

Accepted 5/4/2023

Charter Review Committee Minutes  
Thursday March 23, 2023 -6:00 PM  
Jaillet Meeting Room - Westwood Police Station  
588 High Street  
Westwood, MA 02090

**Welcome**

**Call To Order**

The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:03 pm by Co-Chair Paul Fitzgerald.

**Present**

Paul Fitzgerald-Co-Chair, Peter Cahill-Co-Chair, Nancy Hyde, John Loughnane and Dottie Powers, Town Clerk. Ex-Officio Member: Christopher Coleman, Town Administrator & Patrick Ahearn, Town Counsel.

Special Counsel for the Charter Review Committee, Attorney Lauren Goldberg.

Jessica Cole recorded the Minutes.

**Discuss presentation at the Finance and Warrant Commission meeting(s)**

The Select Board has accepted the Charter Review Committee's recommendation, and it is on the Draft Warrant.

Mr. Fitzgerald thanked Ms. Hyde for presenting at the Finance & Warrant Committee meeting.

The Finance & Warrant Commission had a favorable response and endorsed the Charter Review Committee's recommendation for Town meeting.

1897 was a long time ago and the Charter Review Committee wants to change the foundational documents.

The Finance & Warrant Committee asked about who would do the appointment, asked for some salary ranges and if the Town would add an FTE (full time employee).

May need to reclassify/reorganize existing staff and may not need to add an FTE.

The Finance & Warrant Committee will vote Tuesday night.

The current Tax Collector spoke up and was opposed.

March 28 in the Community Meeting Room at the Main Library the Charter Review Committee will meet with the Finance and Warrant Commission.

**Discuss presentation at the Annual Town Meeting**

Recorded the presentations last year because of the first meeting since COVID.

Mr. Coleman will encourage recordings again.

Who will make the recording? Select Board?

It is a Special Act and requires a majority vote.

Narrate over PowerPoint and add to the Town's website.

The Charter Review Committee will wait until after the Finance & Warrant meeting.

Mention in the presentation that no one pulled papers for the Tax Collector.

**Discuss next steps**

The Charter Review Committee has decided that we will continue towards a traditional charter revision to present at the next Annual Town Meeting.

Go to the Legislature and then have it ratified by a town election.

Attorney Goldberg stated that it depends on what we will be proposing. As long as they are not controversial, spelling and grammar mistakes.

Go to the Legislature for everything and put the controversial items in separate articles.

Local acceptance is favored by the legislature when there are bigger issues going on.

Discussion:

- Select Board: Size.
- Finance & Warrant Committee: Its size and defining its role, make sure that its role and function is clearly defined.
- Personnel Board: Become advisory and will meet quarterly to allow HR to hire more expeditiously and move with more discretion.
- Attorney Goldberg stated that many towns no longer have Personnel Boards.
- Possible change In the Town Clerk's position.
- Recommending every board and committee to talk about what the rules are.
  - Have rules for Public Participation.
  - Make time limits clear.
- Can we require through our Charter, someone wants to put a petition article before Town Meeting they cannot also sit as the Board Member and vote on the recommendation whether or not to place it on a Warrant? Attorney Goldberg: Cannot take away their right to vote at Town Meeting, but could say if you sponsor an article you cannot participate in regard to that article in your official position.
- Advisory to the Moderator
- Committee/Board members serving on other boards in their official capacity and being present at another meeting.
- Quorum at Town Meeting
- Library Trustees: 5 members?

Make some policy calls at the next meeting.

Plan on going through 3 chapters of the Charter a meeting.

**Discuss and vote future meeting dates**

May 4, 2023-Chapter 1-2-3-Jaillet Meeting Room-6pm

June 1, 2023 6 pm - Chapter 4-5-6-Jaillet Meeting Room-6pm

June 15, 2023-6pm 7-8-9- Zoom 6pm

**Approval of Minutes: February 7, 2023 & March 1, 2023**

Upon a motion made by Ms. Hyde and seconded by Mr. Cahill, the Charter Review Committee voted in favor (5-0) to accept the minutes from February 7, 2023 as presented.

Upon a motion made by Ms. Hyde and seconded by Ms. Powers, the Charter Review Committee voted in favor (4-0-1-Cahill) to accept the minutes from March 1, 2023 as presented.

**Public Participation**

None.

**Other Business not anticipated by the Chair**

None

**Adjourn**

Upon a motion made by Ms. Hyde and seconded by Mr. Loughnane, the Charter Review Committee voted in favor (5-0) to adjourn at 7:13pm.