

CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE MINUTES

June 28, 2022 – 7:00 P.M.
Sandwich Town Hall – 130 Main Street

Present: Jim Coogan, Jonathan Fitch, Susan James (7:25 p.m.), Kelee Renzi, Joe Roche, David Sampson, Paul Schrader, Sandwich Community Television, Charlie Holden, Bud Dunham

The Charter Review Committee (CRC) meeting was convened at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Auditorium. Members introduced themselves, talked about how best to exchange information, and asked for a contact sheet to be prepared with home email addresses and phone numbers. Mr. Dunham will bring the contact list to a future meeting.

Background information was distributed and discussed related to the CRC efforts including: the Charge of Duties approved by the Select Board and the existing Town Charter as adopted by the State in 2014. Mr. Dunham described how the Special Act Charter process works, and the likely dates for a potential November 2022 Special Town Meeting and the May 2023 Annual Town Meeting. A final draft of the Charter revisions approved by the CRC and Selectmen would be needed about a month before the actual Town Meeting. Once adopted by Town Meeting, it typically takes 12-18 months for the State review and approval process to be completed.

Mr. Dunham outlined a summary of the most relevant portions of the Open Meeting Law, posting requirements, and Public Records Law that the CRC will likely encounter and need to follow. Some of the topics highlighted included meeting posting requirements, the drafting and approval of meeting minutes and handouts, remote participation capabilities, and the prohibition of serial conversations and deliberating on a matter outside of a public meeting.

The role of Town Counsel was discussed with Atty. Lauren Goldberg being invited to a future meeting for general advice and explanation of the review process. The group discussed how various drafts of the document will be handled and special topics that may need closer attention from Town Counsel. All agreed it would be best to keep Counsel involved during the process instead of waiting until a complete document was ready to be reviewed at the end.

The group discussed what input the CRC would seek and what local officials and committee would make the most sense to invite. In addition, the group talked about how public input would be solicited especially when new draft language was ready for review. The next meeting would likely include Atty. Goldberg and Mr. Dunham to receive an overview on the Charter as a whole. Mr. Dunham said he would reach out to Atty. Goldberg on her availability and he would plan to give a verbal overview of his thoughts on the current Charter, with written comments to come at a later meeting.

Members discussed Committee organization and the desire to appoint a Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary at tonight's meeting rather than waiting for a future meeting. After discussion about who was interested in serving in each capacity, **Mr. Fitch moved to appoint Dave Sampson as Chair, Jim Coogan as Vice Chair, and Susan James as Secretary. Mr. Schrader seconded. Unanimous vote of 7-0 to approve the motion.**

At the Select Board's request, the group briefly discussed the need for alternate members for the on-going review process. All present felt it was not necessary to appoint alternates at this time since seven full members should be more than sufficient for the review efforts. If a

member had to step down, the Selectmen could be approached on short notice to make an alternate appointment.

The members discussed their availability for future meetings and what nights of the week, times of the day, and Town building locations would make the most sense for future meetings. After reviewing schedules, it was decided that, in general, the group would meet twice per month in the Town Hall auditorium at 7:00 p.m. on Monday nights. Because Monday, July 11, was not doable for a few members, the group decided its next meeting would be Wednesday, July 13, at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall with a goal of having Atty. Goldberg and Mr. Dunham attend.

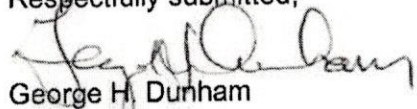
Mr. Coogan distributed a copy of a 3-page summary from the last CRC summarizing what was recommended to Town Meeting for consideration in May 2013. It was noted that after that Town Meeting, the state review and approval process took about 10 months which is promising.

Future topics to focus on based on prior review efforts include the Town Clerk being elected or appointed, open Town Meeting vs. representative Town Meeting, and follow-up on how some of the changes enacted previously have worked. The group would also like to explore technology that could help them review potential language revisions during the meetings which should be able to be accomplished with the IT set up in the auditorium.

Under Public Comment, Mr. Holden thanked the members for volunteering for such an important task and wished them well on their review.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



George H. Dunham
Town Manager

Attachments:

1. 6/28/22 Agenda
2. Members of Charter Review Committee
3. Charter Review Committee Charge of Duties Approved by Board of Selectmen – 5/26/22
4. Town Charter Approved by State – February 2014
5. Charter Review Summary from Last CRC – May 2013