

Minutes Accepted 5/8/2024

Charter Review Committee Minutes
Wednesday March 13, 2024
8:00 AM
Via Remote Participation
Westwood, MA 02090

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, On March 29, 2023, Governor Maura Healey signed into law, an Act Extending pandemic-related authorizations related to public meetings, allowing remote meeting options for public bodies through March 31, 2025. The March 13, 2024, Charter Review Committee meeting was conducted via remote participation.

Call To Order:

The meeting was called to order at approximately 8:01am by Co-Chair Paul Fitzgerald.
All attendees participated remotely, and the meeting was recorded.

Present via Remote Participation:

Paul Fitzgerald, Co-Chairman, Peter Cahill-Co-Chairman, Nancy Hyde, John Loughnane & Dottie Powers, Town Clerk.

Ex-Officio Members: Patrick Ahearn, Town Counsel & Christopher Coleman, Town Administrator.
Attorney Lauren Goldberg & Jessica Cole who recorded the Minutes.

Discuss Preparation for Town Meeting & next Finance & Warrant Commission hearing

Ms. Hyde had a few double spacing typos.

Ms. Powers will reach out to General Code and they will format it.

Mr. Ahearn and Attorney Goldberg went through the Charter fully last week.

We have no follow up for Fin Com, no new material for them and no presentation.

We will send the Finance & Warrant Commission a copy of the Charter.

What is considered Technical vs Housekeeping?

The Charter Review Committee will add the Draft Charter to the Town website.

Mr. Fitzgerald highlighted some of the proposed changes to the Charter.

Mr. Ahearn: What is technical and what is housekeeping? The Committee wants to be well prepared for Fin com and Town meeting.

- A technical change is a clarification
- Housekeeping is grammatical or to bring something into conformity.

The Committee wants to break it down to make it easier for residents to understand.

There are no substantive problems with the document.

Public Comments:

Nada Fabrizio, 32 Webster Street typed in chat: I would like to review this "draft" that is being discussed.

Where can it be found on our website? She suggested that it would be valuable to have the Charter in advance to follow along. The Charter was shared on the screen, and it will be made publicly available on the Westwood Town website.

Discuss Final Revisions of the Town Charter

None.

Discuss Final Report

The Charter Review Committee will have another meeting to design the presentation for Town Meeting after the Finance & Warrant Commission Public Hearing and present a final report to the Select Board.

Public Participation:

None.

Discuss February 26, 2024 Open Meeting Law Complaint filed by Ms. Fran Fusco

Attorney Goldberg is working on a response to the Attorney General for the Charter Review Committee. She is working on it with Mr. Ahearn. The AG has jurisdiction over OPL violations but not public participation.

One of the requests is that the comment screenshot be added to the Minutes.

The Charter Review Committee will attach the screenshot to the February 20, 2024 minutes. Ms. Fusco wants a committee member to be removed from office. Mr. Ahearn stated that only through a recall petition can someone be removed from elected offices the AG does not have jurisdiction to remove an elected office and only the appointed authority can remove someone from an appointed position. Mr. Ahearn will circulate a written copy response before sending it back to the AG.

Attorney Goldberg stated that it is up to the Board to decide to allow public participation. We invited public participation, not sure if that would change the AG decision. This is an unwarranted attack that can be fended off.

Approval of Minutes: February 20, 2024, February 26, 2024, February 27, 2024 & March 6, 2024

Upon a motion made by Mr. Cahill and seconded by Mr. Loughnane, the Charter Review Committee voted in favor (5-0) via roll call vote to accept the minutes from February 20, 2024 as amended to include the screenshot.

Roll Call Vote:

Paul Fitzgerald-Yes

Peter Cahil-Yes

Nancy Hyde-Yes

John Loughnane-Yes

Dottie Powers-Yes

Upon a motion made by Ms. Hyde and seconded by Mr. Loughnane, the Charter Review Committee voted in favor (4-0-1) via roll call vote to accept the minutes from February 26, 2024 as presented.

Roll Call Vote:

Paul Fitzgerald-Abstain

Peter Cahil-Yes

Nancy Hyde-Yes

John Loughnane-Yes

Dottie Powers-Yes

Upon a motion made by Ms. Hyde and seconded by Ms. Powers, the Charter Review Committee voted in favor (4-0-1) via roll call vote to accept the minutes from February 27, 2024 as presented..

Roll Call Vote:

Paul Fitzgerald-Abstain

Peter Cahil-Yes

Nancy Hyde-Yes

John Loughnane-Yes

Dottie Powers-Yes

Upon a motion made by Ms. Hyde and seconded by Mr. Loughnane, the Charter Review Committee voted in favor (4-0-1) via roll call vote to accept the minutes from March 6, 2024 as presented..

Roll Call Vote:

Paul Fitzgerald-Yes

Peter Cahil-Yes

Nancy Hyde-Yes

John Loughnane-Yes

Dottie Powers-Abstain

Other Business not anticipated by the Chair

None.

Public Comments:

Fran Fusco, 20 Pine Lane, typed in chat: In minutes it should also be stated that intentionally, my comment was omitted.

Nada Fabrizio, 32 Webster Street, typed in chat: Absurd...Come on, Chris.

Adjournment

Upon a motion made by Ms. Hyde and seconded byMs. Powers, the Charter Review Committee voted in favor (5-0) via roll call vote to adjourn at 8:43am.

Roll Call Vote:

Paul Fitzgerald-Yes

Peter Cahil-Yes

Nancy Hyde-Yes

John Loughnane-Yes

Dottie Powers-Yes