



Chester Charter Commission
Meeting Minutes

Charter Commission Charter Drafting Session
February 29, 2024 – 6:30 PM
Location: Chester Town Hall Second Floor Meeting Room

CALL TO ORDER

The 2.29.24 meeting of the Chester Charter Commission was called to order at 6:30 PM by Richard Strauss, Chairman, Chester Charter Commission. In attendance included: Commission members; Brian Dailey, Richard Strauss, Jesse Gnazzo, Mark Borton, and Pat Holloway. Absent were Ian McLachlan and Lol Fearon. Charter Commission Staff Rebecca Mead was also present. There was an audience of citizens of zero, with zero attendees online.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made and seconded to approve the draft minutes from the February 13 Charter Drafting Session. No discussion followed, the motion carried unanimously.

PROPOSED DRAFT CHARTER - BOARD OF SELECTMEN REVIEW UPDATE

The Charter Commission discussed the process and timeline moving forward. The Commission currently has a meeting scheduled for March 28th, which will allow for discussion after the Board of Selectmen's Public Hearing.

The Commission then discussed an error in the Charter. Previous versions of the Charter were written with a seven person Board of Selectmen, and required four selectmen to be present for a quorum. The current version of the Charter has been modified to include a five person Board of Selectmen, for which only three selectmen must be present to achieve a quorum. Section 3.4 was overlooked, and incorrectly states that four are needed for a quorum. This section needs to be corrected to accurately represent the requirement for quorum. Chairman Strauss spoke to Town Attorney Roberts on the matter. Roberts advised that this error can be considered a correction and not as a substantive change.

CHARTER 101 WEBSITE - UPDATE AND REVIEW

Rebecca Mead shared the progress on the Charter website. The Commission discussed the need for consistency in language, and to ensure that the language is informative



rather than an advocacy. The Commission also discussed the layout of the website, and the location of content so that it is accessible and digestible.

The Commission then reviewed Mark Borton's one page overview on the charter. This document may serve as a skeleton or roadmap for organizing how the content may appear on the website.

CHARTER CONVERSATIONS

Richard and Mark shared insight from their experience holding the first Charter Conversations. It was noted that some questions and concerns were raised by those in attendance, and that the format of the Charter Conversation led itself to great dialogue. It was noted that the Charter Conversations are designed to inform the public on the charter and the process.

CHARTER TRANSITION PLANNING

If the proposed draft charter were adopted, a transition period will occur. A document was created to overview the transition to a government under a charter to assist the selectmen throughout the process.

OTHER

A motion made and seconded to edit the error in the text regarding quorum requirements for the Board of Selectmen. This would change the requirement for a quorum from four members to 3 members. (Page 13, section 3.4a) There was no discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

None

ADJOURNMENT

The Charter Commission meeting adjourned at 7:43 PM

Respectfully Submitted by: Brian Dailey, Secretary, Chester Charter Commission