



TOWN OF LUNENBURG
Charter Review Committee

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**LUNENBURG TOWN
CLERK OFFICE**

MINUTES
September 27, 2017

Meeting Posted: Yes

Place: Ritter Memorial Building, 960 Massachusetts Avenue — Marian Benson Meeting Room

Time: 7:00PM

Present: Bob Ebersole (Selectmen), Jamie Toale (Selectmen), Michael-Ray Jeffreys (Planning Board), Katie Adams (School Committee), Michael Mackin (School Committee), Terry Burchfield (Finance Committee), Mark Erickson (Finance Committee), Steve Archambault (Community Representative), Nancy Gray (Community Representative)

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment

BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

MINUTES APPROVAL

Motion, J. Toale to accept minutes from 06 September 2017; second by B. Ebersole; all aye.

DISCUSSION

a. Supermajority quorum for major items --

M. Jeffreys stated that since the charter requires two-thirds of the town to pass, the charter review committee should follow similar requirements and need six of the nine members to make major changes. B. Ebersole stated that when three members are missing, no votes should be taken on major changes. J. Toale inquired about the definition of a "major change." This was clarified by B. Ebersole to be non-administrative decisions, such as changing a position from elected to appointed. **Motion, M. Jeffreys, to have an operating procedure of a supermajority (six out of nine members) as a voting requirement for major items; Second, S. Archambault; all aye.**

b. Proposed 4-Phase Committee Approach

i. Community engagement and research

M. Jeffreys recommended for the charter review committee members to first engage with the remaining boards and committees not represented on the Charter Review committee for input on their ideas for changes to the charter. B. Ebersole stated that this could increase efficiency, employ a "divide and conquer" method, and that boards and committees could be able to respond to their representative on the Charter Review Committee, provide a written response, or appear in person, if they desire. T. Burchfield, suggested a group email to make boards aware that we are reviewing the charter and seek their input. S. Archambault suggested that we include the charter in the email. Each member will reach out to the board or committee they represent before the next meeting. B. Ebersole encouraged each member to communicate independently with the Town Manager. S. Archambault disclosed that he gets paid by the Parks Department and has worked under the School Committee.

ii. Focused workgroups

Will be developed, as we move forward

iii. Draft Language

Will likely be developed in subcommittees before being advanced to the larger body

iv. Community Outreach

B. Ebersole stated that engaging the unrepresented committees/boards will help create public awareness; as we get closer to a product or engage the community with certain topics, we can provide press releases to local papers or PACC. M. Jeffreys added that a new website will be launched in October, and the Charter Review Committee will have a dedicated section on that site.

M. Jeffreys will communicate with Steve Malindrinos, Director of IT, to add the link for the Charter to the front page of the existing website.

c. Form of government

S. Archambault suggested that we should look into the date and time of town meetings to make them more accessible and for there to not be any other scheduled activity to coincide with community activities. K. Adams suggested that representative town meeting would limit participation to people more assertive and may limit involvement from more passive personalities.

d. Matters not addressed in Charter

B. Ebersole and J. Toale questioned why some items are in the charter and why others are not. T. Burchfield asked if the idea is for all committees to be moved to the charter or not; M. Erickson noted that the charter is a more general versus the bylaws which are more specific and malleable. General discussion about looking into incorporating some bylaws into the charter.

e. Areas of concern/interest with Charter

M. Erickson noted that the committee should look into the Town Clerk position and consider whether it should be elected or appointed; would like to look into the form of government – open town meeting or representative town meeting; and believes that the organization and format of the charter should be improved, such as adding a table of contents. B. Ebersole stated that the BoS hired a company to codify the charter and bylaws and that it will be uploaded to the new website.

f. Identify areas of consensus

No discussion

g. Assign liaisons for unrepresented boards

T. Burchfield

Finance Committee
Town Accountant/Director of Finance

Cultural Council

Public Access Cable Committee

S. Archambault

Board of Assessors

Cemetery Commissioners

Library Trustees

M. Erickson

Park Commission

Board of Health

Commissioners of Trust Funds

M. Mackin

Town Clerk
Registrars of Voters

Sewer Commission
School Committee

Housing Authority

M. Jeffreys

Constables
Planning Board

Town Counsel
Building Departments/Staff

Zoning Board of Appeals
Police Department

N. Gray

Conservation Commission
Town Moderator

Storm Water Task

Green Community Task Force

K. Adams

Historical Commission
Open Space

Agricultural Committee

Architectural Preservation Commission

J. Toale

Personnel Board

Council on Aging

Capital Planning

h. Discuss community engagement process

M. Mackin presented draft language for a press release about the Charter Review Committee that directs residents to YouTube channel; several members noted the difficulty finding the Charter on the town website; the link for the charter is to the MA Commonwealth website, where it is officially located. The new town website will provide a section for our committee where the Charter Review Committee will be able to upload documents. M. Mackin will provide the press release to the IT department.

i. Identify tasks/topics for next meeting

K. Adams suggested a process to educate and inform residents on government processes; recommended that we review procedural requirements and accessibility of information. K. Adams suggested adding more lay language in town notices and explanations, similar to requirements on ballot questions. M. Jeffreys suggested creating a Director of Facilities – designated person to maintain buildings separate from DPW duties. B. Ebersole suggested Town Manager duties should be strengthened so BoS can get out of day-to-day duties; would like to discuss employed department heads noted in charter; add there's not a clear termination process for certain hired positions; would like to clarify language on elected bodies with employees; and would like to discuss representative town meeting. General conversation about exploring these ideas.

ACTION ITEMS BEFORE NEXT MEETING

- a. Communicate with boards, committees, and departments to identify organizational inefficiencies and needs
- b. Small group to look into other towns and their experience with different forms of government and how towns get more residents to attend Town Meetings. B. Ebersole will contact Lexington; M. Erickson; T. Burchfield, and K. Adams will research other communities.
- c. Look at the representative town meeting structure
- d. Town Clerk position: elected vs. appointed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

BOARD COMMENT/CONCERNS

T. Burchfield and B. Ebersole noted that we should send invitations to Town Accountant and Town Manager to come to the Charter Review Committee meeting in the near future. M. Jeffreys will represent the Charter Review Committee at the town workshop in October.

MEETING SCHEDULE

Meetings are held at Town Hall, 7:00 PM, on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month, unless otherwise indicated. Upcoming meetings:

- 11 October – may be at Ritter; M. Erickson will not be able to attend
- 25 October

ADJOURNMENT

Motion, S. Archambault to adjourn; Second, M. Erickson; all aye. 8:25pm