



TOWN OF NORTON CHARTER COMMISSION

Board of Selectmen Meeting Room
Town Hall, 1st Floor

Monday, June 24, 2019
7:00 P.M.

Town Clerk Date/ Time Stamp

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2019 JUL 22 A 11:45

~MINUTES~

1. Call to Order: Roll Call, Ask / Announce Recording, Pledge of Allegiance

The June 24, 2019 meeting of the Charter Commission was called to order at 7:00 PM, by Ms. Laura Parker, Chair.

Members Present: Ms. Janey Goodwin, Mr. Dave Heaney, Ms. Denise Luciano, Ms. Sandy Ollerhead, Mr. Keith Silver, and Mr. David Wrenn.

Members Absent: Mr. Kevin Schleicher, Ms. Kerry Snyder

2. Acceptance of Minutes

A motion was made by Ms. Luciano to accept the minutes of 6/10/19. Second by Mr. Heaney. Vote: Unanimous.

3. Discussion of administrative items as needed

The Board of Selectmen room is still reserved for August 26 in case it is needed. The commission is going to start using Dropbox to organize all of the documents that are created and discussed. Ms. Parker asked that members don't add comments to any of the documents in order to comply with Open Meeting Law.

4. Public Comment – Open forum

No members of the public wished to speak.

5. New Business:

Interviews with Select Board members Bramwell, Steele and Conway:

Mr. Bramwell:

- Special interest groups can take over Town Meeting
- Lack of information is an issue
- The town needs an IT person to help getting information out but finances are an issue
- The Board of Selectmen is limited in what they can do in day-to-day business
- Suggested that a committee with representatives from different boards appoint the Finance Committee members
- While he believes in term limits, he is concerned what would happen if we don't have people run
- Board of Selectmen can't currently mandate that Water/Sewer Commission members come to a meeting which has caused an issue in the past
- Likes the idea of RTM
- Questions whether we need to include newspaper requirement in the town manager search

Ms. Steele

- Likes that town meeting provides a safety net so that decisions don't rest only with boards and committees
- Feels the reason it's hard for new business to come to Norton isn't because of processes but because of lack of commercial property
- The moderator single handedly appointing Finance Committee members could be a problem in the future

- There is a checks and balances with the Town Manager in that the BOS has to approve the Town Manager choices
- Would like to have charter outline specific expectations of the Finance Committee and outline their role along with the roles of the Town Manager and School Committee in the budget process
- Would like to see the Water/Sewer Commission become appointed rather than elected to give them more accountability
- Believes in term limits for some positions
- Consider making the charter review committee that is formed every ten years an elected committee

Mr. Conway:

- Likes that there is a lot of opportunity for people to get involved
- There's a huge risk of having major changes made to a budget at town meeting based on a special interest group
- Financial planning is a must for the town
- Feels that there are way too many meetings which makes it hard for all demographics to get involved
- Would like to have easy and early access to information ahead of time
- Fully supports term limits and feels it would spur people to run who don't want to run against an incumbent
- Suggested that an incumbent could be appointed in the absence of another candidate running

Upcoming schedule

Ms. Ollerhead shared the schedule for interviews scheduled for our upcoming meetings.

Discussion of Westwood's Charter

Some of the items that were noticed and pointed out by members:

- Identifies whether committees are compensated
- Lists a process for a "Pre-Petition" for a citizen's petition
- Moderator is elected for one-year term
- Some positions list term limits
- Includes a Youth and Family Services position
- Associate members listed for boards and committees
- Lists minimum job requirements for some positions
- Gives power to the Board of Selectmen to hire and fire
- Budget process includes a "summary budget message"
- Board of Selectmen presents proposed budget to town meeting

Next town's charter review assignment: Weston

Weston's charter was tabled until the next meeting in order to gather more information.

Survey:

Mr. Heaney gave an overview of two options for creating a survey, Survey Monkey and Google Forms. He found that the free version of Survey Monkey has more limits than Google Forms. The group agreed that using Google Forms would be better. There are no good ways to restrict the number of responses people can give if the survey is anonymous. Despite this, there was consensus that it would still be better to offer the option of completing the survey anonymously in order to get more responses. Some of the ways discussed for disseminating the survey included using Norton Alerts, Facebook, and posting the survey at the Senior Center.

Ms. Parker will send the group her list of questions. Others can send her questions as well and the list will be discussed at a future meeting. Ideally the survey would contain five or six questions.

6. Other Business: Topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance

7. Next Meeting: July 8, 2019

8. Action Items: Clerk to review

Ms. Parker will reach out to Town Counsel about the Weston charter

Ms. Parker will send survey questions to everyone

Ms. Ollerhead will send out a link to Dropbox to members

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Heaney at 10:13 PM. Second by Ms. Goodwin. Vote:

Unanimous.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Danene M. Ollerhead

Minutes approved by the Board or Committee on: 7/8/19

Chairman Signature: Ann L. Parker