

**WOLCOTT TOWN COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING**

Tuesday, August 24, 2010
Wolcott Town Hall, Council Chambers
7:00 P.M.
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MINUTES

Note: These are summary minutes. A tape recording of this meeting is on file in Wolcott Town Hall; Commission Secretary's Office.

Chairman Santogatta called the Special Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance, and attendance was taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Michael Santogatta, Vice-Chairman Steven Olmstead, David Valletta, Gale Mastrofrancesco, Charles Marsella, Michael Bokon, Randy Petroniro, and Michael Perrone

MEMBERS ABSENT: Francis Masi

ALSO PRESENT: Mayor Thomas Dunn; Brian Tynan, Town Attorney; Mark Monterosso, Chairman, Development & Industrial Commission; Arline Tansley, Vice-Chair, Charter Revision Commission; James Paolino, Member, Charter Revision Commission; Rachel Wisler, Member, Charter Revision Commission; et al.

CORRESPONDENCE (ON FILE):

1. Submitted at meeting, letter dated August 24th from Mark Monterosso stating Section 418 'Development & Industrial Commission' of Town of Wolcott Charter should have staggered terms (copy of Section 7-136 of CT General Statutes & copy of Ordinance to Establish a Development & Industrial Commission attached)

DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING PROPOSED CHARTER REVISIONS:

Chairman Santogatta gave a brief overview of the charter revision process, including where they stand now with respect to the timeline and results of any decisions that they make tonight. Discussion ensued regarding the proposed Charter Revisions (on file). A summary of comments/questions are as follows:

Mrs. Mastrofrancesco referenced Section 408A 'Civilian Police Review Board' and commented that an overwhelming amount of people are not in favor of it, and also commented that it will create another layer of bureaucracy. She noted that her recommendation would be for the Charter Revision Commission to remove that section.

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Mr. Perrone questioned if they could separate sections of the proposals and have the people decide, individually, how they would like the Charter to be changed rather than as a whole.

Attorney Tynan advised that there can only be one question on the ballot; to approve or not approve it. Now is the time to send it back to the Charter Revision Commission for revision if the Council is not happy with the document as a whole.

Lengthy discussion transpired regarding the work that the Charter Revision Commission put into this process. Mr. Perrone and Mr. Marsella commented that they feel it should be up to the voters to decide on whether a Civilian Police Review Board is something that they want for the Town. Mr. Olmstead and Mr. Petroniro both commented that the people they have spoken to are in favor of such a Board. It was noted that they currently have a great Chief of Police, who has turned the department around, however, two years ago, that was not the case. Mrs. Mastrofrancesco, Mr. Valletta, and Mr. Bokon all expressed that they are not in favor of the Civilian Police Review Board and would prefer that this section be removed from the proposals. Mr. Bokon noted that they will no longer be extending lifetime contracts to any Police Chief again, therefore, they won't encounter the types of problems they had in the past.

Mr. Perrone next commented that one of the reasons that he would not be in favor of including the Civilian Police Review Board, is that he is concerned about the appointments to that Board being very political; it would be a very difficult and challenging process to place people on that Board.

Chairman Santogatta stated that he that doesn't have a problem with it either way; he can support the proposals with or without the Civilian Police Review Board contained in it. He stated that he, personally, would probably vote for the entire report being approved and send it to referendum, as the Charter Revision Commission spent a lot of hours on it and researched it thoroughly.

Mayor Dunn commented that he is not personally in favor of a Civilian Police Review Board, but that he does not think it would be too detrimental to the Town. He noted that he thinks it would have a negative effect on the morale of the Police Department, and also commented regarding his concern about the Board being too political in nature. Mr. Petroniro asked the Mayor his opinion as to what effect he thinks a Civilian Police Review Board would have had if one were in place during all of the problems two years ago. Mayor Dunn replied that he does not believe it would have been helpful, and probably would have been detrimental.

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A **MOTION**, was offered by Michael Perrone, seconded by Randy Petroniro, to **accept** the Proposed Charter Revisions, as submitted.

Mr. Perrone referenced the proposal of combining the Acquired Facilities Commission with the Park & Recreation Commission and asked Attorney Tynan if it would be in violation of any ordinances or State Statutes. Attorney Tynan stated that it would not, however, each Commissions' budgets would not be allowed to be combined. He stated that if it passes, he will be writing a letter stating that monies that have been raised at Woodtick Recreation Area, must be used specifically for that property, and not for other properties within the Town.

Mr. Marsella commented that he is in favor of the Civilian Police Review Board, but would hate to see everything defeated because it's in there. Lengthy discussion continued during which it was noted by many of the Council members that they would hate to see all of the proposals fail at referendum due to the controversial nature of the Civilian Police Review Board.

A voice vote was taken, and the foregoing motion *failed* by a majority vote, with Mr. Petroniro voting in favor.

A **MOTION**, was offered by Gale Mastrofrancesco, seconded by Michael Bokon, to send the Proposed Charter Revisions back to the Charter Revision Commission, with the recommendation that they reconsider Section 408A 'Civilian Police Review Board' for removal.

A voice vote was taken, and the above motion *carried* by a majority vote, with Mr. Petroniro opposing.

Chairman Santogatta stated that if no one has an objection, they will schedule another Special Meeting for Tuesday, August 31, 2010, at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

Upon **MOTION**, by Charles Marsella, seconded by Michael Perrone, it was unanimously voted to **adjourn** the Special Meeting at 7:44 p.m.

APPROVED:

Elizabeth Gaudiosi
Commission Secretary

Michael J. Santogatta, Chairman
WOLCOTT TOWN COUNCIL