



**CITY OF SHELTON**  
**CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES**  
*April 13, 2020*  
*Virtual*

Commissioners Present: Dan Debicella  
Gary DeFilippo  
Ruth Ann Dunford  
Ruth Parkins  
David Presutto  
Darlissa Ritter  
Donald Sheehy – joined 7:18 pm

*Signature of Ruth Ann Dunford*

2020 APR 20 A 11:28

CITY OF SHELTON  
TOWN CLERK

- CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Debicella called the workshop to order at 7:04 pm. The meeting was held on Zoom by Executive Order of Governor Ned Lamont 7(b) and being broadcast live on YouTube and will be uploaded to the City Website.

- PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- GENERAL DISCUSSION

Kate Kutash, Member of Board of Education was invited to attend and participate in the meeting. Mrs. Kutash stated that the role of the Board of Education Commission it to set policy and to hire the Superindendant. Most of the policies that in place regarding Board of Education are set by State Statute. There was discussion on how the Board votes and that it forces bi-partisan approval.

The Commission discussed List of Ideas and some Town Comparisons (attached).

Next workshop is scheduled for Monday, April 20, 2020 at 7:00 pm via Zoom and live on YouTube.

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

A voice vote was taken; motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Debicella adjourned the workshop at 8:41 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Sophia V Belade*

Sophia V. Belade  
Charter Revision Clerk

## Shelton Charter Revision 2020

### Full List of Ideas – 4/13/20

#### Appointments

Idea	Relevant Charter Section(s)	Early Commission Discussion
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)	Section 5.3.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reject</li> </ul>
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).	Section 9.6.2(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No disposition</li> <li>• How much on an issue is this? Yes, an issue</li> <li>• Possibility of interim appointments?</li> <li>• Clarify language – waiting for court case info</li> <li>• Possible question for Mayor, possible for him to appoint and BOA to approve for appointed positions</li> </ul>
3) P&Z and Inland Wetlands should not be involved with Administrator selection, which should be left to the Mayor.	Section 5.1.4(a) Section 5.2.5	<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> <li>• Clarification of wording, possibly eliminate</li> </ul>
4) For all appointed Boards and Commissions, the Mayor shall nominate and the Board of Aldermen shall confirm all members.	Section 5	<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>Accept (move from Ordinance to Charter)</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>Reject</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>Reject</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> <li>Be consistent throughout or leave Library Board as is</li> </ul>

**Voting**

<b>Idea</b>	<b>Relevant Charter Section(s)</b>	<b>Early Commission Discussion</b>
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>• Board of Alderman Ordinance in line with state statutes</li> <li>• Executive Sessions must be live and present</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**

<b>Idea</b>	<b>Relevant Charter Section(s)</b>	<b>Early Commission Discussion</b>
1) We should have a formal reserve requirement.	New (Probably Section 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reject</li> </ul>
2) The Board of Aldermen may establish standards for budget submissions that all departments (including Board of Education) must adhere to.	Section 7.1(a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favorable disposition</li> <li>• Creates standardization in the budget process</li> </ul>
3) Increase the amount before Purchasing Agent must go out to bid (based on inflation and benchmarking other towns)  Purchasing Agent Proposal: \$1-5k needs one quote, \$5-25 needs 3 quotes, more than \$25 out to bid	Section 7.14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favorable disposition</li> <li>• Possibly leaving it to Board of Aldermen to set levels</li> <li>• Want more information on what other towns do</li> </ul>
4) Should we change “least cost, most responsible” to “most responsible” or give a check-and-balance way around it (i.e., Aldermanic approval)?	Section 7.14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEW</li> </ul>
5) Should we change the notice requirements for quotes and bids (i.e., on the website rather than published in paper)?	Section 7.14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEW</li> </ul>
6) Is 2% the right level to trigger a referendum to approve bonding (want to benchmark other towns)?	Section 7.15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favorable disposition</li> <li>• Want more information on what other towns do</li> <li>• Discussion with BOA President</li> </ul>

7) Separate out bonding trigger for roads versus anything else	Section 7.15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No disposition</li> <li>Do any other towns do this?</li> <li>Needs further discussion</li> <li>Can BOA go out to bond? Should it be increased or should roads be exclusive?</li> <li>Need discussion on town financing</li> <li>Possible discussion with Mayor/Finance Director</li> </ul>
8) Add in a State of Emergency clause where the Mayor and Aldermen can borrow more without referendum	Section 7.15 (New)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NEW</li> </ul>
9) Allow the Board of Education more time to submit their budget (as most complex)	Section 7.1(a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Favorable disposition</li> <li>Need to determine what is workable within the budget timeline</li> </ul>
10) 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	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No disposition</li> <li>Need to determine what is required by State Statutes</li> <li>Leave as State Fiscal Year</li> </ul>
11) 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> </ul>	Section 7.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reject</li> </ul>

- Dept. heads will appear before A&T to support transfer

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**Board Structure & Composition**

<b>Idea</b>	<b>Relevant Charter Section(s)</b>	<b>Early Commission Discussion</b>
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>

8) The Board of Planning and Zoning should be changed from six members to an odd number (5 or 7).	Section 2.2.1 Section 5.1.4	<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>
9) Eliminate the Board of A&T (and transfer line-item transfer power to the Finance Committee of the Board of Aldermen)	Section 2.2.1 Section 5.1.1 (Various others where Board of A&T is mentioned)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve</li> </ul>
10) Give the Board A&T more budgetary authority (similar to a Board of Finance) and expand to seven members	Section 2.2.1 Section 5.1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reject</li> </ul>
11) Add requirement that Fire Commissioners be electors of the City of Shelton. (Says it in Section 5 for other Boards and Commissions)	Section 6.9.3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favorable disposition</li> <li>• Letter opposing from one of the Commissioners</li> <li>• Does this impact any Commissioner right now?</li> </ul>
12) Delete wording that “The Commissioners shall be equal in rank and authority”	Section 6.9.3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEW</li> </ul>
13) Move appointment of Fire Marshall from “Commission, subject to approval of the Mayor” to by the Mayor. Transfer all other department appointments from Commission to Fire Marshall	Section 6.9.3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEW</li> </ul>

**General**

<b>Idea</b>	<b>Relevant Charter Section(s)</b>	<b>Early Commission Discussion</b>
1) The Aldermen shall call another Charter revision no later than April 1, 2030.	Section 2.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve</li> </ul>
2) Change “Administrative Assistant” to “Chief Administrative Officer” or other title (e.g., Chief of Staff, City Administrator, etc.)	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> <li>• What do other towns do?</li> </ul>
3) Can there be a limitation of certain types of development by Ward?	New Section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reject</li> </ul>
4) Add a Preamble	New Section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEW</li> </ul>

## Shelton Charter Revision 2020

### Ideas to Discuss – 4/13/20

#### Appointments

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