



**MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING
TOWN OF BETHEL, CT**

Monday, October 22, 2012
7:00 PM

CJH Municipal Center – Meeting Room “A”

RECEIVED

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TOWN OF BETHEL
TOWN CLERK

PRESENT: Charter Revision Commission - Chairman David Olson, Vice Chairman Nicholas Hoffman, Secretary Wendy Smith, William Hillman, Meghan O'Connor, William Shannon. Also in attendance was Charter Revision Commission Attorney Nicholas Vitti.

David Olson opened the Public Hearing at 7:00 pm

Commission Attorney Vitti read the call for the Public Hearing:

Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 7-191, notice is hereby given that the Charter Revision Commission of the Town of Bethel, Connecticut will hold a Public Hearing on Monday, October 22, 2012 at 7:00 PM in the CJH Municipal Center, Meeting Room “A” for the following purpose, to wit:

*To receive public comments and/or recommendations
for proposals to revise the Town of Bethel Charter.*

Dated at Bethel, Connecticut, this 24th day of September 2012.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

J. Phillip Gallagher, Sunset Hill Road: Among other comments, suggested that the 3 member Board of Selectman remain unchanged in the number of members and the length of term of office remain at 2 years. He stated that based on election patterns there is no demand in Bethel to lengthen the term of office of the First Selectman. He presented the Charter Revision Commission with a listing of his observations and suggestions.

Ann Cleary, 2 Eagle Rock Hill: Among other comments, requested that there be a Citizen Review Board created to work in conjunction with the Bethel Police Commission. The creation of such a board would form layers of oversight within the system.

William A. Michael, Fleetwood Avenue: Among other comments, offered that he is in favor of an elected Library Board of Directors due to the increase in their budget which is now almost 1.8 million per year. It would be best to have voter control over the Board.

Bernie Flemming, Quaker Ridge Road: Among other comments, suggested that the term of the First Selectman should be increased from 2 to 4 years. This would allow time for the voters to give input on how well the Selectman is doing.

Paul Szatkowski, Winthrop Road: Among other comments, offered that a 4 year term for Selectman and an increase in the number of members on the Board of Selectman from 3 to 5 would be better support a growing town like Bethel with 5 voting districts and 19,000 citizens.

Larry Craybas, Kellogg Street: Among other comments, suggested that the commission change the referendum petition floor from 5% of registered voters to 10%. If there is a valid reason to bring an issue to the voters for decision then asking the petitioner to secure 10% support from the public will not overburden them or keep valid concerns from being brought forward. He provided the Charter Revision Commission with a hard copy of his comments.

Bill Kingston, Dittmar Road: Among other comments, offered his own personal opinion that he is opposed to increasing the Board of Selectmen's flexibility to make budget neutral transfers between accounts. It is important to retain authority to overrule the Board of Selectmen to ensure appropriate spending of each line item.

Matthew Knickerbocher, Colonial Drive: Among other comments, offered that the Board of Selectmen should have the ability to reprioritize budget line items when it comes to operational matters of the town in order to meet public expectations.

Robert Crnic, Old Hawleyville Road: Among other comments, offered that the Board of Selectmen should not have the ability to transfer funds after voters have already voted on the line items. The voters should have the final word and the Board of Selectmen should be accountable to them.

Tim Beeble, Turkey Plain Road: Among other comments, suggested that there be a 4 year increase in the term of office for the First Selectmen. Also, that there should be an increase in membership for the Board of Selectmen from 3 to 5. By doing so this would create a gate keeper, dilute the power and generate freedom of information. He provided the Charter Revision Commission with a hard copy of his comments.

The Public Hearing was closed at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Debra Roper" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Debra Roper, Recording Secretary