



TOWN OF WINCHESTER
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION – PO BOX 41
338 MAIN STREET, WINSTED, CONNECTICUT 06098

July 17, 2023

Mr. Joshua Kelly, Town Manager & CEO
Town of Winchester
339 Main Street
Winsted, CT 06098

Re: Civil Service

Dear Josh,

Thank you for your email correspondence of July 13, 2023 to the Civil Service Commission members regarding your intentions for elimination of Civil Service and replacement with a Town directed Management model, per your terminology. On behalf of the commission members, I can attest that the commission members do not take any of the actions personally, and are supportive of work to promote the best hiring practices for the Town.

You are correct that there is confusing and contradictory language in some of the CSC rules and regulations. As you know, the commission has been receptive to meeting with competent and knowledgeable legal council in Civil Service regulations to make revisions, as appropriate, to address those inconsistencies and help where possible in expediting testing and processes in general. I understand that you have presented to the Board of Selectmen that the CSC process has caused delays in hiring personnel. It is true that the CSC process adds a step in the processes; this provides the check for which Civil Service was introduced in ensuring that fair and impartial hiring is adhered to. I would contend that any time this adds to the hiring practice is invaluable for this reason

There is no question that the majority of towns and municipalities do not employ Civil Service and rely on other Human Resource models for their hiring practices. Past less than professional actions on the part of previous Town Managers, as well as members of the Board of Selectmen were the cause of the introduction and inception of Civil Service; in place to ensure that nepotism and other improper practices do not occur. Civil service serves as a check and balance against abuses by the Town Manager or other public officials and derives its authority outside of the local regulations by State statutes. As recently as 2008, the commission was forced to retain

outside legal representation due to interference by the Town Manager in the hiring practices and are defined by Connecticut General Statutes as well as legal precedent.

In the absence of Civil Service, the recourse would be, as you indicate, limited to the Board of Selectmen, who have not always been as professional and complimentary as is the case at present. The Board of Selectmen need to keep that history of the town and previous miscues in mind as they implement their wisdom and knowledge in the course the Town wishes to pursue for future hiring practice. As always, the commission remains at your service,

Sincerely,

Francis S. Delaney
President

Cc: Town Clerk
Board of Selectmen