

**Town Council Public Hearing**  
**Charter Revision**  
**June 21, 2015**

The Town of Prospect's Public Hearing for a Charter Revision was called to order by Town Council Chairman Thomas J. Galvin @ 7:00 P.M. The meeting was held at the Prospect Town Hall, 36 Center Street. The taped meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Galvin read the Notice of the Public Hearing into the record:

Town of Prospect Public Hearing: 'Public Notice as provided under CT General Statutes and the Prospect Town Charter is herewith given by the Town of Prospect Town Council. A Public Hearing will be held on Tuesday, June 21, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the lower level conference room of the Prospect Town Hall, 36 Center Street, Prospect, CT. Residents of the Town of Prospect are invited to attend the Public Hearing to voice their opinions on the proposed draft revisions to the Charter. Copies of the proposed draft revisions to the Charter as well as copies of the existing Charter can be obtained in the Town Clerk's office at no charge and by way of the official Town website. The Town website may be accessed as follows: <http://www.townofprospect.org>. To access the copies of the proposed draft revisions to the Charter and the existing Charter on the website, select "Town Charter" on the bottom right hand side of the website homepage. Links to both the proposed draft revisions to the Charter and the existing Charter will be on the Charter Revision Commission's (CRC) page'. Thomas J. Galvin, Chairman RA June 15, 2016.

T. Galvin began the Public Hearing by stating that the Town Council has been reviewing the recommendations by the Charter Revision Commission, which were received on May 17, 2016. The total time for review is 45 days and the Town Council has 15 days from tonight's meeting to give the recommendations back to the CRC. The CRC will have two weeks to give back to the Town Council and at that point the Town Council will either take out completely or accept the recommendations as a whole or remove some. T. Galvin advised that the object of the Public Hearing is to listen to the public. T. Galvin requested public comment.

D. Lauber, 9 Pondview, Prospect Tax Collector, came to the podium several times advising of her unwavering feeling that the offices of Tax Collector, Town Clerk and Town Treasurer should stay as 'Elected' and 'not' Appointed positions. D. Lauber included in her discussion the proposed additions to Sections 6.15, 6.16, 6.17, and 6.18; elected vs. appointed positions. D. Lauber stated that due to the Town of Prospect being the Town government that it has been, the elected officials should stay as elected. D. Lauber stated that there has been discussion of the pool of candidates to be small, but she felt this was due to her hard work over the past 27 to 28 years to be the type of Tax Collector that the Town would expect. D. Lauber continued that she has taken an oath of office which she takes seriously. D. Lauber continued that she felt the Town of Prospect respects her position and when she chooses not to run or looses an election,

the pool would be larger as the Town Committees would put up their best candidates. D. Lauber also stated that the form of government that the Town of Prospect has, allows for people to be elected to these positions every two years. D. Lauber also commented on some talk of the Assessor's certification and if the Tax Collector is also. D. Lauber explained that the Assessor has to be certified to sign the Grand list. D. Lauber continued that the position of the Tax Collector is per State Statutes; there is not a specific job description for her position or an elected official. D. Lauber stated that there is a Tax Collector Association for a new Tax Collector to contact for guidance, also a Town Clerk's Association for any new Town Clerk to reach out to. In her office, there are policies and procedures that the staff follows. With respect to residency, and choosing from a pool of candidates with qualifications, D. Lauber did not feel that an appointed non-resident Tax Collector would be so compassionate to a Town resident. D. Lauber stated that as a resident of Prospect and being the Tax Collector there are a lot of instances where she will reach out to the public. D. Lauber stated that she did not like comments from other Towns that an elected official did not show up for work and the governing body had a right to 'fire' the individual, she felt that the individual to be replaced should remain with the voters. T. Galvin stated that D. Lauber was speaking on behalf of one of the recommendations made by the CRC to consider, the Town Clerk, the Tax Collector and the Town Treasurer, to be appointed by the Mayor and Town Council as opposed to being elected. T. Galvin also stated that there is some misconception that the appointments would serve at the pleasure of the Mayor and Town Council, but CRC members stated that 'appointments' should be 'hired' positions and stated as such. T. Galvin stated that there was some discussion as to term; the term did not change. T. Galvin continued that much of the Charter goes back to the original date of 1967 and as some of the language is not clear, it had been suggested to 'clean up' the Charter and clarify by adding job qualifications and evaluating by job performance. T. Galvin explained that the Charter is a document that shows the functions and procedures of city government and looks ahead to the future.

Anne Marie Burr, 4 Radio Town Road, Assist. Tax Collector, spoke on the proposed change from Elected vs. Appointed positions and she stated that she looked at the election data and totaled up the number of voters who vote and found that the people will vote for who they want in office. A. Burr advised that she has been a voter in the Town of Prospect since she was 18 years old and feels that if an elected position is changed to an appointed position, her voting rights will be taken away. A. Burr also stated that some of the changes in the Charter are trying to change the Town of Prospect's form of government; she continued, the people vote, this portrays what Prospect is. A. Burr stated that the Town's government is based on, voting for a Mayor and Town Council and concludes with a Town meeting. A. Burr explained that the Town has a strong Mayor and an elected Council. A. Burr continued that there has been some talk of creating a Town Manager position. A. Burr stated very adamantly that she is strongly against changing the Town's form of government. A. Burr continued that the people are able to have a say in the Town's form of government. A. Burr commented that everyone has worked very hard at keeping the tax basis low; the Council works extremely hard with the Mayor to keep the mil rate down. A. Burr continued that if the officials are changed from elected to appointed, with

qualifications for a specific positions, the salaries of the appointed individuals will be increased which will make the tax base higher. A. Burr stated that she has witnessed this at the Library, with the Librarian having a Masters' Degrees; the wages are expected to be higher. A. Burr also referenced if an individual from Town did not have qualifications, then with the new Charter, non-resident candidates would be considered. A. Burr stated that looking at the residency of the Town of Prospect; she could not believe that out of 9,300 and 9,400 people, there would not be a qualified person to run for Tax Collector, Town Clerk or Treasurer. A. Burr stated that she wanted the Town Of Prospect to stay as is, the one she grew up in, raised her children and had her grandchildren visit.

Bob Albert, 9 Wilkins, Firmly believed in keeping elected officials. B. Albert stated that the Town will have to pay thousands of dollars if an appointed person is out in two years. B. Albert explained that he is dead set against an appointed official and stated to keep elected officials.

Scott Martin, 15 Heritage Drive, stated that he had attended a Charter revision meeting and that he was in favor of the Town's people voting and came tonight to hear what people had to say. S. Martin stated that it comes down to the power of the vote. He explained that he had heard things like technology and performance. S. Martin continued that performance is what you do in the position that you were put into by the people and the people will remove you. S. Martin stated that he felt the people of Prospect are smart on how they vote. S. Martin advised that he and his family came from a higher tax based town to Prospect on how it was run. S. Martin continued that technology has changed immensely; but the Mayor is the Mayor and he has done a phenomenal job. S. Martin stated that he does not like having anything taken away, but by the power of the vote. S. Martin continued that due to changing times, a good lawyer would need to be in place and if someone is doing a poor job, then the people would be heard by removing the individual through voting.

David Young, 35 Nancy Mae, Current Treasurer, raised his concern as a voter stating that his position as a voter is being usurped. D. Young continued that with respect to the positive, this country has fought for its right to vote. D. Young remarked on section 3.02 Presiding Officer: 'This shall be the first order of business and the Mayor shall preside over the meeting without a vote until a Chairperson is elected. If the vote for Chairperson remains a tie after (3) ballots the Mayor shall be permitted to vote to elect a Chairperson. If the Mayor is unable to preside over said Town Council meeting due to absence or disability, the Town Clerk shall preside over said Town Council Meeting until a Chairperson is elected' and commented on the Town Clerk presiding over the Town Council Meeting until a Chairperson is elected and questioned the process if the Town Clerk is not in office. D. Young referenced Section 8.05 Expenditures and Accounting Treasurer and commented on signing of payment vouchers, hiring a Comptroller or CPA but not a lawyer unless CPA certified and hiring an assistant to the Treasurer in the event of an absence by the Treasurer or Mayor. D. Young ended by advising that voting for offices is the Democratic way.

D. Lauber, 9 Pondview Dr., commented on the proposed appointed positions vs. the elected positions by the Mayor. D. Lauber stated that she found a (2) year appointment to be a stumbling block. D. Lauber added that the Mayor and the Town Council hold the power of the Town, but the electorate in the end does, in most cases, by voting. D. Lauber stated that the position should be elected and for (2) years and not appointed; by changing to appointed positions it could change the character of Town.

Mayor Robert J. Chatfield went on record to say that Prospect is a very small town with a 'Heart'. Mayor Chatfield stated that Prospect is not Waterbury, New York or Chicago or any other big city that some like to compare us to. Mayor Chatfield said that we are a small town not a big business, the Town has been in business since 1827, and towns stay running. Mayor Chatfield stated that as to the Conflict of Interest he has no blood or married person working for the Town of Prospect and no-one is of his blood. The Mayor stated that he is ultimately opposed of not electing the Tax Collector, Town Clerk or Treasurer. The Mayor explained that he was stationed in Germany and many servicemen and women gave up their lives for the right to vote freely. The Mayor continued that if the Mayor of one party wanted to 'appoint' an individual and the Town Council majority was of another party, and the Mayor did not have their consent, there could be a stalemate and an alternate candidate would need to be chosen. The Mayor also explained that the current job descriptions were written by those people that do the jobs. Mayor Chatfield continued that a day does not go by that there is something that is not in the Charter. Mayor Chatfield also stated that if a Board or Commission or if someone has something to be put onto the Town's website, specifics need to be made that the information would be given to the mayor's office to be put online. The Mayor questioned why the CRC singled out the Grant's Director but no other department, Tax Collector or Town Clerk etc. Mayor Chatfield commented on some of the changes to Emergency Management and thanked the CRC. Mayor Chatfield questioned if different verbiage had been written for the Fire Dept. T. Galvin explained that as of yet, no verbiage had been re-written. Mayor Chatfield requested of the Council the proposed change for verbiage for both the Police Services and the Fire Dept. Mayor Chatfield thanked the CRC for all of their time and requested that more time be spent on verbiage for Police Services and the Fire Department. Mayor Chatfield requested that the Council reconsider the paragraph (Schedule A) that Mayor Chatfield had given to the CRC for Chapter 7 Police Services. The Mayor explained that the Fire Department has been running well since 1945 and currently finding volunteers is getting harder. T. Galvin requested that J. Slapikas read into the record the change that was proposed. J. Slapikas read into the record for Section 7.01: Police Services: The Town Council shall provide Police Services as required for the safety and protection of the Town and its Citizens. J. Slapikas also read into the record Section 7.02: Fire Dept: The Town Council shall provide fire protection and services and medical response services as required for the Safety and Protection of the Town and its Citizens. T. Galvin had commented that the revisions are a work In progress. Mayor Chatfield commented on the conflict of interest and asked why a 'super majority and not a simple majority'. Mayor Chatfield closed by stating it 'seems that more changes are being made that do not need to be made, are unneeded and unwanted and by trying to change the Charter it will change the character of

as one of the 9 members of the CRC, thanked the Charter Revision Commission for all their time spent and explained that from the beginning, some folks didn't want changes at all.

Katie Blinstrubas, 24 Maple Drive commented that she grew up in Town, raised her children here and would like the Town to stay as is for her grandchildren to visit and she does not want the character of the Town to change. K. Blinstrubas commented on the positions of Tax Collector and Town Clerk; stating that some people may not want to be certified nor do they need a Master's Degree. K. Blinstrubas stated that 'jobs' change, though she did not know the qualifications for a Tax Collector or for a Town Clerk. K. Blinstrubas explained that she felt people could fill the job with minimal skills and a 'willingness to learn'. K. Blinstrubas continued that as far as the Town Clerk and the 'swearing in' of people, the Town Clerk does not take office until January 1<sup>st</sup> per State Statute and the person stays in office until there is someone to replace them.

D. Lauber commented on the qualifications for the Tax Collector, Town Clerk and Treasurer and noted that they were singled out. D. Lauber expressed her feeling that there is no need for change, explaining that Town Hall is the 'Heart' of the community. As for the Fire Department, D. Lauber explained that the Asst. Fire Chief, Bill Lauber was pleased to hear that there was a change to the wording for Fire Department and asked that the Council request the Fire Chief and Asst. Fire Chief to come back to the Council for a discussion. D. Lauber commented that she has a problem of 'appointing' a position for a 2 year term and continued that as to 'Elected vs. Appointed' position, 'The Mayor, with the majority of the Town Council approval'; not just one person, but the majority of the Council, gives the approval. T. Galvin stated that there is a need to change the language of the Charter.

Bob Albert, 9 Wilkens Lane, commented that he finds it appalling that someone would want to take his voting rights away.

Bob Nash, 156 Sycamore Dr., commented that he has been working with the CRC for the past 9 months. B. Nash stated that he is learning what Prospect is about and how a municipal government is run. B. Nash stated that as to 'appointments', the term should be 'hire', and that a process would be to hire someone that would demonstrate their ability and stay in the job, not to term. B. Nash continued that a position should be filled either by election or hire, by Town rules. B. Nash stated that the Tax Collector, Town Clerk and Treasurer do their work by what the Town officials prescribe. B. Nash continued that if the Town were to hire in these positions, it would be to hire people with specific skills. B. Nash stated that the Charter should show step by step details and without the Charter changed, nothing could be done by the Mayor or the Town Council. B. Nash stated that the appointment process would be appropriate and sensible and there would be no short term appointment. B. Nash continued that the individual would stay hired as long as they were performing within the job description.

Council member J. Slapikas commented that the Council has been working through the discussions on 'appointments' and 'hire', using what has been given and is in the works to

change. J. Slapikas stated that the recommendations will be looked at and reconsidered, and clarification will be made to clean-up the ambiguity between 'appointed' and 'hired'.

AnneMarie Burr, 4 Radio Tower read into the record a proposed change to Section 3.14 Salaries: Officers and Town Employees: 'Further, the Town Council shall either establish or cause to be established, job descriptions and an annual performance review process for all Town employees'. A. Burr raised her concern that the form of government for Prospect was going to change by taking away the elected positions. A. Burr commented on job descriptions and annual performance reviews and compensation. A. Burr stated that compensations (wage) are already in place as the Council reviews through the Budget process. A. Burr stated that many people may not know what a certain job entails and though she would come before the Council with confidence, she hoped the Council would take this into consideration on the review process. T. Galvin stated that what the existing language meant in Section 3.14 Salaries was unclear. T. Galvin continued that the Council was not aware of any performance standards and did not know how certain jobs should be paid. T. Galvin stated that most Department heads were under paid. T. Galvin stated that there was no documentation of an employee handbook; there was no continuity for the process of hiring or firing an individual.

D. Lauber, 9 Pondview Dr. commented that she agreed with T. Galvin that the Council needs job descriptions and some wage ranges; the majority of raises are based on the rate of inflation 2-2.5%. D. Lauber continued that to hire or promote, a Department head would come to the Council and review, asking the Council for more than the 2-2.5% increase, as she had in the past. D. Lauber stated that there may be a 'handbook', but if anyone had a question, they would ask the Mayor's office. D. Lauber stated that there had been some talk of involving a Human Resource Person and she did not feel that this was necessary as someone may not have the best relationship with their Department head and in that case, the Mayor's office could be consulted. L. Fitzgerald commented that a salary scale and job descriptions should be established as discussed by the Town Council.

T. Galvin asked for more comments from the public. Hearing none, T. Galvin closed the Public Hearing @ 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Rosalyn B. Moffo, Clerk

(Schedule A)

Suggestion (describe solution):

In order for the Town of Prospect to meet the requirements set forth under Title 7, Chapter 104 Section 7 of the Connecticut General Statutes, it is recommended that the current section 7.01 POLICE SYSTEM, under Chapter 7 Public Safety, of the Charter for the Town Of Prospect, be replaced in its entirety with the following:

Chapter 7  
Public Safety

PROSPECT, CONN.  
TOWN CLERKS OFFICE  
RECEIVED FOR RECORD  
2016 JUN 24 AM 9:11  
TOWN CLERK  
*Monica A. Budner*

SECTION 7.01. POLICE SERVICES

The term "police officer" shall mean a town employee hired by the Town of Prospect to serve in the capacity of a police officer.

The Mayor shall appoint, with the advice and consent of the Town Council, and supervise such number of police officers as may be deemed necessary by the Town Council. Consent shall not be withheld without just cause.

The Town Council shall, by resolution, prescribe all requirements necessary for qualifying all police officers in accordance with the standards set forth by the Connecticut Police Officers Standards and Training Council.

The Prospect Police shall be responsible for the preservation of the public peace, prevention of crime, apprehension of criminals, regulation of traffic, protection of rights of persons and property and enforcement of the laws of the state and the ordinances of the town and all rules and regulations made in accordance therewith. All members of the Prospect Police shall have the same powers and duties with respect to the service of criminal process and enforcement of criminal laws as are vested in police officers by the general statutes. The Mayor shall be the executive officer of the Prospect Police. The Mayor or his designee shall assign all members of the Prospect Police to their respective posts, shifts, details and duties. The Mayor or his designee shall be responsible for the care and custody of all property used by the Prospect Police and for the efficiency, discipline and good conduct of its members. The Mayor or his designee shall make rules for the operation of the Prospect Police and the conduct of the police officers.

All police officers shall have the powers and duties as prescribed by the General Statutes of the State and may be removed by the Hearings Board for any violation of the prescribed Policies and Procedures of the Prospect Police, or other due and sufficient cause.

Anyone not fulfilling his or her responsibilities as a police officer shall be presented at a Hearings Board consisting of the Town Council, and one of the Town's police officers, as chosen by the accused.

The Hearings Board shall follow the procedures established by Ordinance # 37-07-19-77 of the Town Council. (AMENDED 11/79)