



**TOWN CHARTER COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
OF JULY 16, 2024**

Members: George Cormier, Judy Bickford, Don McDowell, Chris Palermo, Laura Streets, Richard Craig, Sara Haskins*, Brian Yeaton, Christopher Moks

Absent: Craig Santenello

Staff: Carrie Johnson, Project Manager; Brent Raymond, Town Manager; Judi Alberi, Executive Assistant

Guests: Martin Green, Tom Cloutier, Alex Cyr, Henry Glowiak, Michael Jansen, Alan Van Anda, Tim Monaghan, Heath Parras, Denis Nepveu

**participating via Zoom*

5:30PM - CALL TO ORDER

Don McDowell called the Charter Committee Meeting to order at 5:34PM at the Tegu Building. Meeting began a few minutes late due to video technicalities.

5:31PM - AGENDA CHANGES/ADDITIONS

Changed the order of items under new business:
Switched item 2 and 3.

5:32PM - APPROVE MINUTES

1. Approve minutes of 3-18-24

Motion made by Chris Palermo to approve the minutes of 03-18-24. Motion seconded by Judy Bickford. Motion carried. (6/0/2) Don McDowell and George Cormier abstained. Sara Haskins joined via zoom and was not heard until after minutes were approved.

2. Approve minutes of 6-24-24

Motion made by Chris Palermo to approve the minutes of 06-24-24 Motion seconded by George Cormier. Motion carried. (8/0)

5:35PM - NEW BUSINESS

1. Charter Committee (CC) Charge

Carrie Johnson encouraged the committee to help all move in the same direction, with no subversive intent, and she would like the public to see the committee working together, focusing on facts, with all Selectboard members valued. This was in response to Laura Streets accusation that the local option tax had not been removed from the agenda, thus contributing to the committee being deceptive. This began a debate on clarification of the committee's charge, specifically whether drafting language for the local option tax is within its scope.

Laura felt the Committee's charge did not allow talk about the LOT. Don McDowell refuted this by stating in the original charge it was not outside the charter. Discussion followed with some community members following Laura's concern and others agreeing with Don's statement. Others expressed concerns about the transparency of the committee's work and questioned the availability of documents and materials available to the public. Although the committee has yet to start discussions with the local businesses, some felt there was no communication with local businesses regarding the local option tax. The committee agreed on the importance of public participation and transparency in the decision-making process. The public education portion of this process had not begun, a fact that seemed misunderstood during the exchanges with those making public comments. Carrie took a moment to review the intended outreach plans. Town Administration has been discussing public education outreach and will be putting more info on the town website. It should be noted that effective local government (Roberts Rules) requires a quorum or consensus to move forward but not 100% concensus.

2. Review final charter draft, forward to Selectboard

Motion made by Chris Palermo to accept the fifth draft of the Town Charter and send it to the Selectboard. Motion seconded by Judy Bickford. Motion carried (9/0).

3. Review and discuss best configuration for the charter committee

Several proposals were offered to the group in regard to the future configuration of the Charter Committee. Chris Palermo suggested that the committee continue in the same configuration with the same members. Laura Streets advocated for ending the committee now and reappointing the committee to a smaller size with fewer selectboard members. A community member suggested that the Charter Committee continue with community residents and little to no selectboard members. Discussion regarding these suggestions continued. Another issue arose about the definition of residence for committee members. It was decided that the selectboard would address these issues when reviewing the committee configuration.

6:12M - OLD BUSINESS

None

6:15PM - OTHER BUSINESS

1. Local Option Tax (LOT) Motion to forward a recommendation to the Selectboard

The Charter Committee consensus is to forward the LOT discussion to the selectboard.

2. LOT facts timeline - Communications to residents

This item will be forwarded to the selectboard committee.

6:30PM - ADJOURN

Motion made by Judy Bickford to adjourn. Motion seconded by Richard Craig. Motion carried. (9/0)

Meeting adjourned at 7:04 pm

Submitted and filed this 7/16/2024.

Bonnie McDermott, Scribe

Please note all minutes are in Draft form and are subject to approval at the next Town Charter Committee meeting.