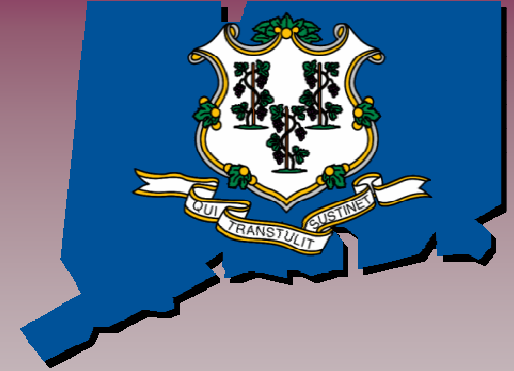
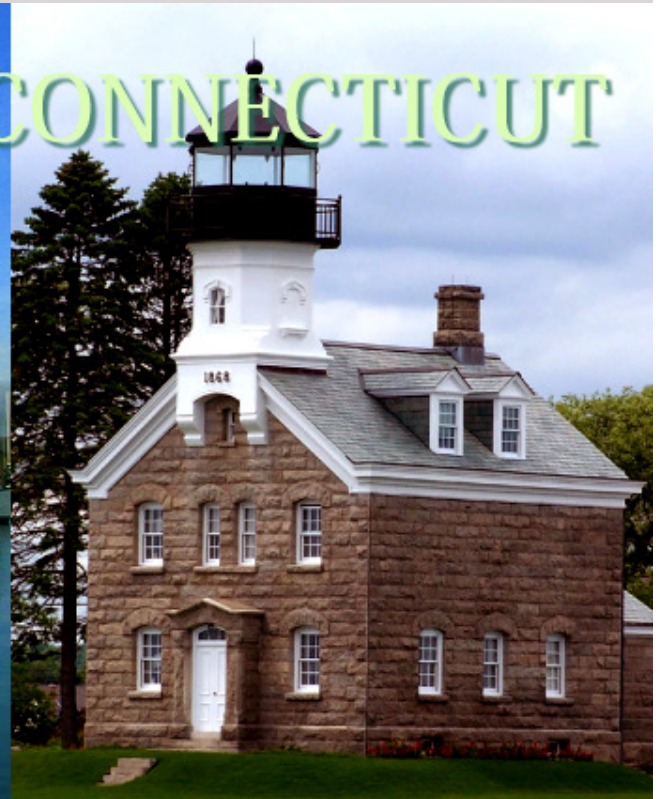
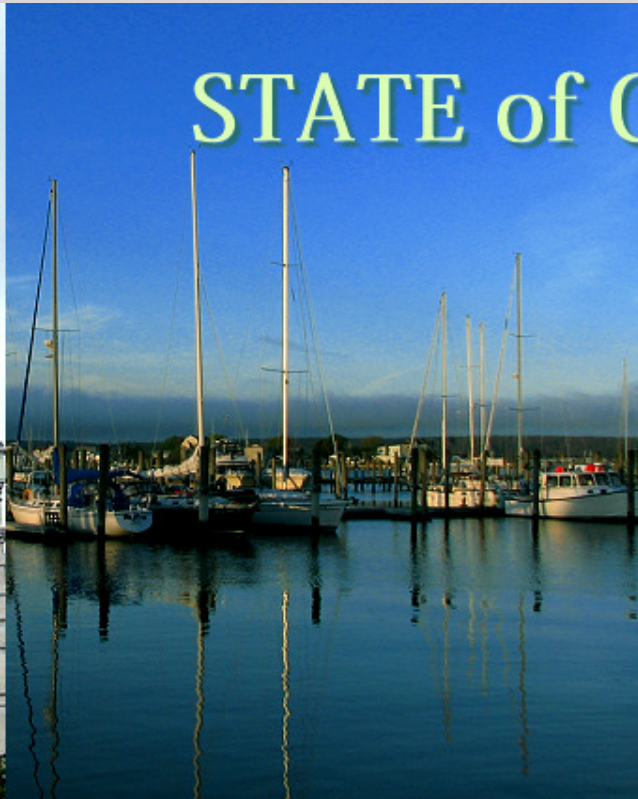


Westbrook Charter Commission Public Hearing

Tuesday, September 27, 2011



STATE of CONNECTICUT



History

- Board of Selectmen appoints a nine member Charter Commission June 28, 2010.
- Selectmen's charge was to “provide a clear blueprint for the operation of town government.”

Selectmen's Charge for Study

- Designation of Legislative Body of the Town
- Designation of First Selectman as CEO
- Automatic Budget Referendum and division of vote
- Code of Ethics
- Appointed vs. Elected Town Officials
- Possible Consolidation of Boards and Commissions

Home Rule and State Statutes

- Chapter 99 Connecticut General Statutes
- Commission must be between 5 and 15 members, not more than 1/3 officeholders
- Once appointed, Commission must hold a Public Hearing before beginning any substantive work. (August 16, 2010)

Home Rule and State Statutes

- Draft report due to Town Clerk and BOS within 16 months from appointment
- BOS to hold at least one public hearing on draft report within 45 days.
- Fifteen days after last public hearing BOS shall make recommendations to Commission.
- Final report due within 30 days

Home Rule and State Statutes

- Within 15 days of receiving final report, BOS must accept or reject.
- 30 days after accepting report/charter, BOS will publish document in newspaper or other mandated media
- BOS will determine whether to have townspeople vote in either regular or special election within 15 months

Resources

- Connecticut General Statutes
- Special Act 267-1939
- Westbrook Code of Ordinances
- Ad Hoc Committee reports from 1992, 2005 and 2009.
- Testimony of BOS, BOF, Finance Director, Treasurer, Town Clerk, Tax Collector and residents
- Survey of Westbrook Boards & Commissions

Additional Resources

- Testimony of Town Managers of Columbia, Coventry and Hebron
- First Selectman from Middlefield
- Robert Wechsler of CT Common Cause
- CCM and COST
- National Civic League
- CT Town and City Management Assoc.
- International City Management Assoc.
- Charters from 12 area towns

Discussion Items

Executive Branch

- Town Manager as CEO of the Town
- Nine member Board of Selectmen
- Four year overlapping terms
- BOS elects First Selectman
- Selectmen serve without compensation
- Within 30 days of adoption, Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen are combined into a single BOS

Discussion Items

Appointive Officers

Board of Selectmen Appoints

- ❖ Town Manager
- ❖ Finance Director
- ❖ Town Attorney
- ❖ Town Engineer
- ❖ Treasurer
- ❖ Town Clerk
- ❖ Tax Collector
- ❖ Assessor

Town Manager

Responsibility and Authority

Connecticut General Statutes 7-99, 7-100

- Chief Executive Officer of the Town
- Supervise, Direct and Administer all departments, offices and employees of the town, except those designated by charter
- Prepare and submit annual budget
- Keep departmental rules, personnel policies and financial controls updated
- Exercise such powers and duties required by ordinance, resolution of the BOS or the charter

Discussion Items

Finance and Taxation

- Detailed timeline and action agenda for composing, presenting and ratifying budget and appropriations.
- Budget developed by Town Manager with assistance of Finance Director as directed by BOS
- Agency heads, including BOE Chair will present expenditure requests by January 1st each year to Town Manager
- Budget prepared for discussion by February 1st by Town Manager

Discussion Items

Finance and Taxation

- On the second Tuesday of March each year, the BOS will hold the Annual Town Budget Hearing
- Annual Budget Referendum will be held on the first Tuesday of May each year
- Within 10 days after budget approval at referendum, BOS fixes the tax rate.

Discussion Items

Appointive Boards & Commissions

- Board of Selectmen appoints members of all appointive boards, commissions and committees
- Term limits = 12 years with one term off
- Uniform Four Year Terms of Office
- Library Board to be appointed
- Ethics Commission recommended with clear process for handling complaints

Discussion Items

Elective Office

- Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission Five members to be elected with Two Alternates. Sanitarian, Town Planner and CRRPA rep serve as non-voting members
- Vacancies for elective offices (other than Selectmen) to be filled by remaining board or commission members within 30 days. After 30 days a special election called. BOS vacancies filled in accordance with CGS 9-222

Discussion Items

Elective Offices

- Changes to terms of office;
 - BOS from 2 year terms to 4 years
 - BOE from 6 year terms to 4
 - BOAA from 6 year terms to 4
 - ZBA from 6 year terms to 4
 - Zoning from 6 year terms to 4
 - Planning from 6 year terms to 4
 - Library BOD from 6 year terms to 4

Discussion Item

Elective Office

- Position of Town Moderator with a term of office of two years established. The Town Meeting elects a Temporary moderator in case of absence.

Discussion Item

Town Meeting

- Town Meeting continues to be the legislative body of the town
- Annual Town Meeting to be held on the second Tuesday in March with an agenda of the presentation of the annual report and a representative of each board, commission or committee present to discuss their activities and concerns
- Budget Hearing and Special Town Meeting processes will remain the same

Transition Section

- With the exception of BOS, “Cabinet” level officials and BOS, transitions may take up to two years to complete
- Current Treasurer, Town Clerk, Tax Collector to be eligible for their positions
- Current members of elective or appointive positions ‘grandfathered’ during transition phase

Advantages of a Charter

Ad Hoc Charter Committee Report, January 2009

1. Provides local officials and citizens with a handy understandable reference booklet to guide government operations without frequent legal consultation and searching CGS

2. Provides for local governance flexibility to meet changing local conditions (e.g. Terms of office, sizes of boards and commissions, creation of new offices and boards)

Advantages of a Charter

Ad Hoc Charter Committee Report, January 2009

3. Within limits, allows for local option in determining appointed versus elected officials, boards and commissions
4. Allows for further clarification of powers, duties and authority of officials, boards and commission
5. Can allow for local modification of the budget formation process, and separate votes on Town and Education budgets

Advantages of a Charter

Ad Hoc Charter Committee Report, January 2009

6. Could yield a charter revision process that discourages frequent tinkering with the governmental structure and process

7. Gives voters themselves the opportunity to decide on the home rule charter question

In the end YOU decide

- Your input, ideas and decisions are vital to the future of Westbrook.

Thank you!