



Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET

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SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Thomas E. Vincent - First Selectman

July 22, 2004

MEMO TO: BOARD OF SELECTMEN

FROM: THOMAS E. VINCENT, FIRST SELECTMAN

RE: RECOMMENDED SCOPE OF REVIEW FOR CHARTER REVISION
COMMISSION

Background

Section 1108 of the Town Charter requires the Board of Selectmen to consider the appointment of a Charter Revision Commission at least every five years. On April 27, 1998, the Board of Selectmen voted to create a Charter Revision Commission to review and make recommendations regarding the Charter. On August 3, 1999, the Board of Selectmen voted to reject the final draft report of the Charter Revision Commission. Therefore, as of August 3, 1999, the last charter review process was completed. Therefore, the Board of Selectmen should appoint the Charter Revision Commission no later than August 2, 2004.

Recommended Scope of Review

The Board of Selectmen may provide a recommended scope of review to the Charter Revision Commission. The Charter Revision Commission must address the areas designated for review by the Board of Selectmen. However, once appointed, the Charter Revision Commission may consider any aspect of the current Town Charter.

A Sub-Committee of the Board of Selectmen was appointed to formulate a recommended scope of review for the Board of Selectmen's consideration and possible approval. The recommendations made by the Sub-Committee address a combination of policy related issues as well as correcting inconsistencies. Some recommendations have also been made to bring the Charter into conformance with current practice.

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The recommendations are as follows:

- ◆ **Form of Government:** Connecticut municipalities have a wide range of options concerning local governance. One of these options is the Council-Manager Form of Government. It is recommended that the Charter Revision Commission review the appropriateness of this form of government to the Town of Simsbury and offer a recommendation.
- ◆ **Terms of Office:** Terms of office for elected officials and those on boards and commissions specifically listed in the Charter range between two and six years. There is a consensus that six years may be too long of a term and two years may be too short of a term. The Sub-Committee suggests that the term length of all boards and commissions be reviewed. Specifically, the Sub-Committee suggests a review of an increase in the First Selectman's term from two to four years as recommended by the 1999 Charter Revision Commission.
- ◆ **Section 301 (b)(8):** The Board of Tax Review is now referred to as the Board of Assessment Appeals.
- ◆ **Section 301:** Review and make a recommendation concerning maintaining separate Planning and Zoning Commissions or combining the Commissions.
- ◆ **Section 402:** The "Personnel and Collective Bargaining" Sub-Committee of the Board of Selectmen is referred to as the Personnel Sub-Committee. Also, the Regional Affairs Committee does not exist.
- ◆ **Section 502:** Sections 502 & 909 have the same title. Consider possible merging of Section 502 with Section 909.
- ◆ **Section 506:** Review last sentence and reconcile with State Statute and recent case law.
- ◆ **Section 603:** Second sentence beginning with "Terms of all administrative officers..." Collective bargaining agreements, personnel rules, state and federal law may render this obsolete. This is inconsistent with current practice and may have an adverse impact during the hiring process. It also seems to be inconsistent with the first sentence of the section.
- ◆ **Section 709:** The Human Relations Commission does not meet. ^{wey not} Review and make recommendation concerning possible elimination. Make recommendation concerning assigning duties to Health and Welfare Commission.
- ◆ **Section 716:** Make recommendation concerning possible elimination of the Jury Committee.

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- ◆ Sections 801 & 804: Review and possibly combine Sections 801 & 804. Review role of Boards and Commissions in appointment and removal of various Town Officers. Make recommendations concerning consistency and efficiency.

Chief of Police: Chief of Police is not listed in Section 801 or 804. Police Department is listed in Section 801.

Town Attorney: Listed in Section 801 but not Section 804. Reconcile with Section 806.

Welfare Officer: Listed in Section 801. Not Section 804. Review with Section 805 and determine necessity.

Social Services Director: Listed in Section 804 but not Section 801.

Town Engineer: Now Town Engineer/Director of Capital Projects

Public Works: Section 801 lists Conservation Officer, Director of Public Works. Section 804 lists Director of Public Works. Possibly assign Conservation Officer duties to Director of Community Planning and Development.

Town Planner: No longer exists. The position is now Director of Community Planning and Development.

Constables: Is this necessary and reconcile with Section 808.

Library Director: Not listed in Section 801 or 804.

- ◆ Section 907 & 909: A public hearing and annual budget meeting are required. No action can be taken at either meeting. Possibly eliminate the public hearing.
- ◆ Section 506: Review and make recommendation concerning raising or lowering (3%) amount for referendum. Also, consider possibility of all capital projects being approved at referendum.