

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
PUBLIC HEARING
JULY 17, 2019 7:30 PM
FIRE SAFETY COMPLEX, 23 GOSHEN HILL ROAD

MINUTES

Members Present: First Selectman Betsy Petrie, Selectmen Glen Coutu and John Bendoraitis
Others Present: Charter Commission members Greg Lafontaine, Mike Ninteau, and Karen Buffkin; Town Clerk Mary Ellen Wiecek; Building Official Jason Nowosad; other residents

B. Petrie called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM. She described the process for the remainder of the process of instituting a Town Charter. Handouts were distributed which included the entire draft of the proposed Town Charter and a report containing key elements of the proposal.

G. Lafontaine presented the major changes and additions to the town's governmental structure under the proposed Charter. He informed the audience that they had drafted the Charter with feedback from the public at previous public hearings and meetings in mind. He stated the consensus from those meetings was that people were mostly happy with their government and did not want to see significant change. With that in mind, the Charter was drafted in a way that would minimize change. He noted the town's rights and obligations are not altered by the Charter, including contracts, leases, etc.

He described the major changes which are laid out in the Attachment to these minutes. Following questions, he clarified that the elected officials whose jobs become appointed under this would serve out the remainder of their terms before the jobs become appointed. He also described the process under the Charter that would allow the town to pursue a Town Administrator at a later date and to subsequently eliminate the position.

Rick Kane asked if under Article 12 the ordinances listed are included in the Charter based on their reference within the document. G. Lafontaine explained that they were under Article 8.1.12.

David Geligoff asked about the decision to leave the treasurer as an elected position. G. Lafontaine explained it was a matter of the qualifications needed for the position. K. Buffkin stated it also served as a potential check and balance against the appointed/hired positions like finance director. D. Geligoff also asked about changing the date of the Annual Town Meeting. G. Lafontaine stated this would require a future Charter revision.

Mary Ellen Wiecek asked about Article 2 and the procedures for the moderator at the Town meeting serving as moderator for the referendum. She recommended that this not be a requirement because it complicates the process of getting someone who is able to perform these duties if they are required to be the same person.

Diane Malozzi asked whether the hired Town Clerk would be in a union under the Charter. B. Petrie said the union would be able to petition for them to join the bargaining union.

Jason Nowosad praised the document but raised some concerns about the transition period for elected positions. He said two months was too long and warned it would interfere with the budget process. He

suggested December 1st as a starting date for newly elected individuals. Other residents also raised concerns about the transition process for newly elected individuals and the transition from elected to hired positions.

B. Petrie asked about the bonding process under the charter and recommended some clarifications.

John Bendoraitis raised concerns that the Charter would require the Town to have separate positions for Tax Collector and Assessor and noted that other towns have combined these positions. He noted that the town may choose to do something similar some day.

B. Petrie stated she had received some more comments in writing which she would forward to the Charter Commission

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Administrative Assistant
Bernard Dennler