

## **SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO THE HARTFORD CITY CHARTER**

### **Adopted by the Voters November 5, 2002**

**Preamble:** We, the people of Hartford, Connecticut, desirous of achieving a more perfect state of civil society, grateful for the liberty we enjoy as a matter of right, and fully cognizant of our duties as free men and women, hereby adopt this Charter for the more efficient, efficacious and equitable transaction of our public business.

#### **Mayor**

- Seat of executive and administrative powers of the City
- Responsible for performance of all appointive officers, departments, and employees
- Appoints
  - Chief Operating Officer (principal administrative aide to the Mayor)
  - Corporation Counsel
  - Department Heads
  - Members of all boards, commissions, agencies, authorities, and other city bodies
- Prepares and submits to Council the annual budget
- Has the right to address the Council at their meetings and have proposals included on the Council agenda
- Acts upon ordinances and resolutions adopted by Council by approving, disapproving (Council may over-ride), or taking no action (becomes effective if no action in 7 days)

#### **Court of Common Council**

- Members elected for 4- year terms
- Seat of the legislative power and authority of the City
- Approves resolutions and ordinances and certifies them to the Mayor
- Responsible for confirming appointment of
  - Chief Operating Officer
  - Corporation Counsel
  - Department Heads
  - Members of all boards, commissions, agencies, authorities, and other City bodies
- May remove, for cause, by  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote, any elective officer or employee confirmed by Council
- Elects a Council President for 2-year term. May remove by a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote. Council President succeeds to Mayor's position if the office becomes vacant.

#### **Boards and Commissions**

- Internal Audit Commission: A 3-member commission and a unit or department will be established with authority to examine into the integrity, efficiency and efficacy of government.
- Planning and Zoning Commission: The new Commission supercedes the previous Commission on the City Plan and the City Council as the City's zoning commission. The Commission will recommend to Council a plan of conservation and development. The Council must adopt a plan within 6 months.
- Other Boards and Commissions established by ordinance.

#### **Board of Education**

- The Board is composed of nine members: 5 appointed by the Mayor and 4 elected by the voters, all for 4-year terms. Council may also create up to 2 non-voting ex officio positions for students of Hartford public schools, to be appointed by the Mayor for 1-year terms.

### **Departments: Intent**

- "The express intent of this Charter is to allow the Mayor and the Council the ability to organize the government in order to achieve a balance of efficiency and service to the people of the City."
- "It shall be the policy of the City to establish a civil service system that will assure recruitment of the best available persons to appointment to vacant positions, advance equal employment opportunity and affirmative action, continue training and evaluation of employees and bargain fairly with the collective bargaining representatives of employees."
- "There shall be established, by the Council, departments and agencies of the City that deal with key functions such as health, human services, recreation, and other community services. Such administrative offices shall always have in place up-to-date action plans to address the health, human service and recreation needs of children, youth, adults and the elderly and shall implement these plans in close coordination with the appropriate state offices and with other pertinent private and public agencies."

### **Departments: Process**

- The Council establishes departments by ordinance, except for Human Resources, Finance, Fire, and Police which are established by the Charter.
- Department heads are appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by Council.
- The Council shall establish a central procurement system with rules and regulations established by ordinance. Competitive bids are required for purchases over \$25,000.
- The following positions are part of the unclassified service:
  - Elected officials
  - Members of boards and commissions
  - Appointees of Council
  - Department heads appointed by Mayor (except assessor, director of human resources, and tax collector), deputy department heads, and one confidential secretary in each department
  - Board of Education employees
  - Staff in offices of Mayor and Council, including COO and assistants to COO
  - Corporation Counsel and Special Counsel
  - Assistant City Treasurer
  - Persons employed in professional or scientific capacity to conduct inquiry, investigation, or examination
- The classified service is composed of everyone else

**Bonding:** The Council will authorize issuance of bonds by ordinance. Bonding will go to referendum **only** if the amount exceeds \$2.0 million **and** a petition for repeal or referendum is signed by 3% of the city's voters.

### **Transition**

- Present ordinances remain effective until amended, repealed or superseded.
- Units of City government remain in existence unless and until altered or abolished by ordinance.
- Directors, Deputies, and Assistants of departments, agencies and commissions continue until replaced by the Mayor.
- Procurement and Human Resources sections are effective upon enactment of implementing ordinances.
- All other provisions are effective on January 1, 2004.

**Other:** Council will appoint a charter revision commission at least every ten years.