

Charter Review Committee Remote Meeting

1/27/2021 - Minutes

1. Call To Order And Pledge Of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm. The pledge of allegiance was said.

Attendance (Charter Review Committee Members attended via remote connection): Matt Jussaume (Chair), Caroline Ahdab (Vice Chair), Ramona Reed (Clerk), John Ladik, Marilyn Tremblay Absent: Bob Newton, Harvey Serreze

2. Acceptance Of Minutes

The minutes from the meetings on January 6, 2021 and January 20, 2021 were reviewed.

January 6, 2021 minutes:

Marilyn Tremblay made a motion, seconded by John Ladik, to accept the meeting minutes from January 6, 2021. These were unanimously accepted by the CRC members in attendance at that meeting: Matt Jussaume, Caroline Ahdab, Ramona Reed, John Ladik, Harvey Serreze, Marilyn Tremblay.

January 20, 2021 minutes:

Ramona Reed made a motion, seconded by John Ladik, to accept the meeting minutes from January 20, 2021. These were unanimously accepted by the CRC members in attendance at that meeting: Matt Jussaume, Ramona Reed, John Ladik, Harvey Serreze, Abstained: Caroline Ahdab, Marilyn Tremblay.

3. Public Comments On The Agenda

Town Administrator, Andrew MacLean, provided additional feedback on Article 5, at the request of the CRC. In an email dated 1/26/2021, Mr. MacLean gave recommendations for Section 5.5, Organization of Town Government. He commented that the Select Board directed him to continue creating the committee charges and suggested "...that the Charter reflect a higher level conversation about committees that includes a definition of a committee and an expectation that a charge be formally set for a committee." His email had an attachment with the details of his suggestions.

4. Public Feedback Received

None.

5. Discussion / Action Items

5.1. Article 5.5 Org Of Town Gov't - Review Updated Organization List In Charter Draft

Section 5-5: Organization of Town Government

The CRC reviewed the email attachment with the committee information from Mr. MacLean. It was discussed which parts, if not all, should be included. It was decided to include all of his suggested text with a minor change to the last sentence of the 3rd paragraph where the text "appointment patterns" was changed to "appointment terms".

Motion: John Ladik made a motion, seconded by Marilyn Tremblay to make this change and to re-organize the beginning of Section 5.5 as mentioned below. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

This beginning of Section 5.5 was broken down into 2 lettered sections, a - General information, with Mr. MacLean's text, and b - Organization structure, which has the original first paragraph of Section 5.5.

SECTION 5-5: ORGANIZATION OF TOWN GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

a. General information - Volunteer committees are a critical component of local government. Provided various powers by statute, by-law, or delegation, committees help create discussion and make decisions important to the community.

There are two primary types of committees. Permanent or 'standing' committees are established by Massachusetts General Law, local Bylaw, or through Select Board delegation. Temporary or 'ad hoc' committees are created by the Select Board or the Town Administrator.

By tradition, standing committee members are appointed or elected on the fiscal year, generally for three-year staggered terms and ad hoc committees are appointed on the calendar year, generally for one-year terms. There are exceptions to both of those appointment terms depending on statutory regulations or the purpose/timing of an ad hoc committee.

A committee, whether standing or ad hoc, should have a 'committee charge' which identifies the authority under which a board, committee, commission, council or similarly named group functions within Pepperell's local governance. The charge should at a minimum describe the establishment of the committee, its appointment structure and the intended role of the committee. The following should be included in a Committee Charge: how established (statute, by-law, Charter, Select Board, Town Administrator, other) / Elected or Appointed, number of members, terms and calendar cycle of terms, purpose.

b. Organization structure - Until such time as a different form of organization shall be provided, in accordance with the provisions of Article 5-1 of this Charter, the following organization whose structure is shown in Figure 1 shall be operative:

After this text, the list of committees appointed by the Select Board is listed, followed by the list of appointments that the Town Administrator is responsible to make.

Section 5-1: Organization of Town Agencies

Another review of Section 5.1 c was made to finish updating the text to include references to the specific MGL that governs it.

Motion: John Ladik made a motion, seconded by Ramona Reed to update Section 5.1 c as follows below. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

c. The Town may, by majority vote at any Town Meeting duly held, transfer any amount previously appropriated to any other use authorized by law. Alternatively, under section 16 of MGL chapter 39, the Select Board, with the concurrence of the finance committee may transfer within the last 2 months of any fiscal year, or during the first 15 days of the new fiscal year to apply to the previous fiscal year, any amount appropriated, other than for a school department, to any other appropriation.

5.2. Revision Discussions For Article 6 Finance And Fiscal Procedures And Other Charter Sections, Time Permitting

Article 6: Finance and Fiscal Procedures

Section 6-1: Fiscal Year - No changes

Section 6-2: Finance Committee - minor text update - "per" replaced the word "with" in the following sentence:

A finance committee shall be established per Article 2, Section 2-3 (b.) of this Charter.

Section 6-3: Financial Plan - John Ladik provided a suggested updates to the text in this section. This was primarily to change the first sentence to state " by the middle of December", rather than "by the first day of December". Also, the terminology, "Board of Selectmen" was updated to "Select Board" in the 2nd paragraph of the section. The CRC reviewed these and agreed to update Section 6.3 as follows:

The Town Administrator shall develop and annually revise a long range general financial plan of not less than three (3) years for the Town by the middle of December of each year or any other time fixed by by-law. The plan shall project anticipated revenues from all sources, provide projections related to the Town's future debt obligations, and identify anticipated municipal problems likely to require major expenditures in the future.

The financial plan shall be reviewed by the Select Board and the Finance Committee and be adopted by the Select Board with or without amendment.

The revision review will continue with Section 6-4: Submission of Budgets and Budget Message at the next meeting.

6. Other Matters Which Could Not Be Reasonably Anticipated 48 Hours Prior To Meeting

None.

7. Adjournment

Ramona Reed motioned to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Caroline Ahdab. By unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 8:56 pm. The next Charter Review Committee Meeting will be scheduled for Weds., February 10, 2021, at 7 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ramona Reed, Clerk, Charter Review Committee