

CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Tuesday, June 17, 2014

Commissioners present:	Chairman Joseph Calsetta, Norman Boucher, Bill Hamel, Sara LeMaster, Dave Ragon, Carl Schiessl, Dave Vaicunas, and Lucinda Van Gieson
Commissioners absent:	George Austin, Michael Forschino, Brian Levy and Doug Glazier

- 1) **Call to Order** – Chairman Calsetta called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm.
- 2) **Pledge of Allegiance** – The Pledge of Allegiance was observed.
- 3) **Public Input** – None
- 4) **Approval of the minutes for the Public Hearing of June 3, 2014.**

Chairman Calsetta asked that Section 1008A be added under “Clarify 805C” because they both address the \$10,000 threshold limit.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the June 3, 2014 Public Hearing with one change – Add 1008A under 805C.

Dave Vaicunas
Motion Passed Unanimously

Seconded by Norman Boucher

- 5) **Correspondence** – No new correspondence was received since the June 3 Public Hearing.
- 6) **New Business** –

Chairman Calsetta stated that there were documents submitted by the Board of Selectmen at the Commission’s initial meeting in May for consideration by the Commission.

- 1) A letter from Town Clerk, Bill Hamel, regarding a scribe’s error in the existing Charter which has been corrected in the official copy at the Town Hall, 2) a 2/9/10 letter from Chadwick & Stone regarding a “spending freeze process”. Chairman Calsetta suggested that this be discussed when Section 800 is discussed since it involves finances; 3) a 9/28/12 letter from Attorney Storms regarding movement of funds which will also be discussed during the Section 800 discussions; 4) a letter from Attorney Storms regarding the Tax Collection Vacancy which has already been filled; 5) a letter from Attorney Storms regarding Public Input (Section 701e) at meetings; and 6) a letter from Attorney Storms regarding Board of Finance Year-end Transfers.

The Commission then discussed how the meeting would proceed. They discussed reviewing the “Topics for Discussion” that were compiled at the last meeting. A suggestion was had that they could categorize topics and possibly create subcommittees to review them for future meetings. It was determined that two obvious errors could be sent to the Board of Selectmen for correction in the existing Charter.

MOTION: A motion was made to correct the start date of the registrars and revise 804B (take “voting machine labels out and add the word ballots”) in the existing Charter.

Joe Calsetta
Motion Passed Unanimously

Seconded by Bill Hamel

Following a brief discussion on the first item on the list, which was Budget voting going to Referendum, Commissioner Schiessl suggested that the Commission go through the entire list compiled at the last meeting, and only decide tonight which items would remain or be eliminated for debate at future meetings. **(The revised list will be included at the end of these minutes)**

- Consideration for all Budget Voting going to Referendum – Item will remain on list
- Combine Commissions – Item will remain on list
- Change the Charter to allow certain decisions to be made by Board of Selectmen – Item moved to be included under line item called “Clarify 805C”.
- Review wording for relevance to 2014 – Item removed as an issue. Commission determined that relevance would happen automatically as the Charter is revised.
- Clarify 805C – Item will remain on list
- Require Chairman and Vice Chairman of Commissions to exchange roles each year – Item will remain on list
- Set stricter regulations for Blight Ordinances – It was decided that they would look into adding something to the Charter that would require a governing body to review ordinances within stated timeframes in order to keep Ordinances current.
- Change the term for First Selectman to four years – Item will remain on list
- Clarify the independence of the First Selectman relative to the Board – Item will remain on list
- Consider making Town Clerk and Tax Collector positions of Civil Service – Item will remain on list
- Update gender usage of “Selectmen” – Remove from list – Sara LeMaster stated that State Statute would have to change before we could make this change to our Charter.
- Consider adding more to the website – Remove from list since it’s not a Charter issue
- Fix spelling errors and grammatical errors in existing Charter – Remove from list – Commission feels this will happen automatically as the Charter is reviewed

7) **Public Input (Agenda Items Only) - None**

8) **Commissioners Comments –**

Commissioner Boucher asked if the date/time of the Charter Revision Commission meetings could be changed due to a conflict with his schedule. After a brief discussion, it was decided that Tuesdays at 6:30 would be the norm but exact dates will be decided later. There will be only one meeting in July and one in August. The next meeting will be July 1. Chairman Calsetta suggested having our next Public Hearing in September to discuss Section 800.

Chairman Calsetta stated that he would also like to add the review of Section 604, Town Counsel, with regard to the amount of Attorney’s we hire in various roles. He suggested possibly having only one Town Attorney and hiring others on an as needed basis.

Chairman Calsetta would like to add a discussion to clarify the role of Welfare Director.

Commissioner Schiessl suggested working backwards from our deadline date and setting up a timeline for getting things done throughout the process of revising the Charter. Chairman Calsetta agreed and asked that this be added to the Agenda for the next meeting. Commissioner Hamel stated that he has an old timeline that he can revise and that our deadline date is September 20, 2015 in order to be on the November ballot. Chairman Calsetta asked Commissioner Schiessl to put together his ideas for the timeline prior to the July meeting.

9) **Adjournment –**

**MOTION: To adjourn at 7:49 pm.
Bill Hamel
Motion Passed Unanimously**

Seconded by Dave Vaicunas

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Pfaffenbichler
Recording Secretary

Charter Revision Commission Meeting Agenda's and Minutes are available on the town website for downloading.

CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

JUNE 17, 2014

(Revised after meeting to be discussed at July 1, 2014 meeting)

- Consideration for all Budget Voting going to Referendum
 - Limits to number of Referendums
 - Length of time between Referendums
 - Set default increase after multiple failed Referendums
- Combine Commissions (at least seven members each)
 - Police/Fire
 - Board of Selectmen/Board of Finance
 - *Open for additional Commission Consolidations*
- ~~• Review wording of existing Charter for relevance to 2014 will happen automatically when Charter is reviewed~~
- Clarify 805C
 - Increase the numerical threshold for new budget items
 - Change the Charter to allow certain decisions be made by BOS rather than a Town Meeting (*moved from above*)
- Require the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Commissions to exchange roles yearly
- Set stricter regulations for Blight Ordinance (*changing to a more generic line item involving the review of all Ordinances by a governing body*)
- Change the term for First Selectman to four years.
 - Disqualify loser from automatic entry to the Board
 - Stagger election years for First Selectman and Second Selectmen
- Clarify the independence of the First Selectman relative to the entire Board
- Consider making Town Clerk and Tax Collector positions civil service
- ~~• Update gender usage of "Selectmen" would have to be changed at State Level first~~
- ~~• Consider adding more to the website, (i.e., notification of referendum) not a Charter issue~~
- Fix spelling errors and grammatical errors in existing Charter *will happen automatically when Charter is reviewed*