

Charter Commission
Special Meeting
June 27, 2019 7:00 PM

Community
Center

MINUTES

- **Members Present:** Gregg LaFontaine, Karen Buffkin, Myles Davis, Mike Ninteau, Pierre Belisle, and Suzanne Gilleese

1.0 Call to Order

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

2.0 Discuss and act upon approval of minutes from June 5 Regular Meeting and June 19 Regular Meeting/Joint Meeting with BOS.

M. Ninteau MOVED to approve minutes of 6/5/19 meeting: SECONDED, Motion carried 5:0:0.

M. Ninteau MOVED to approve minutes of 6/19/19 meeting: SECONDED, Motion carried 5:0:0

3.0 Communications

See 4.0.

4.0 Discuss and act on charter recommendations from Board of Selectmen and Legal.

The Chairman led discussion on the Board of Selectmen's proposed changes to the draft charter. Reference was made to the Board of Selectmen's marked-up draft charter presented at the last meeting and an email from legal counsel.

Members discussed the definition of "Biennial Town Election" proposed to be included in section 1.4 (definitions) section. There was discussion on proposed additions to the definitions section, including the term "capital improvement project" and "total year tax burden". Members agreed to change the term "total year tax burden" to "total year tax levy". Members agreed with the Board of Selectmen's suggested changes to eliminate references to "full super majority" and "full majority" in the definitions section.

Article 2--Members agreed with the Board of Selectmen's suggested change to Section 2.3.

It was agreed to modify section 2.4(2), to change the phrase "issuance of bonds" to "authorization to issue". Section 2.4 (3) was modified as proposed and Section 2.4. (10) was eliminated, as proposed, for the reason that it is redundant. The members further agreed to revise Section 2.4(13) to refer to any capital improvement project that has an entire project cost of at least \$1 million.

Article 3—several members agreed to the Board of Selectmen's proposal to have a five member board of selectmen, provided that there would be no town administrator position in the charter. All members then agreed that the proposed charter would have a five member board of selectmen and that the provisions in the 2015 proposed charter on staggered terms for the 5 member board, would be inserted into this proposed charter. The members further agreed that the charter would not create a town administrator position. Members then agreed to change Sections 3.3(2) to eliminate the word "full" before the word "majority" and eliminate the phrase "duly convened meeting". Section 3.3(14) was also changed to eliminate the word "full". Section 3.4 was then discussed and the second paragraph of Section 3.4 was modified to

include the phrase “at the first meeting of the Board of Selectmen” to specify the time when the First Selectman would designate his or her stand-in, in the event of his or her absence or disability. Additional language was added requiring the written designation to be filed with the town clerk and to permit the First Selectman to change his or her designee at any time in writing.

Article 6—Section 6.2 was modified to include a reference to a different minority representation rule for a five member Board of Selectmen.

Article 7—Section 7.1 was referenced and the members agreed to eliminate the term “full” in the fifth paragraph. Members then discussed the Board of Selectmen’s proposal to change the treasurer position from an elected position to an appointed position. In discussing this proposal, members discussed whether it has always been a set policy to have all members of the board of selectmen sign each and every check. Members ultimately agreed to keep the treasurer position as an elected position. Members then agreed to the Board of Selectmen’s proposed changes to Section 7.4.

Article 8—in Section 8.1, in the paragraph on “vacancies”, members agreed to eliminate the language after “majority vote” and include an explicit reference to section 6.2 of the charter on minority representation. The members then addressed the “removal” paragraph in Section 8.1. The Chairman referred to a state statute referencing fire marshals, including removal of fire marshals. It was ultimately agreed not to make changes to the “removal” paragraph since it appeared consistent with the state statute. The members then agreed to remove Section 8.2.1 entirely, in light of the members’ agreement not to include a town administrator position in the charter. Section 8.2.5 was then modified with language similar to that proposed by the Board of Selectmen.

Article 9—members agreed to the Board of Selectmen’s proposal to change the word “will” to “shall”. Members also agreed to the changes proposed for Sections 9.6.1 and 9.8.

Article 12-- It was agreed to delete the first ordinance referenced in Article 12 since it had already been repealed.

The Chairman then proposed having further discussion on the proposed charter at the next regular meeting scheduled for July 3, 2019. K. Buffkin indicated she would prepare the latest version of the proposed charter for this next meeting. There was discussion whether to send this latest version to the Board of Selectmen for their review. It was agreed that the latest version would be sent to legal for review before the revised proposed charter is filed in mid-July.

5.0 Discuss Final Report to accompany Charter proposal

The Chairman then addressed the need to have a final report accompany the proposed charter. The Chairman agreed to draft the report for review by the members at the next regular meeting.

6.0 Adjourn

P. Belisle MOVED to adjourn meeting; K. Buffkin SECONDED; Motion carried 6:0:0.

Meeting adjourned around 9:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Gilleese
Secretary, Charter Commission

Please see the minutes of subsequent meetings for any corrections hereto.