

## Minutes Accepted 5/8/2024

**Charter Review Committee Minutes  
(Charter Review Committee Attendance at Finance and Warrant Commission's Meeting)  
Tuesday March 26, 2024  
Westwood Library, Community Meeting Room  
660 High Street - 7:00 PM  
Westwood, MA 02090**

The Charter Review Committee attended the Finance and Warrant Commission's public hearing on Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles to participate in the discussion and presentation of annual town meeting warrant articles.

### **Present**

Peter Cahill-Co-Chair, Nancy Hyde, John Loughnane & 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 remotely.

### **Call to Order**

Co-Chair Peter Cahill called the meeting to order at 8:13pm.  
Ms. Hyde introduced the Charter Review Committee.

### **Presentation of recommended Charter Amendments**

There are 5 substantive articles:

#### **Quorum**

Only for the beginning of the Town Meeting.

#### **Elected Officers**

Change Town Clerk from Elected to Appointed.

#### **Finance & Warrant Commission**

Allowing flexibility of up to 15 members at the discretion of the Town Moderator.

#### **Personnel Board**

Recommending change to Personnel Advisory Board.

#### **Permanent Building Commission**

3 adjustments, functioning the same, it's about the appointment process

### **Technical Articles:**

Ms. Hyde stated that there are word changes, minor adjustments that do not change the sum and substance of the articles.

### **Housekeeping Articles:**

This article addressed typos, reformatting, renumbering, comports with State Law.

### **Housing Authority:**

This article will incorporate the existing Housing Authority into the Charter, it is not in the current Charter. It does have elected positions on it, and all elected boards are captured in the Charter.

### **Finance and Warrant Commission:**

Mr. Hertz went through the Articles.

#### **SB1-Quorum**

No comments.

#### **Elected Officers: Town Clerk:**

- Does the term expire? *Ms. Powers is tenured until she is 70, or if she chooses to step down.*

- Attorney Goldberg stated that there is a local town provision, allowing the Clerk to maintain tenure till Clerk is 70, or leaves.
- Why move from elected to appointed? *Want the position to stay highly professional and understand all the elements of the job. The Town Administrator will hire with the Select Board being consulted.*
- Any residency requirement for the Town Clerk? *No, it is a trend in the Commonwealth for Town Clerk's to be appointed.*

Finance & Warrant Commission:

Personnel Board:

To make it Advisory.

Clerk question:

Change from elected to appointed. Appointed would cost more? What would the financial impact on the Town be in terms of health benefits? Ms. Powers is a full-time employee and is entitled to all the benefits of Town employees. It may not be necessary that a new appointed Town Clerk would need an increase in salary.

Permanent Building Commission:

Technical

Provide for consistencies throughout the document. We were trying to make the document user friendly. Provided headers to sections. Improved the organization and flow.

Chair Hertz recommended getting copies of the Articles and will move onto the Select Board portion of the Public Hearing.

Public Comments:

Ms. N.Milosavljevic-Fabrizio, 32 Webster Street, stated that she is opposed to 3 Articles.

SB5-Home Rule Petition-Quorum-opposed. If we change the quorum, we need a correlating bylaw that mandates the order in which the articles appear on the warrant are to be determined by a random selection process. She would agree with the Quorum article if we make it a random selection at Town Meeting.

SB6-Town Clerk: Opposed, every member on the Commission should be too. The entire appointment process is vulnerable. It should continue to be elected. I hope you agree.

SB7-FinCom-Ex-officio. Suggested adding words 'non-voting' members.

8:54 pm took a break.

10:17 pm the Charter Review Committee came back.

Ms. Hyde apologized for missing paperwork.

Town Clerk:

- Town meeting members, how will they understand it? *Town Members will get the charter in the Meeting book.*
- How can people follow this? *Attorney Goldberg: Strikeouts may be confusing, it is harder to explain, it does not refer to the section in the charter. The write ups could include the sections. There is a lot of material.*
- What goes to the Legislature? *Attorney Goldberg: A certified copy of the vote at Town Meeting, a copy of the proposed Charter Amendment, and a copy of the old copy of the Charter and the new Charter.*
- Is it possible to give exactly what sections it refers to?
- Suggested a One Warrant Article with the full set of changes but it is an up or down vote for Town Meeting.

Ms. Hyde went through the Articles and gave the correlation sections in the Charter.

Mr. Hertz wanted the references.

Ms. Hyde continued with the correct numbers in the Charter.

**Received May 13, 2024@2:06PM**  
**By: Westwood Town Clerk**

A member suggested adding the wording ex-officio 'non-voting'.

Technical Articles: It is in the text of the articles. *Mr. Ahearn explained that they are non-housekeeping, they are changes that are not numeral, punctuation or commas.*

Housekeeping:

Renumbering, adjustments, grammar, cleaning up the document.

Housing Authority:

Added on, there shall be a Housing Authority.

Final Comments:

- SB 10 & 11. What is the definition of a technical revision? *Mr. Ahearn: When we change something but don't change what we are trying to do.*
- SB 12, there are 2 different 4-7-1's.

**Adjournment**

Upon a motion made by Ms. Hyde and seconded by Ms. Powers, the Charter Review Committee voted in favor (4-0) to adjourn at approximately 10:45 p.m.