

# Charter Review Committee Meeting, Town Hall, Meeting Room A

2/12/2020 - Minutes

## 1. Call To Order And Pledge Of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 pm. The pledge of allegiance was said.

The meeting was chaired by Matt Jussaume, Vice Chair, in absence of chairman, Doug Adams.

Attendance: Charter Review Committee Members, Caroline Ahdab, Matt Jussaume (Vice Chair), John Ladiak, Ramona Reed (Clerk), Harvey Serreze, Marilyn Tremblay  
Absent: Doug Adams (Chair), Bob Newton, Mike Tang

## 2. Acceptance Of Minutes

The minutes from Charter Review Committee meetings on January 7, 2020 and January 22, 2020 were presented for review.

Ramona Reed made a motion, seconded by Marilyn Tremblay, to approve the meeting minutes of January 7, 2020. This was subsequently withdrawn by Ramona, seconded by Caroline Ahdab, in order to review them at the next meeting with a suggested amendment to the discussion on agenda item 5.1 (Charter Section 2-11/Capital Plan for Town Meeting) and to add cited references from Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR 11th ed.) concerning conventions for recording feedback from meeting guests.

Caroline Ahdab made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of January 22, 2020. This was subsequently withdrawn because a quorum of members who attended that meeting was not present.

Marilyn Tremblay made a motion, seconded by Caroline Ahdab, to delay the acceptance of the minutes from January 7, 2020 and January 22, 2020 until the next meeting. A vote was made and the motion was unanimously accepted by the committee.

## 3. Public Comments On The Agenda

None

## 4. Public Feedback Received

At the meeting, Pepperell Resident, Tony Beattie, 36 Oak Hill St, - Provided feedback that based on the last Special Town Election, he started a petition for Town Meeting to request that Pepperell elections to be non-partisan. He requested that this also be considered to be added to the Town Charter. He presented examples from the City of Melrose and the Town of Orleans' Charters where this was adopted. Matt Jussaume read the excerpts from the Melrose and Orleans' Charter that state all elections are non-partisan and ballots bear no party emblem/designation. Orleans' Charter has this and also includes that no candidates or candidates committee elected for town offices can accept contributions from any political party committee. Mr. Beattie recommended the Orleans' verbiage.

At the meeting, Pepperell Resident, Ron Carr, 30 Elm St - Presented his research that in the past, Pepperell adopted Citizen's Caucuses based on a State Law from the 1880s which was non-partisan. Pepperell abolished the Caucuses in 1996 but Town elections have generally not been partisan.

After this feedback, Caroline Ahdab motioned to add a discussion item to the Charter Review Committee's next agenda about the suggestion to add text to the Pepperell's Charter stating Pepperell elections be partisan free. After discussion, this motion was not moved forward because the CRC agreed that a motion is not required to add public feedback for the Charter as an agenda discussion item.

## 5. Discussion / Action Items

### 5.1. Continue Charter Review - Articles 6, 7 And 8

Article 5, Section 5: -Organization of Town Government

-Harvey Serreze submitted feedback on revisions for this section and advised that he consulted with the Town Administrator and is awaiting his feedback. To start, the TA suggested that non-standard or ad-hoc committees not be listed.

-Caroline Ahdab suggested that we look for verbiage that could possibly be added to summarize who the Board of Selectman are responsible for appointing, etc.

Article 6 - Finance and Fiscal Procedures

-John Ladik submitted feedback for revisions to Article 6 to be considered for inclusion in the Charter. In particular, he recommended revising the specific scheduled budget due dates to make them more general for flexibility.

After discussion of John's revisions and further review of Article 6, the initial review of this article was completed.

Article 7 General Provisions

-Section 7-3 - Specific Provisions to Prevail - **Action Item:** Matt Jussaume will make edits to clarify the section which will be reviewed on the next pass of this section.

-Section 7-5 Rules and Regulations - The CRC questioned what rules a town agency could make outside of Town By-Laws or the Charter - **Action item** - Ramona Reed will check with Town Clerk for possible clarification.

-Section 7-6 Periodic Review - The committee discussed that for section 7-6a, that a length of time for the Charter Review Committee appointment should be defined. It was suggested that the appointment should expire after the revisions are approved by the Town and then approved according to the State laws as referenced in Charter Section 7.1. This will be further discussed.

-Section 7-7 Removals and Suspension - This section will be revisited to potentially add a removal path for a non-performing member on multi-member board.

-Section 7-8 Procedures Governing Multiple Member Bodies - This needs to be reviewed and possibly synced up with Section 3-7a which covers filling vacancies for a multiple member board. Possibly parts of 7-8 could be eliminated or a reference could point to Section 3-7a.

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

John Ladik suggested that we need to add verbiage to Charter Section 2.7 to state that signatures from Citizen Petitions need to be certified. Matt Jussaume made note to add this for the next pass of Article 2.

## 7. Adjournment

Marilyn Tremblay motioned to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by John Ladik. By unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

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

