

**Town of Prospect Charter Revision Commission**  
**Approved Minutes – Public Hearing**  
**May 12, 2016**

**Board Members Present:**

Chairman G. Gruber, R. Nash, P. Krisavage, T. Galvin, B. Hiscox, E. Cranney, J. Paulella,  
P. Reed, K. Blinstrubas

Chairman Gruber opened the Public Hearing at 7:00 pm. He announced the purpose of this Public Hearing is for the specific purpose of hearing the opinions on the draft Revised Charter Document from the Residents of the Town of Prospect. He also stated that Legal Notice of this Public Hearing appeared in the Republican American Newspaper on May 4, 2016. The Legal Notice of this Public Hearing as it appeared in the newspaper was then read aloud.

The public was invited to speak. The public comments are as follows:

1. Scott Martin, 15 Heritage Drive, Prospect, CT: Section 2.01. Does not agree with the Commission's change of appointing the Town Clerk, Tax Collector and Town Treasurer. The change is unnecessary. The decision of who holds these positions should be left up to the people of the Town. This change would be similar to having the Governor choosing Mayors. He suggested the Commission keep these positions as is, elected. He does support the change of requiring job descriptions for Town employees.
2. William Lauber III, 33 Salem Road, Prospect, CT: Speaking as a voter, he agrees entirely with Mr. Martin regarding the change to 2.01. The voters should have a say in who holds these positions.
3. William Lauber III, 33 Salem Road, Prospect, CT, speaking as Asst. Chief, Volunteer Fire Department of Prospect, Inc., he commented on page 24, section 7.02, regarding the Town Council may enter into a written agreement with the Volunteer Fire Department of Prospect, Inc. He complained that the Fire Department was not involved in any way with this decision and that he was not notified. He does not read the paper, so putting a public hearing notice in the paper did not help him. He suggested that perhaps the Commission should have published this on Facebook. The fire department has existed for 70 years. The way it works it not broken, so don't fix it.
4. Jason Kolodziej, 15C Juggernaut Road, Prospect, CT and Fire Chief. He reiterated his Asst. Chief's comments regarding the use of an agreement between Town Council and the Fire Department (Section 7.02). He considered this change a slap in the face as an agreement is not needed. In his 4 ½ years he has never had to sign an agreement and he has no intention of doing so in the future. He also commented on the appointment vs. election of certain positions. (Section 2.01). He is not in favor of this. He pays taxes and deserves a vote. The Commission is on a slippery slope. He reminded the Commission that it is still a democracy.
5. David Young, 35 Nancy Mae Ave, Prospect, CT: He presented a letter dated 05/12/16 written by Marie Delage, no address provided. Chairman Gruber read the letter aloud. She questioned the logic in changing the positions of Town Clerk, Tax Collector, and Town Treasurer (Section 2.01). She thanked the Commission for their time.

6. Diane Lauber, 9 Pondview Drive, Prospect, CT: She is disappointed with decisions of the Commission. She has read all the minutes. The minutes do not reflect the reasoning of the Commission's decisions. Regarding Section 2.01 and changing the positions of Town Clerk, Tax Collector and Town Treasurer from elected to appointed, she is "absolutely opposed to this change" and can't see the reasoning. She spoke of her bookkeeping and secretarial background and her oath that she takes as an elected official. She next commented on the change in Section 8.02 on the annual budget. The Commission proposed changing the date for which town departments, offices and agencies submit forms for financial appropriations from February 10 to January 15. This date change would be difficult for her as Tax Collector. She prefers a date of February 1<sup>st</sup>.

Commission member Tom Galvin reminded the public not to hold back. The Commission's decisions are not set in stone.

Commission member Tom Galvin reminded the public that the Public Hearing is informational for the Charter Revision Commission and that the issues raised at the Public Hearing would be discussed during the CRC Regular Meeting.

7. Bob Harvey, 5 Tress Road, Prospect, CT. No need for an agreement between Town Council and Fire Department.

Commission member Tom Galvin encouraged the public to stay for the Regular Meeting of the Charter Revision Commission which will follow the close of the Public Hearing.

Chairman Gruber agreed with Mr. Galvin. He reminded the public that every meeting held by the Commission was open to the public and that notices were made in town newspapers, on the town website and via letter to all boards, commissions and town employees. He described the remainder of the process involving the Charter Revision and that voting on the charter revisions would be on September 8<sup>th</sup>.

8. Dave Michaud, 5 Meadow Lane, Prospect, CT. Regarding Section 2.01, 6.15 and 6.17. He is not supportive of the change. It does not need to be changed. Regarding Section 7.02. He has been a member of the Fire Department since 1997. There has never been any agreement between Town and Fire Department. He does not support this change.
9. Theresa Graveline, 20 Corrine Drive, Prospect, CT. She thanked the Commission for their time and efforts. She likes the preamble. She agrees with the public who spoke this evening. She agrees with the change in annual audit and the number of consecutive annual audits performed by the same firm. She mentioned her disappointment in the general clarity of the minutes.
10. Bob Chatfield, 25 Cornwall Ave., Prospect, CT, Mayor. The Mayor was asked if he had anything in writing to provide the Commission, since he informed us that he had a number of items to go over. He had nothing in writing to provide the Commission. He will only speak, as he always does.
  - a. Section 2.01 – Not in agreement with changing the three positions from elected to appointed. He chastised the Commission for not thinking this through. He questioned what

- would happen in the event that the Mayor is not a part of the majority party. He cited the 97% tax collection rate. He considers this a slap in the face to all elected officials.
- b. Section 2.01, page 5 – Regarding the paragraph beginning with: “The terms of all Municipal Officers shall commence on the second Friday...”; he suggested a time should be defined.
  - c. Section 2.02(b) – page 5. Might want to add the Director of Public Works and the Land Use Inspector.
  - d. Section 3.07: Relations to Administrative Service: Regarding the first paragraph on page 10, he has a problem with the wording “...provided the Mayor may seek advice from the Council regarding appointments...”. [He suggested no changes. Note: the draft revised charter document did not propose any word changes for this language.] He doesn’t see anywhere in Charter when the Mayor takes office.
  - e. Section 3.16: Grant Public Hearings – regarding the second paragraph, he questioned the level of detail requested. [No change was suggested.]
  - f. Section 5.02, page 17 – Duties of the Mayor. Regarding the Mayor’s Transition Report, he stated that there is no mention of the same “online notification” as is listed in other sections covering the Town’s Annual Report. Chairman Gruber explained to the Mayor that Chapter 12 should cover this.
  - g. Section 5.03 – With regards to the Library, he mentioned who (the Town) is responsible for mowing grass and that electricity rate has been locked in for 4 years. [No change was suggested.]
  - h. Sections 6.12, 6.13, 6.14, 6.15, 6.16, page 22 – Regarding the language “The Mayor, with the consent of the Town Council, shall appoint and...”, he would like to see “with the consent of the Town Council” deleted. Additionally, he is concerned about what happens when the Mayor’s party differs from the majority party of the Town Council?
  - i. Section 6.04: Emergency Management Advisory Council - He agrees with the changes for Emergency Management.
  - j. Section 3.02 – He agrees with breaking the tie of the Town Council language.
  - k. Section 7.02 - Regarding an agreement between Town Council and Fire Department. He doesn’t see the reason for this change. He mentioned his years of service to the town and the deceased members of the Fire Department. He considers this change an insult.
  - l. Section 8.02 Budget. He stated he is the only one in this room this evening that has ever prepared a town budget. He would like the date stated in the second paragraph changed from January 15<sup>th</sup> to February 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - m. Section 8.03 – He suggested changing the date in the first paragraph from February 15<sup>th</sup> to March 1<sup>st</sup>. He stated that he has time constraints, and in 8.04 you gave the Town Council 10 extra days.
  - n. Section 8.04 – In the second paragraph he liked the date of April 30<sup>th</sup>. The Chairman reminded the Mayor that the dates in section 8.02, 8.03 and 8.04 of the document were the dates provided by the Mayor to the Commission during his visit to the CRC in April.
  - o. Section 8.04, page 27 – Regarding the third paragraph: “Should the Annual Town Budget Meeting disapprove the budget, subsequent Town Budget Meetings shall be called at ~~ten~~ seven (10 7) day intervals until a budget is approved”. Upon request of the Mayor, Chairman

Gruber asked Attorney Santoro to research whether there is a CT Statute issue with this being 7 days.

- p. Section 9.01, page 30 - Thank you.
- q. Section 11.01, page 32 – Conflict of interest. Asked the Commission to consider simple majority vs.  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority.
- r. Section 12.01, page 32 – He suggested the clerk of the boards and commissions shall have to forward to his office the information to post on Town’s internet website.
- s. Suggested that the Commission move towards more than one question on the ballot for revisions to the charter.

- 11. Colleen DeBiase, 23 Trotters Way, Prospect, CT: Expressed dissatisfaction with negative comments on minutes. The Town pays \$150 per meeting. It equates to less than minimum wage and the Town requires that I pay my own self-employment taxes. You get what you pay for. Expressed dissatisfaction with the comments made by the Mayor. Reminded him that he had been invited to participate in the process of the charter review. Asked why did he wait so long to present so many issues? Expressed dissatisfaction with the members of Fire Department who spoke of not knowing about this meeting. The fire department did receive notification. Reminded the public that the Charter Commission members are also volunteering their time.
- 12. Diane Lauber, 9 Pondview Drive. Appreciates comments of Mayor. Appreciates the time and effort of the Commission.

Commission member Tom Galvin reminded the public that at the close of the Public Hearing the Commission will have their Regular Meeting. He asked the fire chief to stay and participate.

Chairman Gruber thanked everyone for their input and specifically thanked all the firemen for their dedicated service to the town.

Chairman Gruber closed the Public Hearing at 7:56 pm.

[Note: At the close of the Public Hearing many of the people who raised questions during the Public Hearing left, even though they had been informed that the questions/issues raised during the Public Hearing would be discussed during the CRC Regular Meeting. Many of the Commissioners asked the people to remain, unfortunately they left – even the Mayor left.]

G. Gruber, Chairman

C. DeBiase, Clerk

PROSPECT, CONN  
TOWN CLERKS OFFICE  
RECEIVED FOR RECORD  
2016 MAY 25 AM 8:37  
*Wendy A. DeBiase*  
TOWN CLERK