

Ryan Knapp, Chair
William DeRosa, Vice Chair
Chris Gardner
Tom Long
Charlie Gardner
Jeff Capeci



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TOWN OF NEWTOWN

Minutes of the Legislative Council Ordinance Committee

The Legislative Council Ordinance Committee met on Wednesday, October 5th, 2022, at 7:00 PM in Meeting Room 3 of the Municipal Center. Mr. Knapp called the meeting to order at 7:05.

Present: Mr. Chris Gardner, Mr. Long, Mr. Capeci (7:15), Mr. Knapp, Mr. DeRosa and Mr. Chaudhary of the Police Commission

Absent: Mr. Charles Gardenr

Minutes: Mr. Long moved to approve the minutes of July 20th, 2022, Mr. DeRosa seconded.
All in favor. (4-0)

VOTER COMMENT:

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion and Possible Action:

Review and Recommendation of the proposed "Do Not Block The Box" Ordinance

Mr. Knapp invited Mr. Chaudhary to join the conversation. Mr. Knapp discussed the request, the process, and the formatting of other local traffic ordinances, specifically Fire Lanes. He also researched other town's such as Shelton's. He believes municipalities have the authority to set fines up to \$199.

Mr. Chaudhary said this is required for the State to give permission to paint the intersection of a Town and State road. He feels the marking helps the most, and this is more than enforcement. The Police Commission has no recommendations on the fine amount. The ordinance does not need to specify the address as in Shelton's, rather the Police Commission can determine the box location.

Mr. DeRosa noted the Council received a letter requesting another box location. He raised a concern about people getting stuck in the box on 25, the traffic through that intersection, and fine amounts. He expressed concern that \$199 would be excessive and would like to see it start with a warning or a lower fine for first offense.

Mr. Chris Gardner agreed a \$199 fine is would be too high. He feels the accidents justify moving this forward, and questioned why tractor trailers are excluded.

Mr. Chaudhary explained that tractor trailers are excluded in the enabling statute, and speculated that it has to do with their ability to stop and their length.

Mr. Capeci asked how far the box would be from the stop line and who paints the box?

Mr. Chaudhary said approximately two car lengths and it will likely be the Town, though he is unsure.

Mr. Knapp said he will work on a draft in the same formatting as other ordinances in the Code Book for the next meeting.

Newtown Fair Rent Commission Ordinance

Mr. Knapp kicked off discussion with a review of the packet that was provided and the statute. He said the model ordinance which is 7 pages long, was very prescriptive and had concerns about duplicating the statute language rather than referencing it. Statutes frequently change and then the Town ends up being in conflict. New Britain for example has an ordinance that is only one page long. He suggested that perhaps CCM or COST have alternative models to work from which are more appropriate for Newtown which is on the smaller side of Towns that will have these commissions\

The group discussed the challenge of finding people to serve, and noted that the Commission could have from 3 to 9 members, with smaller being in line with Board of Assessment Appeals. .

Mr. Capeci felt the model was elaborate and offered to reach out to COST and CCM. He will send around what he gets back for discussion at the next meeting.

Research and recommendation into a possible Financial Advisory Commission should the Charter Revision pass.

The group discussed the history of Newtown's Board of Finance, the roles of the different bodies, and the governmental framework of peer communities such as Southbury, Brookfield and Monroe. In the past the BOF initiated efforts such as Medical Self Insurance, building the Fund Balance to get AAA with S&P, and reviewing the fund management.

Mr. Knapp felt there would be value in a commission of appointed experts that can be tasked and operate more as free agents rather than duplicating the appropriations process work of the Council. He discussed moving to a pay as you go model, studying regionalization, shared services, and benchmarking against peer communities to identify opportunities for improvement as initiatives that could be tasked to a body.

Mr. Long questioned their role in the budget process.

Mr. Chris Gardner spoke of his experiences serving on the Board of Finance and now the LC, and the value of a task oriented body staffed with subject matter experts like the Building Inventory group.

Mr. DeRosa questioned if we were getting ahead of ourselves as the Charter Revision has not passed.

Mr. Capeci discussed outreach and that we consider alternatives ahead of the Charter vote.

The group discussed looking into what other Town's do and the value in streamlining processes.

VOTER COMMENT: None.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Chris Gardner moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:20PM, Mr. DeRosa seconded.

All In Favor (5-0)

Respectfully submitted,

Ryan W. Knapp
Chairman, Ordinance Committee