



TOWN OF NORTON CHARTER COMMISSION

Board of Selectmen Meeting Room
Town Hall, 1st Floor

Monday, December 16, 2019
7:00 P.M.

Town Clerk Date/ Time Stamp

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NORTON TOWN CLERK
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~MINUTES~

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

The December 16, 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. Kevin Schleicher, Mr. Keith Silver, Ms. Kerry Snyder, and Mr. David Wrenn.

2. Public Comment – Open forum

No members of the public wished to speak.

3. Information Gathering & Research - Interviews

a. Norton Housing Authority: Mr. Robert Salvo

- Governor's appointed position on Norton Housing Authority has not been filled for five years
- Town doesn't have much input on what they do since it is a state entity
- Possibility for future housing on the current leaching field once the sewer hookup is complete
- Would like to see people run for positions and volunteer
- NHA is a separate entity from the town with their own operating budget

b. Cultural Council

Janet Linehan

- Two term limit according to the Mass Cultural Council (MCC)
- Had 37 grant applicants the last two years
- Town Accountant works with NCC to help disperse funds

Laurie Pleshar

- MCC provides support and hosts events where Local Cultural Councils can meet to exchange ideas
- Membership is their biggest issue
- Have a good relationship with the library since many of the grants use the library as a venue
- Would like to see the arts integrated as much as possible

Catherine Headen

- Norton Cultural Council receives funding from Mass Cultural Council which is a statewide agency; can also fundraise separately
- Minimum of 5 members needed to operate with a maximum of 22 members; currently 6 active members
- Would like to see something put in place to provide opportunities for them to meet with members of other town agencies

c. Select Board: Ms. Renee Deley

- Needs to be more communication with department staff and better understanding of what department needs are
- Charter becomes too restrictive when simple changes such as a name change of a committee require a change in the charter
- More checks and balances needed between BOS and Town Manager
- Information often given either that day or the night before which makes it tough to make good decisions
- Need to start working together more and be more informative
- Need to reduce the amount of meetings that we have and make the process more efficient for businesses
- Feels Norton is too big to be run by Town Meeting and we don't have appropriate representation at Town Meeting
- Very small window of time to submit articles for warrant
- Need HR Department and IT
- Would like to see an interview process by the board to approve appointments

d. Planning Board

Oren Sigal

- Often receive bylaw amendments without much time to go through them or to get them peer reviewed
- Thinks Planning Board should stay elected because it's the one board where the inhabitants can express their views and make sure they have people that they think represent them
- If a member misses 2 meetings can't vote on special permit which can become problematic; suggested alternates might address this issue
- More information should be available to those impacted by bylaw amendments
- Should be working together more collaboratively with departments such as conservation
- Should be able to meet with candidates for Planning Director in advance and have some input
- Town could use more technical support
- Currently some duplication with what Planning Board and Conservation do specifically relating to stormwater issues
- Need more education and training for new members
- Having only 120 people deciding issues at Town Meeting doesn't reflect the town; would like to see a change to some type of representative government

4. Acceptance of prior meeting minutes

A motion was made by Ms. Snyder to accept the minutes of December 2, 2019. Second by Ms. Goodwin. Vote: Unanimous.

5. Discussion of administrative items, as needed

Ms. Parker has shut the survey off and updated the website and taken down the links to the survey.

a. Upcoming interview schedule update, if needed

The last two interviews will be with the Board of Health, scheduled for December 30th, and the Historic District Commission, scheduled for January 13th.

6. Information Gathering & Research – Discussion

a. Review of Janey Goodwin's analysis of aggregated public feedback

Ms. Goodwin passed out a summary of survey results which were discussed.

b. Discussion of additional information collected and / or needed by Charter Commission, if needed

Ms. Parker asked that everyone come prepared to the next meeting to discuss initial thoughts on which form of government would best address the issues that have been raised.

7. Topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance

8. Next Meeting: December 30, 2019

9. Action Items: Clerk to review

Mr. Silver will send his position statement to Ms. Parker to be shared at the next meeting

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Heaney at 9:47 PM. Second by Mr. Schleicher. Vote: Unanimous.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Dana R. Allenhead

Minutes approved by the Board or Committee on: 12/30/19

Chairman Signature: Quinn H. Parker