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Charter Revision Commission Regular Meeting June 4, 2026

Elizabeth Lynch
TOWN AND CITY CLERK
ANSBRIA, CONNECTICUT

Call to Order

Chairman Bruce Goldson called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The roll was called, and a quorum was declared.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

Bruce Goldson	✓	Denise Matusovich	✓
Mary Gibson	✓	FrankPergola(Tardy, 7:25pm)	✓
Daniel Kershaw	A	Javier Varas	✓
Eileen Krugel	✓	Chris Lisi	✓
Beth Lynch (Tardy, 7:08pm)	✓	Frank Halpin	✓

There was a quorum of 9 present and 1 absent.

3. Consideration of the previous minutes

Javier Varas MOVED to accept the May 5, 2026 meeting minutes; SECONDED by Eileen Krugel. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Public Session

John Feddern: 63 Hubbell Avenue- Registrar of Voters, has two proposals. The first is proposing an extension of the timeframe between the passage of a budget and its subsequent referendum, if one is required. John says the existing five-day window is insufficient for administrative preparation, public outreach, as well as issuing absentee ballots. John submitted this proposal in writing. (Please see attachment for details)

John also proposes to consolidate the city's current seven wards into four wards, supported by three to four polling locations. He notes that this would decrease election expenses by reducing the number of poll workers, reducing voting equipment, creating less set-up and breakdown of polling sites, and reducing confusion as to where to vote. John says that with fewer polling locations, the city can be more selective about who they hire, and election results can be reported to City Hall faster. John provided this proposal in writing including a map alongside population statistics to demonstrate how

the ward boundaries would comply with redistricting requirements. (Please see attachment for details).

Javier Varas asked with the consolidation of the wards from seven to four, how many Aldermen would be assigned to each Ward. John noted that the new number of Alderman per each ward would be voted on. If the city keeps the number of Alderman per ward at 2, making it a total of 8, no action is required. A separate charter is needed to change the number of Alderman per ward.

Edward Norman, 51 Grove Street- Chairman of The Board of Apportionment and Taxation proposes more authority for the Board of Apportionment and Taxation. He proposes to revise the charter on how our budgets are handled, get back on a schedule and as such, avoid having to do referendums. Edward also noted that other towns utilize Aldermen at large and suggested the city consider adding 4-5 Aldermen at large.

Eileen Krugel asked Edward Norman to draft his proposal in writing and present it to the Board.

Tyler Kennedy, 27 Castle Lane- Proposes revisiting the formula for the 3% or adjusting the tax formula for the referendum. He proposes that instead of a net 3% tax levy, the formula be adjustable based on what the town expenditures need.

John Feddern, 63 Hubbell Avenue- Spoke again suggesting a minimum voter turnout for a referendum to pass. John recommended 10-20% voter turnout be met.

Chairman Goldson asked three times if any other member of the public wished to speak. There being none, he declared the public session closed.

5. Discussion about Public Session

Eileen Krugel asked if we are still currently a member of CCM (Connecticut Conference and Municipalities). Javier Varas responded that yes, we are. Eileen Krugel noted that CCM can provide input on voter turnout referendum minimum for towns/cities comparable in size to Ansonia.

6. Discussion and set date for Public Hearing

Javier Varas MOVED to set the Public Hearing for 6/18/2026 at 7:00p.m at the discretion of chair; SECONDED by Frank Pergola. Motion carried unanimously.

7. Adjournment

At 7:53p.m., Frank Halpin MOVED to adjourn; SECONDED by Eileen Krugel. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Susie Parente

**City of Ansonia
Registrar of Voters/Administrators of Elections
253 Main Street
Ansonia, CT 06401**

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David Papcin

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John Feddern

Email registrar@ansoniac.org

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June 3, 2026

To: Charter Revision Committee

Re: Consideration for Charter Revision to Extend Number of Days to Conduct Budget Referenda

Section 43 (Annual Budget Process), subsections (d) and (e) of the Ansonia City Charter state the following:

(d)Referendum. A public referendum on the budget must be held if the budget approved by the board of aldermen represents an increase of three percent (3%) or more in net taxes to be collected from the previous year's budget. The referendum vote shall be by machine ballot. The referendum shall be held not more than 5 days after approval by the board of aldermen. The referendum questions shall be presented on the ballot as follows.(1)Shall the city portion of the budget, as recommended by the board of aldermen of (dollar amount) for the fiscal year (specify year) be adopted?(2)Shall the board of education portion of the budget, as recommended by the board of aldermen, (of dollar amount) for the City of Ansonia for the fiscal year (specify year) be adopted? The voters shall be given the option to vote either "Yes" or "No" and additionally the option to vote "too high" or "too low" on each of the budgets.

If both budgets are rejected, both budgets shall be resubmitted to the ballot after revisions by the board of aldermen. In case of further rejections, the aforesaid process, under this section, shall be repeated until said budgets are accepted, or until the increase in net taxes to be collected is less than three percent from the previous year's budget.

If only one (1) of the aforesaid portions of the budget passes, that budget shall be deemed to be approved. The budget question that is rejected shall be resubmitted to the ballot after revision by the board of aldermen, and resubmitted again after further rejection and further revision by the board of aldermen until said budget is accepted or until the increase in "net taxes to be collected" is less than three percent (3%) from the previous year's budget.

If the referendum vote rejects the budget, or either part thereof, the rejected portion shall be reconsidered by the board of aldermen within five-calendar-day. In case of further rejection this process shall be continued using a five (5) calendar day period of reconsideration by the board of aldermen until the budget is adopted.

(e)Non-adoption of budget. If the budget is not adopted by June 20 the city shall send out real estate tax bills based on the same taxation figures and adjusted mill rate of the prior fiscal year, which would include adjustments for the new revenues, debt service, and legal obligations for the next fiscal year, which begins July 1. After the complete budget is passed the balance of the real estate plus personal property and motor vehicle tax bills shall be sent out based on any change brought about by referendum vote.

The Registrars of Voters would recommend the following changes be made to this sections:

- "The referendum shall be held not more than 5 days after approval by the board of aldermen." **We recommend a period of 10-14 calendar days from budget passage to holding of the referendum.** The current 5 day mandate is not ideal for a number of reasons:

- Difficulty in obtaining election workers on short notice

- Difficulty in setting up polls on short notice
- Inability for electors to utilize mail-in absentee ballots, as 5 days is too short of a timeframe to ensure ballots will be delivered to Town and City Clerk by the end of referendum day voting period
- Difficulty in creating signage to properly notify the public
- Expectations of electors to have enough to consider and plan their vote

Most Connecticut municipalities that conduct budget referenda have at least a two-week notice period, and Ansonia should follow that model, or close to it.

In essence, **the five day window may be disenfranchising voters, and must be extended.**

Respectfully submitted,
CITY OF ANSONIA REGISTRARS OF VOTERS
David Pappin and John Feddern

**City of Ansonia
Registrar of Voters/Administrators of Elections
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June 3, 2026

To: Charter Revision Committee

Re: Consideration for Charter Revision to Reduce the Number of Wards

The City of Ansonia currently operates each primary and election with 5 polling locations: 3 schools (covering Wards 4, 5, 6 and 7), the Ansonia Armory (Wards 1 and 2) and one church (Holy Rosary Catholic Church for Ward 3, for which we pay a rental charge). With only 6.2 square miles, Ansonia leads the state with the number of wards per square mile. Since state statutes require that each district have its own poll the number of wards will need to be reduced in order to accomplish our goal.

We are recommending a reduction to four (4) wards, to be serviced by 3 or 4 polling locations. A reduction to four wards would allow for current Wards 4 and 5 to be combined into one singular ward, with the other three wards to be redistricted to have a population within about 3% of the new Ward 4 and 5 combination. (Please note that ward population is based on total population, not registered voters.) Reducing the number of polling places (and wards) would reduce election expenses, allow the registrars to be more selective in the hiring of poll workers, and provide us with an improved ability to produce accurate election reporting. From our perspective, this is an obvious and long overdue move. Prospective new ward map and approximate populations therein are located in the Appendix.

As of June 1, 2026, we have 11,603 registered active voters, with little expectation for those numbers to grow. In general, the maximum turnout is about 50%, and only during presidential election years (municipal/state elections usually top out at 30%). We are fully confident that these voters can be served using 3 or 4 polling locations.

Each primary/election costs approximately \$20,000, not including the early voting period and budget referenda. With recent increases for tabulator maintenance of over \$3,000 annually, anticipated increases in the state minimum wage (currently \$16.94), plus additional expenses borne by our public works and police department, any effort we can make to reduce the number of wards and polling places would be welcome. This is especially crucial considering the current budget issues in the city.

If passed, the Mayor would need to appoint a Ward Boundary Commission to evaluate federal decennial census data, map out the geometry of the 4 new wards, and mathematically prove they satisfy the population equality rule before elections can proceed.

Another major consideration is that with a reduction in the number of wards, the number of aldermen per ward may need to be adjusted. This committee would need to choose between leaving the number of aldermen per ward as is (2 per ward, total of 8), or increase the number to 3 or 4 per ward (12 or 16 total aldermen). Determining the number of aldermen is outside of the purview of the Registrar, and would require a separate discussion with the Mayor and the current Board of Aldermen, but would need to be included as part of the ward reduction referendum question.

Ward reduction advantages:

- **Less confusion about polling locations with fewer sites.**
- **Fewer election workers required.** Competent, responsible, dedicated help is a difficult task that falls on the Registrar's office for both parties. Poll moderators (the person in charge at each poll) are at an extreme premium, and in certain cases we have had to bring in moderators from other towns.
- **Less set up and breakdown** required for each location. Securing and confirming polling locations, keys (when required), and setting up each election takes several days. Even a reduction in poll site by one would be a significant cost/time savings.

- **Less voting equipment required.** We currently are under contract to service 20 ballot tabulators and 8 IVS ballot marking systems (Integrated Voting Systems for the disabled); this number would be reduced with ward consolidation, and our maintenance costs reduced in conjunction.
- **Less expense for signage at each poll.**
- **Less expense for worker training.**
- **Less expense for meals for poll workers.** The more poll workers we require, the more expensive it is to provide lunch and dinner. It is a very long day for workers from 5:15 AM to 8:30 PM.

Positive overall results:

- **Election returns will be expedited** with fewer locations (polls) to report back to City Hall.
- **Less breakdown of polling locations** and storage of equipment, supplies, etc.
- **Cost savings to the taxpayers of the City of Ansonia** with fewer locations, workers, equipment, training, meals and supplies without reduction of service.

Summary Recommendation:

- **Reduce the number of wards to four (4) from seven (7).**
- Work with Charter Revision committee to **establish the appropriate number of polls based upon population** and potential quality polling sites. This would include, if possible, utilizing only city properties as potential polls (schools/Armory).
- Work with the Committee to **establish the number of aldermen per ward.**

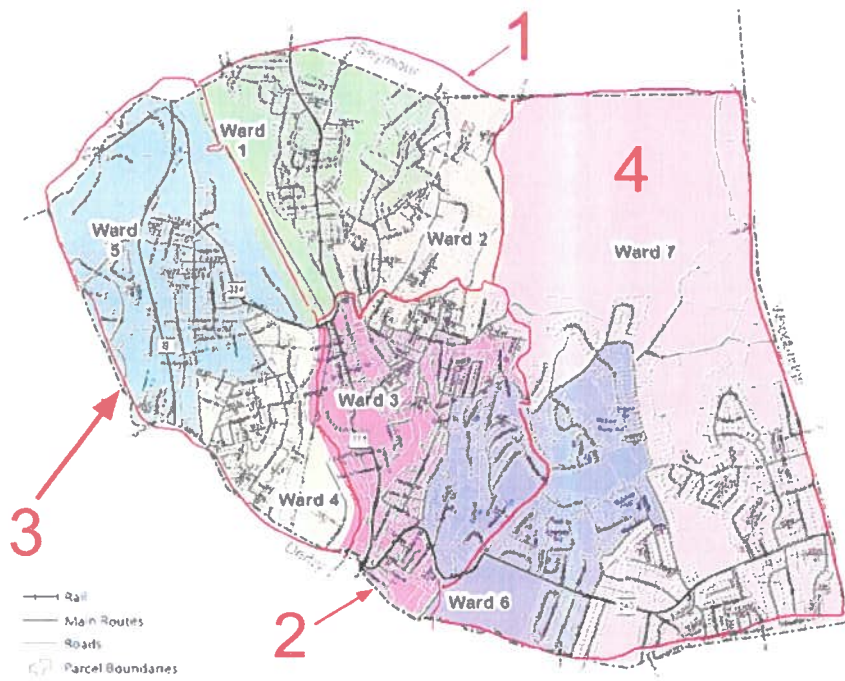
Respectfully submitted,
 CITY OF ANSONIA REGISTRARS OF VOTERS
 David Pappin and John Feddern

Appendix

Affected sections of the Charter (portions to be amended in italics):

- **Sec. 3. - Wards.:** The City of Ansonia shall be *divided into seven (7) wards*, which wards shall be redistricted every ten years, following the decennial census, pursuant to applicable state and federal statutes.
- **Sec. 5. - Elections to be held pursuant to state election laws; when held; officers to be elected, terms, etc.:** All elections hereafter held within the City and Town of Ansonia shall be held pursuant to the provisions of the general election laws of this state. On the Tuesday following the first Monday of November of each odd-numbered year, the electors of the several wards of said city *shall elect from their number two (2) aldermen*, who shall be residents and electors of their representative wards at the time of their election, and at said meeting the electors of said city, voting in their respective wards, shall elect from their number a mayor, town and city clerk, a treasurer, a board of education, five (5) constables, and such other officers as the laws of this state shall prescribe for election at said time, all of whom, except the board of education, shall hold their offices for the term of two (2) years from the first day of December next succeeding their election and until their successors are elected and qualified, except that the town and city clerk shall hold his office for the term of two (2) years from the first Monday of January next succeeding his election and until his successor is elected and qualified.

Prospective New Ward Map:



“One person, one vote” requirements for redistricting:

Redrawing 7 wards into 4 triggers federal and state constitutional requirements—the **10% Deviation Cap**. According to federal case law and standard Connecticut redistricting procedures, the newly designed 4 wards must have “substantially equal populations”—deviation between our most populous new ward and least populous new ward must be under 10%. **Our proposal has a deviation of about 3%.**

Current Wards/Population (based on 2020 census):

Ward #	Pop	%Pop
1	2945	15.6%
2	2730	14.4%
3	2875	15.2%
4	2385	12.6%
5	2782	14.7%
6	2554	13.5%
7	2647	14.0%

Total 18918 100.0%

Proposed Wards/Approximate Population:

New Ward #	New Pop	%Pop
1	4575	24.2%
2	4575	24.2%
3	5167	27.3%
4	4601	24.3%

Total 18918 100.0%