



Town Of Webster

Est. 1832

Massachusetts

Charter Review Committee

350 Main Street
Webster, MA 01570

Earl Gabor, Chairman
Andrew Jolda, Vice Chairman
Ted Avlas, Recording Secretary
Robert Craver
Pamela Leduc

Lee Ann Majercik
Thomas Ralph
Will Starzec
Doug Willardson

Town of Webster
Charter Review Committee
Open Session Minutes (M.G.L. C.39)
Wednesday May 17, 2017 6:00pm
Community Meeting Room
Webster Police Department, Webster, MA 01570

In Attendance:

Earl Gabor
Robert Craver
Pam Leduc
Lee Ann Majercik
Doug Willardson

Absent:

Ted Avlas
Andrew Jolda
Thomas Ralph
Will Starzec

Also:

Attorney Lauren Goldberg

1. Call to Order:

Chairman Gabor called the meeting to order at 6:10pm

- Approval of minutes of 4/5/17 held over to next meeting.

2. Informational Mail:

- Review of emails from Ms. Jane Cullinane. Ms. Cullinane suggested the Charter be amended to require only one Town Meeting to be held in the spring citing possible cost savings. A second email requested that the warrant articles be made available to the public 30 days prior to the single Town Meeting. Committee members pointed out that various financial transactions such as free cash certification might not be ready for the May Town Meeting. Other issues can arise after the start of the fiscal year on July 1st that are better addressed at a fall Town Meeting rather than waiting until the following May TM. Many towns are moving toward having two town meetings for these same reasons. As for the 30 day request, there is already a 7 to 14 day requirement for notice of the warrant

articles. Some of the budgetary explanations for the articles are not finalized 30 days prior to the TM. Thus, the shorter time frame was agreed to be more realistic. If consideration of a change in time frame would be feasible, it should be done using a by-law rather than in the Charter which is a less flexible document.

The Committee agreed to keep the schedule as it is. Chairman Gabor said he would respond to Ms. Cullinane.

3. Review of Town Charter document with legal counsel, Atty. Lauren Goldberg.

- The entire latest draft of the Charter was reviewed by the committee. Changes were proposed and discussed, most of which were minor modifications to wording, corrections of typographical errors, and sequencing. Atty. Goldberg stated she would make the changes discussed. Once the new draft was complete, she would email the document to Chairman Gabor.
- A significant change was proposed by Chairman Gabor to increase the size of the Board of Health from a 3 person board to a 5 person board. All 5 members would be elected positions. After discussion, motions were made and a vote taken on the proposal.
 - Motion - Chairman Gabor
 - Second - Mr. Willardson
 - Vote: Yes - 5 No - 0 Abstain - 0
 - Motion to increase the BOH from 3 to 5 elected members via the Charter passed.
- Discussion was held on the transitional language to be added to the Charter which would be required to increase the BOH from 3 to 5 members. The schedule of elections for the BOH would use the same language as that of the Board of Selectmen in the Charter

4. Old Business

- Timeline for publishing CR draft and providing Community information/Public Hearings and Charter vote.
 - Formats for posting CR for community review: a) Clean Copy, b) Strike-through copy, c) Executive Summary. These formats were all recommended by Atty. Goldberg to give the clearest picture of the new Charter, the changes between the existing Charter and the proposed document, and an explanation of the document.
 - Tentative schedule for Public Hearings: a) September 2017, b) Spring 2018
 - Proposed date for a Special Town Meeting on October 30, 2017 to hold a vote to get the proposed Charter on the ballot for Spring 2018. This STM vote is to decide whether to place the Charter on the ballot for the Spring 2018 elections. It will not be a vote to accept the Charter itself. A 2/3 vote is required.
 - Atty. Goldberg will send samples of documents from other communities (Abington, Dedham) as examples of how they handled the dissemination of information for public hearings and ballot questions.
 - Brief discussion of what should be on the ballot - an “all or nothing” question, multiple questions providing voting opportunities on substantive changes, or other options. This discussion will continue during upcoming meetings.

5. New Business:

- Interaction with the Bylaw Committee

- Chairman Gabor sent a draft of the Charter to Mr. Ken Mandile, Chairman of the Bylaw Committee. The plan is for the Chairman to invite a member of that committee to the Charter Review meetings, as needed.

6. Adjournment: Motion to Adjourn

Motion – Ms. Majercik

Second – Mr. Willardson

Vote: Yes – 5 No – 0 Abstain – 0

Motion passed

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 PM

Documents Reviewed:

KP Draft Charter dated 4/5/17

Clean Copy Draft Charter dated 5/17/17

Respectfully submitted,
Lee Ann Majercik