



## CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

CJH Municipal Center – 1 School Street – Bethel, CT 06801  
(203) 794-8501 – Fax: (203) 778-7520

### MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING

Thursday, April 25, 2013  
7:00 p.m.

CJH Municipal Center – Meeting Room “A”

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TOWN OF BETHEL  
TOWN CLERK

**PRESENT:** David Olson, Chairman, Nicholas Hoffman, Meghan O’Connor, William Hillman, Paul Improta, William Shannon and Wendy Smith. Also in attendance was Attorney Nicholas Vitti.

**Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag:** David Olson called the regular meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**Public Comments:** None

**Correspondence:** William Kingston, Chairman, Board of Finance submitted a Proposal for Funding and Disbursing Funds for Non-Governmental Organizations Currently Addressed in Account 400 of the Bethel Town Budget. The proposed plan would adequately fund Non-Governmental Organizations that provide significant services for the people of Bethel through a voluntary mechanism in conjunction with car tax notices. The attorney for the Tax Collector’s office verbally responded - no other fees can be added to the tax bill and no other fees can be sent in the same envelope as tax payments. Nick Vitti will contact their council for a written response.

**Approval of Minutes – April 8, 2013:** William Hillman made a motion, which was seconded by Paul Improta, to approve the minutes with one amendment: Discussion with Volunteer Fire/EMS Departments and Emergency Management Director – ‘The consensus is to eliminate the concept of an implied relationship with the town and become duly recognized town departments’. Vote all in favor, motion was unanimously approved.

**Approval of Invoices:** Wendy Smith made a motion, which was seconded by Nicholas Hoffman to approve payment of the invoice from Cacace, Tusch & Santiagata, Attorneys at Law, in the amount of \$1,700.00 for legal services through April 1, 2013. Vote all in favor, motion was unanimously approved.

**Continued discussion regarding Volunteer Fire/EMS Departments:** Chief Fred Ingram - Bethel Volunteer Fire Department was in attendance and submitted a copy of the Bethel Volunteer Fire Department By-Laws to the Commission for review. The document will be emailed to all members. He also provided clarification on several questions the Commission had.

Attorney Vitti presented Draft Changes to C8-14 - Fire Departments to the Commission. After some discussion, William Hillman made a motion to adopt the language presented as is. As some members felt more time was needed to make a decision, the motion was withdrawn and the discussion was tabled until the next meeting.

In addition:

- Attorney Vitti was asked to add 'Adopted By-Laws' and 'Adopted Mutual Aid Agreements' to paragraph B of C8-14.
- The Commission will contact the First Selectman to clarify the relationship/chain of command between the First Selectman and the Fire Departments.
- The Commission will recommend that the Board of Selectmen can recognize this relationship by ordinance in accordance with state statute.

**General Discussion – Roles and Responsibilities of the Board of Finance:** William Kingston, Chairman Board of Finance, was in attendance and was prepared to discuss the roles and responsibilities of the BOF and the BOS's flexibility to make budget neutral transfers between accounts. Mr. Kingston maintains that it is important to retain authority to overrule the BOS to ensure appropriate spending of each line item maintaining the checks and balances in the system.

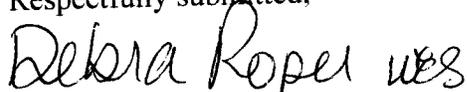
After much discussion, William Hillman suggested that after the town's operating budget is set, voted on and approved, the BOS should have the ability to make intra-department budget neutral transfers at a clip level that do not affect the department's bottom line and that do not change headcount in order to cover unexpected expenses. Mr. Kingston was agreeable to this.

In addition, the Commission discussed:

- Should the trigger for a Special Town Meeting be increased above 25K and should the amount be escalated annually with an appropriate index? The Commission will seek advice from the Town Controller (with cooperation from the BOF) about what indexes should be used and look at the history of Special Town Meetings.
- How best to go about setting the First Selectman's salary. Nicholas Hoffman has research from our ERG and will email that information the members for review and discussion at the next meeting on May 13, 2013.

**Adjourn:** As there was no further business on tonight's agenda, Wendy Smith made a motion, which was seconded by William Shannon, to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Debra Roper, Recording Secretary