

CITY OF NEW BRITAIN, CONNECTICUT

Charter Revision Commission
Special Meeting
May 23, 2022

DRAFT MINUTES
(Subject to Approval)

1. Call to Order.

Sharon Beloin-Saavedra called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call.

Members in Attendance: Daniel Salerno, Neil Connors, Nathan Amos, Justin Dorsey, Carmelo Rodriguez and John Buckley, Sharon Beloin-Saavedra.

3. Public Comment.

Beloin-Saavedra Saavedra opened the floor to public comment.

Carlo Carlozzi applauded the work of the Commission and stated that he strongly supports the position of Chief Operations Officer and the implementation of a minority representation requirement. He indicated that he liked the way each was presented in the draft report. He stated that he also likes the recommended ballot questions but urged the Commission to consider whether the voting public would be confused by the use of the term Revenue Collector versus Tax Collector in the second recommended ballot question.

Desiree Costa commented that she is in support of all of the recommendations of the Commission. She inquired as to what changes have been made to the draft report and Charter since the Public Hearing. Beloin-Saavedra indicated that those changes were going to be addressed in the meeting but that they wanted to add a residency requirement for the Town and City Clerk and the Revenue Collector and to revise the 4th recommended ballot question to highlight the change regarding periodic charter review.

There being no further comments, Beloin-Saavedra closed the floor to public comments.

4. Approve Meeting Minutes from May 10, 2022 Public Hearing.

The Commissioners were provided a copy of the draft minutes from the May 10, 2022 Public Hearing for review and approval. A motion was made by Dorsey to approve the minutes. Motion was seconded by Salerno. Approved 6-0. Beloin-Saavedra abstained.

5. Approve Meeting Minutes from May 10, 2022 Regular Meeting.

The Commissioners were provided a copy of the draft minutes from the May 10, 2022 Regular Meeting for review and approval. A motion was made by Dorsey to approve the minutes. Motion was seconded Connors. Approved 6-0. Beloin-Saavedra abstained.

6. Discuss Public Comment to Draft Report to the Common Council regarding Proposed Amendments to the City of New Britain's Charter.

Beloin-Saavedra reviewed the timeline for completion with the Commissioners. She stated that the Draft Report would be submitted to the Town Clerk on May 24, 2022 and that the Common Council would have forty-five (45) days from May 24, 2022 to hold a Public Hearing. The Common Council would then have fifteen (15) days from the Public Hearing to provide feedback to the Commission. Following receipt of the feedback, the Commission would have thirty (30) days to respond. She stated that upon completion of this process, the Common Council will develop the final ballot questions. Beloin-Saavedra noted that all of this needs to be completed not later than September 8, 2022.

Beloin-Saavedra directed the Commissioners to the copy of the Draft Report and revised Charter in their meeting packages. The Commissioners discussed the Draft Report and agreed that they would like to include language in the discussion points section to highlight that the Collector of Revenue, Town and City Clerk and Chief Operating Officer are each required to become a resident of the City within one year of being hired. They discussed and agreed upon draft language in each of these sections.

Salerno discussed the proposed change to Recommended Ballot Question 4 noting that he felt it was important to highlight to voters that mandatory, periodic Charter review was included in this question. The Commissioners agreed with this position.

Beloin-Saavedra asked Danielle Braun of Shipman & Goodwin LLP to define what would be included in the housekeeping matters that are covered in the Commission's Recommended Ballot Question #4 (in addition to the periodic Charter review), should the Common Council adopt these questions. Braun commented that they include eliminating references to pronouns, removing duplicative text and revising references to Sections of the Charter which no longer exist. Braun indicated that once the Common Council approves the final ballot questions, explanatory text will be prepared that will highlight these changes to the voters. Mark Bernacki stated that the explanatory text would be available in the Town Clerk's office, at polling locations and included with absentee ballots.

Buckley questioned whether Recommended Ballot Question #2 should be revised to clarify that the Revenue Collector was formerly known as the Tax Collector. Discussion ensued amongst the Commissioners. The Commissioners agreed that the Common Council could make that determination when it develops the final ballot questions.

7. Act on Draft Report to the Common Council regarding Proposed Amendments to the City of New Britain's Charter.

A motion was made by Connors to approve the Draft Report and Proposed Amendments to the Charter, subject to adding language regarding the residency requirement to the Draft Report, as discussed earlier. The Motion was seconded by Salerno. Approved 7-0.

8. Adjournment.

Motion made by Dorsey to adjourn the meeting at 6:21 p.m. The Motion was seconded by Amos. Approved 7-0.

Submitted by:

Cheryl A. Rodzen
Acting Recording Clerk