TOWN OF BRIDGEWATER

Charter Review Committee

Dennis C. Gallagher, Chair

Carlton Hunt
Stephanie Ryan
Gerald Muller
Erick Lynch

Michael J. Spagone, Secretary
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Academy Building - 66 Central Square
Bridgewater, MA 02324

Bridgewater Charter Review Committee
Minutes for the Charter Review Meeting that Convened on Wednesday, August 20, 2014

Meeting called to order as formal session by Dennis C. Gallagher (Chairman of the Committee) in accordance with rules governing meetings and quorum filled. Meeting starts at 7:07PM.

Members in Attendance: *Dennis C. Gallagher, Carlton Hunt, Gerald Muller, Erick Lynch and Stephanie Ryan (arrived at 7:45PM)*

Approval of Agenda: *The Committee accepts the agenda of the current meeting.*

Approval of Meeting Minutes: *The Committee defers approval of minutes until its next scheduled meeting.*

Public Comments: *There are no public comments for the current meeting.*

Announcements: *There are no announcements for the current meeting.*

New Business: *The Committee engages in a discussion of new business.*

Committee Brief on Previous Meeting
The Chair and the Committee briefly discuss their informal session with the Town Clerk Ronald Adams. The Committee note their input and concerns regarding the comparison of elected vs. appointed town clerks; and the pros and cons of each. ***A motion is made by Mr. Hunt to invite the Town Clerk to attend an October scheduled meeting of the Charter Review Committee for the purposes of more in-depth conversations on the items of Elected vs. Appointed Town Clerk and recall provisions in the next revision of the Town Charter, seconded by Mr. Lynch.*** *With a vote of 5 yea, 0 nay, the motion to invite is approved.*

A motion is made by Mr. Hunt to request the Chair research turnout percentages for municipal recall elections through the Secretary of State's Office, seconded by Mr. Muller. *With a vote of 5 yea, 0 nay, the motion to request is approved.*

The Committee agrees that any revisions with respect to changing the nature of Town Clerk's position or recall provisions should have a legal review when the time to offer recommendations arrives.

Committee Meetings and Topics Schedule
The Chair and Committee discuss their upcoming schedule of meetings and potential for topics of conversation in those meetings. The Committee considers the following schedule of meetings with the following topics:

September 3, 2014 (09.03.14) – Recap of Committee Work to Present time
September 17, 2014 (09.17.14) – Conversation with the former Town Government Study Committee
October 1, 2014 (10.01.14) – Conversation with the Town Council President
October 15, 2014 (10.15.14) – Conversation with the Town Manager
October 29, 2014 (10.29.14) – Conversation with the Town Clerk

The Chair and Committee agree to the above scheduled barring any cancellations due to scheduling conflicts or lack of quorum on the dates tentatively noted.

Article IV (Town Manager) Continued Discussion
The Committee continues discussion of Article IV (Town Manager) and the potential changes to consider for this section. Some questions are raised as to the language that describes how the Town Manager is hired/fired by the Town Council. Specifically, what constitutes a vote of 'the full council', is it a two thirds vote or a full nine-member assembled Town Council vote? Does the section also allow for the removal or suspension of the Town Manager during a public meeting?

Additional Items
The Committee engages in a discussion of additional items for conversation and consideration of these items, the following are discussed:

Article V Administrative Organization
The Chair and Committee discuss the Administrative Organization section of the Town Charter (Article V). In the discussion, the Committee converses on several items relative to the Town Attorney ranging from preventing bias by legal counsel to funding the legal counsel.

A potential suggestion is made to change the terms and conditions of how legal advice and legal counsel are utilized by the Town.

A question is raised about the role of an Assistant Town Manager in Town Government; should the position exist or be created, what would its role be?

The Committee also notices that Article V contains sections relative to recall petition and citizen initiative elections. ***A motion is made by Mr. Hunt to combine the two sections into one, seconded by Mr. Muller.*** *With a vote of 5 yea, 0 nay the motion to combine the two sections is approved.*

Article X, Section 35 (Transitional Government Provisions)
The Chair and Committee review Article X which addresses the transitional government provisions of the Town Government at the time Council/Manager governance took effect. Concerns are raised as to whether these provisions need to continue existing in the Charter. ***A motion is made by Mr. Hunt to remove the transitional government provisions, seconded by Mr. Muller.*** *After further discussion, the motion is then withdrawn by Mr. Hunt.*

Old Business: *The Committee engages in a discussion of old business.*

Committee Membership Openings
The Chair briefly discusses the remaining openings on the Charter Review Committee. At present, the Chair notes the vacancies have not yet been filled, but that he will be following up with the Town Council President in the near term.

With formal discussion concluded, a request is made to adjourn: *By unanimous approval of the Committee, the meeting is hereby adjourned. The next meeting will be September 3, 2014.*

Meeting is hereby adjourned by unanimous consensus of the members in attendance in accordance with rules governing meetings. Meeting adjourns at 9:08PM.

I hereby affix my hand to this document that the minutes of this meeting are true and accurate to the best of my ability, note-taking, and penmanship as so ordered by the Chair of the Committee this Twentieth Day of August, Two Thousand and Fourteen.

A True Copy Attest,

Dennis C. Gallagher, Chairman of the Committee

Michael J. Spagone, Secretary of the Committee