Relevant Charter Section(s)	Early Commission Discussion
<p>1) The Board of Ethics should consist of people chosen from a pool approved by civic organizations (e.g., Chamber of Commerce, LWV, United Way)</p>	<p>Section 5.3.5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unfavorable disposition</li> <li>• Not likely a workable solution due to undemocratic nature of organizations, geographic issues (most are not purely Shelton-based), and lack of proof they would be any better at finding good candidates than normal process</li> </ul>
<p>2) Boards should have the power to fill vacancies in the event the Mayor or Aldermen fail to do so in a reasonable time (e.g. 60 or 90 days).</p>	<p>Section 9.6.2(b)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No disposition</li> <li>• How much on an issue is this?</li> <li>• Possibility of interim appointments?</li> </ul>
<p>3) P&amp;Z and Inland Wetlands should not be involved with Administrator selection, which should be left to the Mayor.</p>	<p>Section 5.1.4(a)                      Section 5.2.5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No disposition</li> <li>• Options could include the Commissions making recommendations to Mayor, but him having the final ability to choose whomever he wants</li> <li>• Do state statutes proscribe this? And does 2018 State Supreme Court ruling make that irrelevant?</li> </ul>
<p>4) For all appointed Boards and Commissions, the Mayor shall nominate and the Board of Aldermen shall confirm all members.</p>	<p>Section 5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favorable disposition</li> <li>• Need to understand if there is a logic to why the Mayor appoints some and the BOA appoints some (e.g., financial responsibility)?</li> </ul>

Term Lengths

Idea	Relevant Charter Section(s)	Early Commission Discussion
1) P&Z Alternatives should be 4 year terms rather than 2 years.	Section 2.4.1(f)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No disposition</li> <li>• Do state statutes proscribe this? And does 2018 State Supreme Court ruling make that irrelevant?</li> </ul>
2) Board of Education terms should be 4 years staggered.	Section 2.2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No disposition</li> <li>• Need to discuss in the context of structural suggestions for the Board of Education</li> </ul>
3) ZBA has no terms, and should.	Section 5.2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favorable disposition</li> </ul>
4) Terms of various appointed boards should be standardized (e.g., 2 years or 4 years)	Section 5.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favorable disposition</li> <li>• However, need to understand if there is a logic to why there are different term lengths. In absence of logic, we will standardize – but if there is good reason for different terms we will maintain as-is</li> </ul>
5) Should we consider any term limits?	Various (depends on position)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unfavorable disposition</li> <li>• Feeling that frequent elections serve as the best term limits</li> </ul>
6) Change the term of the Mayor from 2 to 4 years	Section 2.4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unfavorable disposition</li> <li>• Feeling that accountability to voters more important than longer-term stability benefits</li> </ul>
7) Library Board terms should be reduced from 6 years to 2 or 4 years	Section 5.1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Item</li> </ul>

**Voicing**

Idea	Relevant Charter Section(s)	Early Commission Discussion
1) We should clarify whether Board members need to be present to vote, or can vote over the phone.	New (Probably Section 5.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favorable disposition</li> <li>• Need to discuss if there is "minimum technology level" or leave that vague</li> <li>• Need to have a minimum of people physically present (two-thirds? Three-fourths?)</li> </ul>
2) Charter should define what consists a quorum for various Boards and Commissions	New (Probably Section 5.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favorable disposition</li> <li>• Need to discuss specifically what this would look like.</li> </ul>
3) Board of Aldermen should be able to pass with majority of those present and voting, not absolute majority	Section 4.3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No disposition</li> <li>• Should make this align with any quorum definition we have for all Boards</li> </ul>
4) Voters may choose up to 5 candidates for the Board of Education (rather than current up to 9). Note: Need to check if this violates state statute	Section 2.2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No disposition (mixed views)</li> <li>• What do other towns do?</li> <li>• Do state statutes proscribe this? And does 2018 State Supreme Court ruling make that irrelevant?</li> </ul>

**Budget**

Early Commission Discussion	Relevant Charter Section(s)	Idea
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unfavorable disposition</li> <li>• Should not be mandated by Charter, but up to elected officials to decide</li> <li>• Non-dedicated reserves are not always needed because of low revenue volatility and ability to borrow/bond. An artificial tax increase.</li> </ul>	<p>New (Probably Section 7)</p>	<p>1) We should have a formal reserve requirement.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favorable disposition</li> <li>• Creates standardization in the budget process</li> </ul>	<p>Section 7.1(a)</p>	<p>2) The Board of Aldermen may establish standards for budget submissions that all departments (including Board of Education) must adhere to.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favorable disposition</li> <li>• Want more information on what other towns do</li> <li>• Want to discuss with the Purchasing Agent</li> </ul>	<p>Section 7.14</p>	<p>3) Increase the amount before Purchasing Agent must go out to bid (based on inflation and benchmarking other towns) Possibly \$5k-\$15k get three quotes, and \$15k+ go out to bid</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favorable disposition</li> <li>• Want more information on what other towns do</li> <li>• Want to discuss with the Finance Director</li> </ul>	<p>Section 7.15</p>	<p>4) Is 2% the right level to trigger a referendum to approve bonding (want to benchmark other towns)?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No disposition</li> <li>• Do any other towns do this?</li> <li>• Needs further discussion</li> </ul>	<p>Section 7.15</p>	<p>5) Separate out bonding trigger for roads versus anything else</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favorable disposition</li> <li>• Need to determine what is workable within the budget timeline</li> </ul>	Section 7.1(a)	6) Allow the Board of Education more time to submit their budget (as most complex)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No disposition</li> <li>• Need to determine what is required by State Statutes</li> </ul>	TBD	7) Shift the City's fiscal year start to later in the year (Oct or Jan), and shift budgeting process until after General Assembly finalizes state budget
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unfavorable disposition</li> <li>• Linked to structural discussions on A&amp;T (see next section)</li> </ul>	Section 7.10	8) Board of A&T Operations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All departmental budget requests go forthwith to A&amp;T.</li> <li>• On all A&amp;T meeting cancellations to the city clerk, the finance director will state that no further requests are pending.</li> <li>• All A&amp;T mtg. materials will be supplied 48 hours in advance to a+ members.</li> <li>• Dept. heads will appear before A&amp;T to support transfer</li> </ul>

**Board Structure & Composition**

Idea	Relevant Charter Section(s)	Early Commission Discussion
1) The Board of Aldermen should have minority representation and either be increased from 8 to 12 (no more than 2 from one party per Ward) or have At-Large aldermen.	Section 2.2.1 Section 2.2.4(f) Section 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No disposition</li> <li>• Requires further discussion and analysis</li> </ul>
2) We should increase the number of wards to 5, and increase the number of Aldermen to 10.	Section 2.2.1 Section 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No disposition</li> <li>• Requires further discussion and analysis</li> </ul>
3) We should have both geographic wards and at-large Aldermen	Section 2.2.1 Section 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No disposition</li> <li>• Requires further discussion and analysis</li> </ul>
4) The Board of Education should be elected in a non-partisan manner (no parties listed).	Section 5.1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No disposition</li> <li>• Requires further discussion and analysis</li> </ul>
5) The Board of Education should have a maximum of 6 members from any political party.	Section 5.1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No disposition</li> <li>• Requires further discussion and analysis</li> </ul>
6) The Board of Education should be elected by Ward, with 2 from each Ward and one at-large. (All from any party)	Section 5.1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No disposition</li> <li>• Requires further discussion and analysis</li> </ul>
7) The Board of Education should be expanded to 12, with 3 elected by Ward (no more than 2 from any party)	Section 5.1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No disposition</li> <li>• Requires further discussion and analysis</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favorable disposition</li> <li>• Right now requires 2/3 vote to get anything passed— too high a requirement</li> </ul>	<p>Section 2.1 Section 5.1.4</p>	<p>8) The Board of Planning and Zoning should be changed from six members to an odd number (5 or 7).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favorable disposition</li> <li>• Want to vest all financial authority in democratically elected Board of Aldermen</li> </ul>	<p>Section 2.1 Section 5.1.1 (Various others where Board of A&amp;T is mentioned)</p>	<p>9) Eliminate the Board of A&amp;T (and transfer line-item transfer power to the Finance Committee of the Board of Aldermen)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unfavorable disposition</li> <li>• Want to vest all financial authority in democratically elected Board of Aldermen</li> </ul>	<p>Section 2.1 Section 5.1.1</p>	<p>10) Give the Board A&amp;T more budgetary authority (similar to a Board of Finance) and expand to seven members</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favorable disposition</li> </ul>	<p>Section 6.9.3.2</p>	<p>11) Add requirement that Fire Commissioners be electors of the City of Shelton. (Says it in Section 5 for other Boards and Commissions)</p>

**General**

Idea	Relevant Charter Section(s)	Early Commission Discussion
1) The Aldermen shall call another Charter revision no later than April 1, 2030.	Section 2.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favorable disposition</li> </ul>
2) Change "Administrative Assistant" to "Chief Administrative Officer"	Section 6.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favorable disposition to change the title, but need to think harder about what to change it to.</li> </ul>
3) Can there be a limitation of certain types of development by Ward?	New Section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unfavorable disposition</li> <li>• Probably illegal under State Statute.</li> <li>• Not interested in putting this in chart even if legal (leave it up to elected officials to decide)</li> </ul>

**Information Status – 3/2/20**

Expected Completion	Status	Questions to Answer	Information Source
Mid-March	In Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structure and elections questions (BOA, BOE, A&amp;T, P&amp;Z)</li> <li>• Bonding and RFP trigger levels</li> </ul>	1) Town Comparisons
Mid-March(?)	To Be Scheduled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trigger amounts for bids and RFPs</li> <li>• Bonding referendum limits</li> <li>• Commission Appointment Process</li> <li>• Commission Term Length Differences</li> </ul>	2) Interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchasing Agent</li> <li>• Finance Director</li> <li>• Mayor</li> <li>• BOA President</li> <li>• BOE Vice Chair</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• P&amp;Z and Inland Wetlands Admin Selection</li> <li>• P&amp;Z Alternate Term Length</li> <li>• Municipal Fiscal Year Start Date</li> </ul>	3) Review of State Statutes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do local charters or state statute take precedence when the two are in conflict?</li> </ul>	4) CT Supreme Court Case