

**Charter Revision Commission
Regular Meeting
Draft Minutes May 28, 2015**

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CYNTHIA LADWIG
TOWN CLERK

Chairman Matthew Berger called the meeting to order at 7:01pm. In attendance were Chairman Matthew Berger, Vice-Chairman Stephen Bessette, Sue Jones, Alice Soscia, Amy Hambly, Bob Statchen, Ashley Gillece, James Murphy.

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment

Virginia McCormack – Ms. McCormack worries that the charter revision will face opposition in November and that immediate implementation will give opponents ammunition being that the state and Town Attorney have advised against 2015 implementation. Ms. McCormack would like to see the changes be made simple for the town to understand and support.

Bill Sternberg – Supports a seven member board and four year terms to allow for competitive elections. Mr. Sternberg stated that it will be a bad idea to go against council regarding the implementation of the transition. Mr. Sternberg supports adopting all three recommendations from the Board of Selectmen.
3. Announcements: none.
4. Approval of Minutes – 4/23/15
 - a. Ms. Gillece moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Bessette, all in favor 8-0, motion approved.
5. Communications: Email correspondence from Kevin Bornstein
6. Old Business: none.
7. New Business:
 - a. Response(s) to changes recommended to the Charter Revision Commission that it amend Section 10-3(B) of the proposed revised Charter to read as follows: “To establish the staggered terms for the Board of Finance and increase the membership of the Board of Finance to seven members, the following process shall be followed. For the 2017 town election, three positions will be filled pursuant to the election procedures contained in this Charter, except that one of said positions shall be for a term of two years for the 2017 election only.

Ms. Gillece stated that she would like to see the change implemented immediately but believes that it is more important to delay rather than risk the revision passing. Ms. Soscia and Ms. Hambly asked for clarification on the communication with Attorney Bromley and Attorney Londregan. Mr. Berger clarified the statement from the Secretary of State. Mr. Murphy stated that by not following the recommendations of the Board of Selectmen the public will question the legality of the revision. Mr. Statchen stated that he does not want to see this diminish the work thus far, but believes the commission must be bold. Mr. Statchen stated that from the beginning the commission was told this would not survive, however everything has happened to the contrary. Mr. Statchen discussed the comments made thus far by the Secretary of State and Town Attorney and does not feel it sufficient for making a decision. Mr. Bessette stated that he would like to see the commission act on behalf of the public and heavily consider the recommendations of the Board of Selectmen and to show a solid revision. Ms. Hambly stated that this is becoming politicized by believing there will be some underground opposition and does not want to see a decision based on fear. Factually

she has not seen a basis for not allowing 2015 implementation. Ms. Jones stated that voters that have not been involved in the process will see the contest against the attorney opinions and may vote against and believes the commission should move forward with the recommendation. Mr. Berger stated the commission is volunteer and not elected officials and must follow the rules provided. Mr. Berger reiterated the concern of those who may vote against due to this issue. Ms. Soscia stated that the recommendations of the Board of Selectmen should be considered heavily to protect the revision. Mr. Bessette supported the efforts of the Board of Finance thus far, but these changes will assist the democratization of the system.

- b. The Board of Selectmen's recommendation to the Charter Revision Commission that it amend Section 6-5(C) of the proposed revised Charter to reference the Board of Finance rather than the Board of Education.
 - c. The Board of Selectmen's recommendation to the Charter Revision Commission that it amend Section 8-2(B) (Department of Assessment) of the proposed revised Charter so that the last sentence of the first paragraph reads: "The Department shall have the following duties in addition to any powers set forth under Section 10-4 of this Charter."
8. Vote on changes to final report
- a. Mr. Bessette moved to accept the recommendation "amend Section 6-5(C) of the proposed revised Charter to reference the Board of Finance rather than the Board of Education" seconded by Ms. Soscia, all in favor 8-0, motion approved.
 - b. Mr. Bessette moved to accept the recommendation "amend Section 8-2(B) (Department of Assessment) of the proposed revised Charter so that the last sentence of the first paragraph reads: "The Department shall have the following duties in addition to any powers set forth under Section 10-4 of this Charter." Seconded by Ms. Gillece, all in favor 8-0, motion approved.
 - c. Ms. Soscia moved to accept the recommendation "amend Section 10-3(B) of the proposed revised Charter to read as follows: "To establish the staggered terms for the Board of Finance and increase the membership of the Board of Finance to seven members, the following process shall be followed. For the 2017 town election, three positions will be filled pursuant to the election procedures contained in this Charter, except that one of said positions shall be for a term of two years for the 2017 election only." Seconded by Ms. Gillece, all in favor 6-2, Roll Call: Murphy – favor, Gillece – favor, Bessette – favor, Berger – favor, Statchen – against, Hambly – against, Jones – favor, Soscia – favor, motion approved.
9. Public Comment
10. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 7:52pm.