

Members of the Charter Revision Commission;

I have some suggestions of changes to the Charter that I would appreciate your considering. They are, in no particular order, as follows:

Section 604. This section details that the Director of Library Services is hired and fired by the Board of Library Trustees. This is the only Director of own Services that does not report to, nor is named by, the Town Manager. I went researching as to how this came about, and why. It appears that this has been the practice since Bloomfield first had a library. I can tell you that my research indicates that this came about because the Library was not funded through the Town's budget. I cannot tell whether or not it was funded by a separate tax schedule or how the funds were raised by the Library Board of trustees. What I can determine is that sometime between July 1, 1938 and June 30, 1940, this practice changed, as the fiscal report for the year ending June 30, 1941 shows that the funding for the Library was part of the Town's budget.

I suggest that this should be modernized so this Director is on an equal footing with all the other Directors of the Town. The Library Board of Trustees could still oversee the operation of the Town's libraries, similar as to how some of the advisory bodies for other town operations (Parks and Leisure Services, the Wintonbury golf course, etc.) as examples. Further than could also act as the final review panel to recommend to the Town Manager which candidate or candidates to consider.

Section 601. This section identifies that the Town shall have a head of the Department of Public Safety. What it does not do is delineate whether this individual is the Town Manager or the Police Chief. I suggest that this be clearly spelled out. My suggestion is that it probably should be the Chief of Police, but an equal argument can be made that it should be the Town Manager.

Section 301. This section lists that there shall be 9 members of the Town Council. I suggest that there should be ten members of the Town Council.

Section 302. This section lists the responsibilities of the Mayor. I suggest that wording be added that the Mayor of votes on Council matters in case of a tie in the voting by members of the own Council.

Section 201. This section, where it pertains to the members of the Town Council, lists the term of office to be two years and that there are nine members. I suggest that this should changed to ten members, and the terms should be for four years rather than two. In addition, I suggest that we would elect 5 members every two years. The wording to accomplish this can be similar to that for the Town Planning and Zoning and that of the Board of Education.

Section 202. I also suggest that you consider changing Section a of this Section to read that "for the office of Town Council, no party shall nominate more than three (3) persons. In addition, no person shall vote for more than five (5) persons."

I also suggest that under Chapter II of the Charter, that you include a new section that states that no person shall serve more that twelve (12) years on a particular elected body. This would still leave the opportunity for someone to serve twelve years on the Board of Education, twelve years on Planning and Zoning, as well as twelve years on the Town Council.

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I believe these suggestions would provide for replacement of elected officials but also provide continuity as provided for in the elections to the Board of Education, Planning and Zoning, and the Library Board of Trustees.

Thank you for your consideration of these suggestions. I can be reached at 860-930-7544 and would be happy to appear for discussions if you so desire.

Robert Berman

April 2, 2024