

India Rodgers

From: Suzette D-brown <suzette.dbrown@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, May 24, 2024 11:05 AM
To: India Rodgers
Subject: Concerns/information on Charter Revision

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Good morning,

Please include my comments...I will also make a brief statement at the meeting tomorrow

According to the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), the council-manager form is the most popular structure of government in the United States among municipalities with populations of 2,500 or more. Of Connecticut's 169 towns, 33 have a town manager. (Connecticut General Assembly Office of Legislative Research)

Towns with a Town Manager As Table 1 shows below, 33 Connecticut municipalities have town managers as their CEOs. Town managers are most common in mid-sized municipalities; the populations of town manager towns range from approximately 9,500 (Hebron) to 63,000 (West Hartford). Most larger municipalities (15 of the 20 largest) have elected mayors as their CEOs and all 20 of those with the smallest populations have first selectmen (Department of Public Health, 2019 Annual Town and County Population for Connecticut and 2019 Connecticut State Register and Manual).

Municipality Charter Legislative Body Population

Avon Yes town council 18,276 Berlin Yes town council 20,436 Bloomfield Yes town council, town meeting 21,211
Cheshire Yes town council 28,937 Clinton Yes town council, town meeting 12,925 Coventry Yes town council, town meeting 12,407 Cromwell Yes town council 13,839 East Hampton Yes town council, town meeting 12,800 Enfield Yes town council 43,659 Farmington Yes town council, town meeting 25,497 Glastonbury Yes town council 34,482 Granby Yes board of selectmen 11,507 Groton Yes town council, representative town meeting 38,436 Hebron Yes board of selectmen, town meeting 9,504 Killingly Yes town council, town meeting 17,336 Manchester Yes town council (called a board of directors) 57,584 Mansfield Yes town council, town meeting 25,487 Meriden Yes town council (called a city council) 59,395 Newington Yes town council 30,014 North Branford Yes town council 14,146 Norwich Yes town council (called a city council) 38,768 Plainville Yes town council 17,534 Rocky Hill Yes town council 20,115 Simsbury Yes board of selectmen 25,395 South Windsor Yes town council 26,162 Southington Yes town council 43,834 Tolland Yes town council 14,618 Watertown Yes town council, town meeting 21,578 West Hartford Yes town council 62,965 Wethersfield Yes town council 26,008 Winchester Yes board of selectmen, town meeting 10,604 Windham Yes town council, town meeting 24,561 Windsor Yes town council, town meeting 28,73

Section 201- Elections....I do not think we should go with staggered terms.

Out of our surrounding town 1 town (Hartford- Population 121,054 have 4-year council term which ties to the mayor term) all others are 2-year terms

Section 205- Voting District...Bloomfield is a small town. I think splitting us up in voting district will further divide us. I also think it will eliminate the "minority" part participation. Interesting to note our Capitol City of Hartford much larger than Bloomfield votes at large

Out of our surrounding towns all towns conduct at large voting

Would like to add this information as well: Out of our surrounding towns we only have 2 (East Hartford- Population 51,045 and Hartford- Population 121,054) who operate under Strong Mayor/Council form of government.

Section 301- Town Council (Compensation)

Out of our surrounding town 2 (East Hartford and Hartford) provide compensation/stipends to council members.

I have provided the information above for you to have an understanding of governance of some of the 169 Towns in CT.

I believe that Bloomfield is a special town, and we should keep it that way. We are a small town and voting on the people that represent us by districts would further divide us. We would now have individuals looking out for their individual districts and not necessarily in the best interest of the entire town. We have individuals that feel left out already this will just cause a further issue.

I have been told that this issue came up years ago in the DTC to no avail. Let's keep moving and not resort to inflict undue harm for personal reasons.

Keeping the election of the Town council as it would be of benefit. The two-year term gives our residents the opportunity to decide their legislative body (if the current is doing a good job keep them if not change them). I think it is more important to keep good staff after all they are the ones doing the work. I also believe that group dynamics (not groupthink) is important so a good team/ slate would be of benefit as well

Towns with a "strong " mayor get some form of compensation. I will say If other elected positions in Bloomfield get the same consideration, then so be it. How about all elected positions get some form of tax break like the volunteer Ambulance. We would also evaluate to cost to the town.

As a side note those that a pushing for this now dragged me then when they falsely accused me of trying to be a "strong "mayor. Not only was the narrative a lie but it's very interesting now how it has changed. We are basing rules on who we like not what is in the best interest of the town...let's be very carefull

I want to once again go on record to say we should not make decisions to benefit current leadership because leadership will change then where will that leave the town. The residents of Bloomfield should be at the forefront of our minds when we go down this path. We should also be mindful that we will have to live with these changes for a while. I am for Bloomfield all day not any individuals or groups (things changes) All of Bloomfield should be our NorthStar.

Respectfully submitted

Suzette DeBeatham-Brown
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