

Approved 6/15/2023

Charter Review Committee Minutes
Thursday May 18, 2023 -7:30am
Jaillet Meeting Room - Westwood Police Station
588 High Street
Westwood, MA 02090

Welcome

Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:34am by Co-Chair Paul Fitzgerald.

Present

Paul Fitzgerald, Peter Cahill-Co-Chair, Nancy Hyde & Dottie Powers, Town Clerk.
Ex-Officio Members: Christopher Coleman, Town Administrator & Patrick Ahearn, Town Counsel.
Jessica Cole recorded the Minutes.

Discuss Town Charter Chapters 2-4, additional chapters if time allows

CHAPTER 2-ELECTIONS AND TOWN MEETING (Continued from 5/4/2023)

Comments:

- Can election day be changed? *Ms. Powers stated that there is plenty of time to vote.*

Section 9

Presiding Officer

Moderator (Continued)

Comments:

- Deputy Moderator/Assistant Moderator it is at the discretion of the Moderator.
- Assistant Town Moderator is at the discretion of the Moderator, but they cannot be the Acting Moderator.
- We want the option to appoint an Assistant Town Moderator.
- Is it beneficial of the Town to have a short list of 'Acting Moderators'?
- The Charter Review Committee wants the option to appoint an Assistant Town Moderator.
- Ms. Powers wants to see what other towns do, but what we have works.
- Would need to be a non-elected official.
- Leave 2-9-3 for now.
- Will follow up with Attorney Goldberg.

CHAPTER 3-THE SELECT BOARD

Section 1

Composition and Terms

- The Charter Review Committee had a discussion of 5 Select Board members vs. 3.
- The new Select Board member, Joe Privitera, will come to our June 1, 2023 meeting.
- Charter Review members are open to 5 members, but want to avoid 2 people running at the same time.
- Currently with 3 Select Board members, all discussions need to be done in front of everyone.
- With 5 members, they can speak off-line with other members.
- With 5 members there will be demands on staff.

- Mr. Ahearn stated that it takes a lot of time to speak to all Select Board Members, he would need extra staffing.
- After a discussion there were many valid points and members wanted to stay at 3 Select Board members.
- Mr. Coleman stated that there would need to be a significant increase in staffing in the Select Board Department with at least one more support staff and a dedicated finance or HR assistant would be needed.
- 5 Select Board members could add diversity.
- The Charter Review Committee should have a response for having 5 members, we considered, discussed and evaluated.
- The Charter Review Committee will revisit after speaking to Mr. Privitera.

Section 2

Powers and Duties

3-2-3- Housekeeping change to *Select Board* remove *selectmen*

Section 3

Power of Investigation

No changes.

Section 4

Power to Appoint Town Officers

No changes.

Section 5

Power to Appoint Town Boards and Commissions

- Mr. Coleman noted that there should be Committee level Bylaws established for each committee and approved by the Select Board.
- Committees appointed by the Select Board should have bylaws
- Mr. Ahearn likes it in the Charter. It lets them know what they have to do and shows that it is mandatory.
- Make the appropriate language in the Charter for Committee Level Bylaws.

Section 6

Power to Rescind Appointments

CHAPTER 4-ELECTED TOWN BOARDS AND OFFICERS

Section 5

Library Trustees

- By State statute cannot have less than six Library Trustees (State Statute allows for six to nine members).
- The Library Trustees are an oversight board.
- The Library Director reports to the Town Administrator.
- Remove *maintenance*.
- Does not say oversight.
- Clarify 4-5-2 more.

Section 6

Associate Members

- 4-6-1

- The Chair of the elected board (change to) *shall* designate.
- Will work on the language with Attorney Goldberg.
- Associate members may be appointed to the board consistent with provisions of 4-6-1.
- Change 4-6-1-only applicable for the Planning Board; they are the only Board that has Associate members. It is a housekeeping issue.
- Remove *each* and *elected under this chapter who* and change to *the Planning Board*.
- 4-6-2
- Strike town treasurer and tax collector

Discuss and Vote Future Meeting Dates

June 1, 2023 - 6 pm -Jaillet Meeting Room

June 14, 2023 - 7:30am - Jaillet Meeting Room

June 15, 2023 - 6pm - Zoom 6pm

Approval of Minutes: May 4, 2023

This item will be added to the June 1, 2023 agenda.

Public Participation

None

Other Business not Anticipated by the Chair

Ms. Powers is finalizin the Home Rule Petition letter. It will be sent to Senator Rush and Representative McMurtry and will be supplemented with phone calls.

Adjourn

Upon a motion made by Ms. Hyde and seconded by Mr. Cahil, the Charter Review Committee voted in favor (4-0) to adjourn at 8:47am.