

Charter Commission
Special Meeting
May 23, 2019 7:00 PM

Town Hall

MINUTES

- **Members Present:** Gregg LaFontaine, Karen Buffkin, Myles Davis, Mike Ninteau, Pierre Belisle, and Suzanne Gilleese

1.0 Call to Order

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7 pm.

2.0 Communications

None noted.

3.0 Discuss comments for 5/20 public hearing.

The Chairman asked for comments about the May 20, 2019 hearing. One member noted that based on the comments that perhaps the commission should revisit the size of the board of selectmen—from three to five. Another noted that most negative comments came from one attendee in particular, that a pathway to an administrator is the way to go, and that going from three selectmen to five selectmen would be a problem. Another commented that staggered terms were brought up and another member noted that the attendees seemed to accept what the committee was doing.

4.0 Continue work on content and framework of document. Identify elements ready for legal review.
Review drafts from Karen and any proposals from committee members.

S. Gilleese brought up a proposed insert to Section 8.2 to provide for an express pathway to the creation of the town administrator position in the Charter and an express pathway for elimination of the position. The pathway would provide that the Board of Selectmen could hire such an administrator, upon the affirmative vote of each member of the Board of Selectmen, and upon the affirmative vote of a super majority of qualified voters at the Annual Town Meeting. The insert also included a provision that the position may be eliminated upon the affirmative vote of each member of the Board of Selectmen and upon the affirmative vote of a supermajority of qualified voters at the Annual Town Meeting.

Members discussed this insert. It was agreed to include this within Article 8 of the Charter but to have a referendum as an alternative to the Annual Town Meeting and to have an affirmative vote of a majority of qualified voters instead of a supermajority of qualified voters. There was further discussion on whether the affirmative vote of the Board of Selectmen had to be unanimous, and it was decided to leave it that way and that this may have to be revisited after the board of selectmen review the draft charter. The chairman suggested including the sentence-- “there will be a written job description” in the first paragraph in the insert.

There was further discussion on whether the charter should have a five member board of selectmen. The members however agreed to keep a three member board of selectmen.

Members then reviewed the latest changes to the draft charter, including Article 9 concerning finance and taxation and the annual town budget.

Members agreed to change the language in section 10.2 on conflict of interest to the language provided on conflicts of interest in the Town of Burlington's charter, as proposed. Members agreed to keep the penalty language in section 10.2 however, as it was written in the 2015 proposed charter.

There was discussion on Article 11 and the effective date of the charter. The proposed charter was proposed to be effective the day after the biennial election in 2019.

5.0 Discuss upcoming schedule and meeting dates

The Chairman noted that the next meeting is June 5, 2019 and that the proposed charter is to be filed by June 7, 2019. K. Buffkin proposed to have the final draft (along with a copy of track changes) emailed to the members within 24 hours. The members agreed that the proposed charter could then be reviewed by the town's legal counsel. The Chairman noted that he may call a special meeting if legal counsel has issues with the proposed charter.

6.0 Adjourn

P. Belisle MOVED to adjourn; SECONDED; MOTION CARRIED 6:0:0.
Meeting adjourned around 9:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Gilleese
Secretary, Charter Commission

Please see the minutes of subsequent meetings for any corrections hereto.