

BOARD OF REPRESENTATIVES
PUBLIC HEARING
AUGUST 1, 1960

A public hearing on the report of the Third Charter Revision Commission was held in Burdick Jr. High School Auditorium at 8:15 P.M. on Monday, August 1, 1960.

Matters as they appeared on the Charter Revision Commission report to the Board of Representatives, as specified in Resolution No. 322 (adopted by the Board at meeting held May 2, 1960) and in accordance with the provisions of Public Act No. 465 of the General Assembly, Session of 1957, were taken up.

The President of the Board of Representatives, Mr. John R. Nolan, presided, together with members of the Charter Revision Committee, namely: Paul T. Callahan, Chairman, Miss Rose C. Farina, J. Clyde O'Connell and Paul D. Shapero. Messrs. Connors and DeForest were absent. No roll call was taken of the Board members present at this hearing, but there appeared to be 15 members present.

Those present were invited to pick up a copy of the Charter Revision Commission report and 14 persons availed themselves of the opportunity. They were: John Stashenko, S. M. Wise, Julius Kuriansky, Jean Allaway, Frank Ursone, Louise Pape, Clair Mecca, Georgine Wexler, Nunzio A. Lupo, Louis Giancolo, Sherwood E. Rapp, William C. Kaminski, Donald Saltus (WSTC reporter) and Robert M. Meyers. Copies had previously been sent to all Board members and the Press and Radio.

There were 15 speakers, some of whom spoke for a second time. Those who spoke were: Edward Rivlin, President, SGGA; James L. Mulgano, (Marine Corps League); Nunzio Lupo; John Stashenko (member, Board of Finance); Samuel Wise (member, Board of Finance); Mrs. Wilbur Miller (member League of Women Voters); Umberto J. Bello (unsuccessful candidate for Mayor at 3 elections); Kevin Tobin (President of Stamford Police Association); Lawrence Hogan (member of Police Department); Attorney Robert Meyers; Julius Kuriansky (Attorney for Municipal Employees' Association); Sherwood E. Rapp; James P. Romanzo and Saul Kwartin, local attorney, who read a letter from Mrs. Doris M. Zuckert, former Republican member of the 5th Board of Representatives, 7th District.

The President announced that speakers were not limited to merely speaking on approved proposals, but could speak on any proposal taken before the Charter Revision Commission.

First Speaker: JAMES P. ROMANZO, Revonah Woods

Spoke in opposition of a four year plan (Sec. 102 - Terms of Office of Elective Officers) because it gives time to build up "power politics". He said biennial elections were a good checkmate on the office of Mayor or the Town and City Clerk.

Second Speaker: EDWARD RIVLIN, President, Stamford Good Government Association

Sec. 102 - Terms of Office of Elective Officers

Spoke in favor of a four year term of office for the Mayor. He said a two year term did not give a Mayor enough time to develop his own program, as he was handicapped by policies and holdovers from the previous administration. By giving the Mayor a four year term, it gave him a chance to really give his program a fair trial.

Re: Board of Education (Proposal rejected by the Charter Revision Commission)

He said this was a proposal from the SGGA. Part of this proposal was rejected, but he said he was pleased to see they accepted the proposal to provide for the annual election of three members of the Board of Education, eliminating the "lame duck" character of the present setup.

Mr. Rivlin objected to the short time after receipt of the report of the Charter Revision Commission and the public hearing. He said it gave various organizations no time to study the recommendations or to call a meeting of their organization. He urged that in the future charter revisions that more time elapse between the public notification of charter revisions and the public hearing.

Third Speaker: JAMES L. MULGANO (From the Marine Corps League)

Re: Sec. 741. Veterans' Preference

Mr. Mulgano spoke in opposition to the one time use of Veterans' Preference points in Civil Service examinations, and having it confined to only one examination with ten points being given, as recommended in the report of the Charter Revision Commission (see page 15).

Fourth Speaker: NUNZIO LUPO (Member of, Central Veterans Association) (Commander, Local Chapter of Disabled American Veterans)

Re: Sec. 741. Veterans' Preference

Mr. Lupo spoke in opposition to any change in the Charter in respect to above matter.

Fifth Speaker: JOHN STASHENKO (Democratic Member of Board of Finance)

Re: Section 651 and 651.1 - (proposal No. 5 in report)

Mr. Stashenko spoke in opposition to any change in these sections of the Charter. He said it is adequately covered by the present wording in the Charter and creates no hardship upon any city Board or the Mayor. He said the wording of the Charter at present, spells out the dates the Board of Finance shall meet in regard to the Budget, and any two members of the Board can call a meeting and make sure that a quorum will be present and the Mayor also has the right to call a meeting.

He said he has been a member of the Board of Finance for the past 9 1/2 years, he has had an opportunity to observe the meetings that members have attended and knows at first hand that many members have attended meetings from half way across the continent - that a meeting had been called Sunday, necessitating that members come back from their vacations just to attend the meeting. He pointed out that merely by changing the wording of Section 651 would not guarantee that a quorum of the members would be available and nothing would be accomplished.

Sixth Speaker: SAMUEL WISE (Republican Member of Board of Finance)

Re: Section 651 and 651.1 (proposal No. 5 in report)

Mr. Wise also spoke in opposition to any changes in this section of the Charter. He agreed with Mr. Stasherko and said the Board of Finance, in the majority of cases, have held their meetings at the convenience and ability of their members to attend. He stressed the fact that merely stating that a meeting must be called at a certain time will not guarantee that everyone will find it possible to be there. He stated that the members were business men who had to necessarily go on business trips and other personal matters that might interfere with a set date of meeting. He said they had held meetings sometimes on a Sunday afternoon or on a Saturday morning. He urged that no change be made to set a certain meeting date, because you cannot legislate the private business of individuals, and that meetings have to be arranged at the convenience of the members in order to assure that a quorum be present.

Seventh Speaker: MRS. WILBUR MILLER (19 Crestview Avenue, Springdale)

Re: Section 102 - Terms of Office of Elective Officers (Proposal No. 1 in Report)

Mrs. Miller spoke in approval of the recommendations for changing the present two year terms to four years.

Re: Sec. 112 - Concerning Election of Board of Education

Mrs. Miller said, as a member of the League of Women Voters, she had participated in a study of this matter. She urged approval of an annual election of the members of the Board of Education. She objected to the short time that was given to the various organizations in which to study the recommendations of the Charter Revision Commission. She said from Friday until Monday did not allow enough time for any organization to hold a meeting to act on the proposals and make recommendations as to how they felt on any matter.

Eighth Speaker: UMBERTO J. BELLO (3 time candidate for Mayor)

Re: Section 102 - Terms of Office of Elective Officers (Proposal No. 1 in report)

Mr. Bello spoke in opposition to any change in the present two year term of office for either the Mayor or the City Clerk.

Ninth Speaker: KEVIN TOBIN (President, Stamford Police Association)

Re: Section 741 - Veterans' Preference (Proposal No. 8 of Report)

He stated that the Safety Board, sometime ago, presented a recommendation to the Personnel Commission on this matter. Subsequent to this the Police Association held several meetings in regard to Veterans' preference points. He said the sentiment was one of reluctance to give up preferential points which one has earned through service to his country and because of the vote taken by the Association he and two others appeared before the Personnel Commission and stated their views as to why they could not support the proposal of the Safety Board. He said the members of the Police Association were very definitely opposed to limiting the points that can be used by Veterans.

Re: Section 731 and Section 501-Appointive Board Members and Organization of Personnel Commission (Proposal No. 731)

Kevin Tobin also spoke on the above matter. He said he was opposed to a 5 man Personnel Commission and thought a 3 man Commission was adequate.

Tenth Speaker: LAWRENCE HOGAN (69 Tupper Drive, Member of police Department)

Re: Section 741 - Veterans' Preference Points (Proposal No. 8 of Report)

Mr. Hogan spoke as a private citizen. He opposed the restricting of veterans' points in examinations. He said he wished to reiterate the views of the previous speaker.

Eleventh Speaker: ATTORNEY ROBERT MEYERS (126 Hoyt Street)

Re: Section 731 and Section 501- Appointive Board Members and Organization of Personnel Commission (Proposal No. 6 of report)

Attorney Meyers spoke in favor of his proposal (approved by the Charter Revision Commission) to change the Personnel Commission from a 3 member Board to a 4 member Board. He explained the reasons why he thought this change was a necessary one. He said the City of Stamford subscribes to a service from the Public Personnel Association, which is an organization in Chicago, Illinois, which serves as a Consultant to Personnel Commissions of many cities and towns throughout the U. S. He said this service recommends the ideal size of a Personnel Commission. He said he furnished to the Charter Revision Commission certain publications of this Association - that this Association had conducted a survey of 1,200 different cities and towns throughout the country, with the result that a 3 man Commission was the predominant size. He said he discovered that Stamford, however, was unique in one thing, and that was it was the only city with a member of the Classified Employees on the Personnel Commission. He said he was advised by this Consultant Personnel Association that the primary purpose of a Personnel Commission was to represent the interests

of the people of the City of Stamford and not one or more factional groups, and that a way to accomplish this would be to have an odd number of members of a Personnel Commission, when any factional group was represented on the Commission.

Twelfth Speaker: ATTORNEY JULIUS KURIANSKY (346 Westover Road - Representing the Municipal Employees Association)

Re: Section 740.1 - Appeals (Proposal No. 7 in report)

Attorney Kuriansky said the MEA (a group of some 400 members) was in favor of this amendment. He said there were already provisions in the Charter for the right of employees to appeal in the case of disciplinary action, to the Board of Appeals of the Board of Representatives. (Section 204.3 of the Charter) He said, unfortunately, there was no similar redress made available in the case of other matters, concerning an allocation or re-allocation of an employee's job, although the Charter did provide that an appeal could be made directly to the Personnel Commission. But, if an employee was turned down by that Commission, he had no further opportunity to be heard. He said it would appear that there was more need in a case of this sort, for further appeal than for a person who has violated or committed an infraction of regulations contained in the Charter and therefore made the subject of a disciplinary action. Mr. Kuriansky said this would be the same setup as is now provided for members of the Police and Fire Departments who feel they have been aggrieved by the action of the Safety Board. He said the MEA would like to have the same procedure as is already set up under Section 740, chapter 73 of the Charter, by going a step further and adding Section 740.1 to provide for redress for employees who have a grievance, to seek recourse to the Personnel Board of Appeals of the Board of Representatives.

Thirteenth Speaker: SHERWOOD GRANT ^{RAPP} (383 Shippan Avenue)

Re: Section 651 - Meetings of Board of Finance - Addition of Section 651.1 (Proposal No. 5 of Report)

Mr. Grant spoke as an individual and said he approved this proposal. He said he thought it would be of great help to know in advance when the Board of Finance was meeting in order that the public might attend such meetings, although they would not be able to participate in such meetings.

Fourteenth Speaker: JAMES P. ROMANZO (Second Time)

Re: Section 741 - Veterans' Preference Points-Morale Division of the USO)

Mr. Romanzo spoke for a second time, but on another matter (See above). He stated that he was a member of the USO in the Mobile Unit and received no benefits from serving and does not expect to and there are no provisions made for such benefits. He said he had met many service men in his experience who had been taken away from their homes, from their studies and occupations and when the war was over, found they had just a little less knowledge in the participation of examinations. He spoke in favor of the retention of these Veterans' Preference Points.

Fifteenth Speaker: EDWARD RIVLIN (Second time)

Re: Sec. 102 - Terms of Office of Elective Officers

Mr. Rivlin spoke for a second time on the above subject. He said he hoped the Committee would go thoroughly into the matter of having "Strong Mayor" type of government - its advantages and disadvantages. He urged the approval of a four year term instead of the present two year term of office.

Sixteenth Speaker: ATTORNEY SAUL KWARTIN (96 Harvest Hill Lane)

Re: Proposal No. 3 to eliminate from the Charter in several places, the right to appeal to the Board of Representatives from decisions of the Planning and Zoning Boards.

Attorney Kwartin presented a letter from Mrs. Doris M. Zuckert, a former member of the Board of Representatives, in opposition to the above proposal.

Attorney Kwartin read Mrs. Zuckert's letter. When he finished he stated that he differed with Mrs. Zuckert.

There being no further speakers, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 P.M. and the Committee then went into executive session.


Velma Farrell
Administrative Assistant
Board of Representatives

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