I. Call to Order: Chairman L. King called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

II. Roll Call:
Commissioners present: Chairman Les King, Janis Sawicki, Arthur Lathrop, Richard Podurgiel, Linda Becker, Debra Dickey
Commissioner absent: Michael Gualtieri

III. Communications: Letter from the Senior Affairs Commission to be added to next month's agenda

IV. Approval of Minutes from October 9, 2014: Motion to accept as presented, Commissioner Podurgiel, 2nd Commissioner Lathrop, motion carried unanimously.

V. Old Business:
a. Review wording of Charter in relation to the Mayor's job:
Corporation Counsel Michael Driscoll and Commissioner Lathrop were in attendance. Mayor Deberay Hinchey was not able to attend and sent in a letter. M. Driscoll spoke on the role of the Mayor economic development. Under the current Charter, the Mayor cannot be forced to be a member of a specific body, but may volunteer. Commissioner Lathrop spoke on the main focus of the Mayor's role as being economic development. The second most important thing that a Mayor does is to Chair the meetings of the City Council and have a vote in the City Council. It is very rare that Charters exist that mix the executive and legislative as Norwich has done. The third item is the Mayor represents the City in a variety of contexts, such as civic, cultural and social events. He agrees with Mayor Hinchey in that the current process works as laid out. He thinks that we have a system that can work if the people in the jobs can perform them so it does work. Commissioner Lathrop did not find anything restrictive in the Charter as it pertained to the Mayor's role when he was in office. He finds that the City Manager/Mayor form of government works well for Norwich. He does not feel that it would work to have the strong Mayor form of government. He would like to propose an automatic salary increase for the Mayor and it should stay in the Charter.

Chairman King asked for comment from former Mayor Peter Nystrom. Peter Nystrom commented that he did not find restrictive language in the Charter. There was occasionally resistance from council. If he had to pick an issue; there are times there will be partisan feelings
and it will affect economic development. This can probably not be addressed through Charter Revision. The Charter already provides for a salary increase if approved by the Council. The Charter provides for the Mayor hiring an economic development coordinator, but does not provide for funding. No Mayor to date has looked for funding for this position. He feels that the focus of NCDC has been a bit broad due to necessity and should possibly be more defined. Commissioner Dickey asked if there had been a staff economic development person would they have had more oversight of the downtown bond program to catch the financial mistakes. P. Nystrom commented that it could have. Commission Podurgiel commented that there is the perception that the Mayor's economic development role has been shifted more over time to NCDC. P. Nystrom commented that the Mayor has to initiate opportunities as he did when he was in office and not sit and wait for NCDC. They have initiated many things such as the walking tour that bring people and generate excitement about the City. He thinks that anyone in the Mayor's seat has to take on the responsibility of initiating opportunities. He doesn't think limiting them at this point in time would be prudent. Commissioner Lathrop views NCDC as a tool. He does not think that anyone but the Mayor; we are too small a City, the private sector is weak in CT, the Mayor is the only person that can really get the attention of every piece in the puzzle to be able to bring them together and make things happen. He agrees that the Mayor has got to be the focal point, leader and catalyst. He feels that the Mayor should decided their relationship with NCDC. Commissioner Dickey asked if NCDC was subject to FOI. M. Driscoll responded that when they are acting as a private entity then they are not, when they are acting as a public entity or managing public funds they are. M. Driscoll pointed out the provision in the Charter regarding the Mayor being ex-officio, voting member on all boards and committees. The voting could pose a problem as far as minority representation rules and maximum number on a board. To date this has not proven to be a problem, but it could be. Commissioner Dickey asked if the Mayor being a voting member is usual to be included in the Charter. M. Driscoll said no. The Commission will take the matter up regarding the language regarding the Mayor being a "voting" ex-officio member. M. Driscoll thinks that Norwich's Charter was derived largely from an original Hartford Charter. P. Nystrom commented on political action committees influence on Mayoral candidates. M. Driscoll commented that a partisan council came about in the 1960's. The original Charter provided for a non-partisan council; people got the required amount of signatures and ran. Candidates were not endorsed by a party. Commissioner Lathrop asked if it would be barred for an outside interest group to contribute in a referendum to one side or the other. M. Driscoll commented that it probably not be prohibited.
M. Driscoll distributed a handout on eminent domain. In Norwich, besides the City, there are a few other entities that have this power. The Board of Public Utilities Commissioners has it under the Charter with Council approval. When they act as the sewer authority they have the same power under State Statute. Changing the Charter does not change that Statutory power. The Parking Commission has it under the Charter through the City and under State Statute as the Parking Authority. The only time that NCDC will have eminent domain is under State Statute when they are acting as the economic development arm and it would have to be approved by the Council.

VI. Form an Agenda for Next Meeting: November 13th will be the next meeting.
   1. Bonding & leasing caps and capital improvement (check with Joe Fasi)
   2. NPU and Bonding: Presentation: John Bilda
   3. Establish ground rules for November 20th meeting -public hearing in Council Chambers

   (Thursday November 20) One City Tax: Presentations: All fire departments, Chamber
   (Future Meeting) Vote on council member stipends

VII. Comments by Commissioners: Commissioner Lathrop Michael Lahan's report for the last Charter Revision Commission

VIII. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn, Commissioner Podurgiel, 2nd Commissioner Lathrop, motion carried unanimously, meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.