

SAUGUS CHARTER COMMISSION

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

OF

MAY 22, 2008

The twenty-second meeting of the Saugus Charter Commission was held on Thursday, May 22, 2008. The meeting was held in the auditorium, at the Saugus Town Hall. The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Peter Manoogian at 7:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Nine members of the nine member committee were present at roll call:

Cam Cicolini, Karen Cote, Eugene F. Decareau, Karla J. de Steuben, Albert W. Diotte, Jr., Joan L. Fowler, Peter Manoogian, Sr., Debra Panetta, and Thomas Stewart

READING OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (April 24, 2008)

The minutes were passed out to the members for their review till the voting at the next meeting.

ACCEPTANCE OF PREVIOUS MINUTES (APRIL 17, 2008)

Mrs. Panetta made a motion to accept April 17, 2008 minutes.

The Chairman seconded the motion.

Motion passed **9 – 0**

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none at this time.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

1. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE – UPDATE

Mr. Manoogian thanked Town Meeting, Ms. de Steuben and the Budget & Finance Sub-Committee for their presentation at Town Meeting. The Article was passed at Town Meeting for the allocation of monies.

Mr. Manoogian stated that the Plymouth Charter has failed and the Plymouth Charter Commission was split.

Mr. Manoogian handed out a copy of Editor's notes: Let's get busy.

Editor's notes: Let's get busy

By Scott C. Smith

Wed May 21, 2008, 06:18 AM EDT

PLYMOUTH - How many times have I heard these two takes in the past couple of weeks?

The defeat of the charter question in the local election signifies that most people are content with the way Plymouth's government is structured and don't want it changed.

Or the defeat of the charter question in the local election signifies that most people are not content with the way Plymouth's government is structured and want much deeper change than the charter called for.

I'm not hearing anyone admit that voters are actually split on the issue. Not all believe one or the other – some truly don't want to change our Town Meeting-based government structure, and some won't settle for anything less than a strong mayor and a town council. It really is either/or. Most folks definitely don't want the untried, unproven and politically lukewarm proposal that was put before voters. Who wants to wade in the shallow end of the pool, when you can do flips (and belly flops) into the deep end?

The bottom line, here, is that what's missing isn't so much the "right" form of government. What is missing is leadership.

Pro-mayor folks claim we'd get that in a mayor.

While having a strong mayor holds a certain appeal, a mayoral government could be a disaster if the wrong person were elected. And there's a lot to be said about giving up any aspect of a more democratic process; if we dump Town Meeting, there's likely no turning back. On the other hand, a long-held argument says Town Meeting (any town meeting, not necessarily Plymouth's) is often stacked with local government officials and employees who seek to empower themselves at the expense of an apathetic public. I've seen that occur in many towns, and it often isn't pretty.

I'm concerned that we have sound, *professional* governance in place to execute policy, and that we have an effective long-term planning process in place – based in the residents of Plymouth and buffered with checks and balances – to create sound, financially reasonable policy. I think our administrators are professional and generally good at their jobs. I admit I don't know them all, but I do believe it true of the primary ones. And we'll soon have a new school superintendent who will add a new dimension to the town's team.

I'm enough of an optimist to believe that even though the current long-term planning process may be lacking, that lack can be overcome by sound leadership. And let's face it; if the politicians in the current government don't seriously step up now that we're in charter-change limbo, then there likely will not be another chance. The pro-mayor folks undoubtedly will be back at our doorsteps, petitions in hand, and the growing swell could well flood the dike next time around.

Leadership entails using one's intelligence, experience and communication skills to develop – with others – worthy, challenging, reasonable, attainable goals; developing action plans – with others – to achieve the goals; and then leading the troops to attain them.

Leaders inspire and influence.

Leaders do.
Leaders learn.
Leaders behave in such a manner that others respect them.
Leaders respect in turn.

Leaders care deeply for their people and advocate mightily on their behalf.

Leaders lead by example.
Leaders are ethical and moral.
Leaders are open and honest.
Leaders possess great character and are trustworthy.
Leaders do not dictate; they motivate.

Envision those people you believe to be great leaders and you'll identify these attributes; think about people put into leadership positions who fail at the job and you'll see these attributes lacking.

In local government, we have an ever-changing cast of elected and appointed officials, many of whom are amateurs at this stuff. And with elected officials comes varying degrees of the above attributes, along with the potential for egotistical interference. Some are effective; some aren't. But the good news is that even ineffective or challenged people put into leadership positions can become good leaders – because leaders aren't born; leadership is learned. It's a skill set that takes effort to learn and make work.

So, regardless of one's views on Plymouth's current government structure and elected officials, there is hope that real leadership can emerge. With the defeat of the charter proposal comes the opportunity for us to start over, making what we have now work better, even if it's for the short term.

We may be surprised. People may seriously step up to the task of leading (vs. imposing).

They may truly focus on the town's best interests and not on their own political ambitions or power base.

They may decide that the town's best interests should not be based on whether change occurs in their own backyards.

They may decide that discourse is good for the town regardless of the number of multi-syllabic words used in that discourse.

They may decide that sometimes fast-tracking a sluggish process is appropriate.

They may recognize that sometimes the sluggish process can be an effective check against whimsy.

They will hopefully know when no change is better than bad change.

Of course, good change and bad change are relative terms. But change should be qualified by the collaborative mindset of the people, not our individual obsessions. If most of us choose to follow a certain path, then our elected leaders had better make it fairly smooth, more or less straight and generally affordable.

Governance is not easy. Leadership takes work. Let's get busy.

Scott C. Smith is the Community Newspaper Company's senior managing editor based in Plymouth. He's on vacation this week. E-mail scsmith@cnc.com.

Mr. Manoogian stated that Alderman Lyle Baker from Newton will be meeting with us on June 12th at 4:30p.m.at the Library.

Mrs. Cote stated that Town Manager David Cressman from Tewksbury will meet with us on June 5th at 7:30p.m.at the Town Hall.

Ms. de Steuben stated that Thomas Reilly from Winthrop will meet with us on May 29th at 7:30p.m.at the Town Hall.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Decareau stated that there was no change and that the appropriation will be in our account on July 1st.

COMMITTEE REPORT – INVITATION SUB-COMMITTEE

Mr. Manoogian went over the draft minutes of the invitation sub-committee. He stated that on May 28th the Mayor of Amesbury will meet with us at 4:30p.m.at the Library.

NEW BUSINESS

- **INVITED GUEST – FLORENCE CHANDLER – FORMER SOUTHBRIDGE TOWN MANAGER**

1. Mrs. Chandler served on the Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen for the town of Saugus. She also served as Town Manager in Southbridge and Town Council in Sturbridge.
2. 1989-1999 served as town manager in Southbridge
3. very unusual government
4. When they adopted Town Council they went through the process, they became a city and they did not know it. They had special legislation passed. Manager had the same power as our Board of Selectmen and Town Council had the same power as our Town Meeting.
5. Department of Revenue division of local services gives advice to cities and towns.
6. She had a strong manager and all powers of the Board of Selectmen she did herself.
7. She set the agenda for the Town Council.
8. They met every two weeks, Town Council could not increase the budget, but they could decrease it. She found it difficult to find items for their agenda every two weeks.
9. Southbridge was an old industrial mill town. Town Council did deal with zoning.
10. She always remembered that Sturbridge always knew what they wanted to be. They all worked together to keep the vision.
11. Southbridge needed development; they were beset by hard times.
12. Town Meeting has done an excellent job in zoning, conscientious, they had vision and courage to say it.
13. She would bring in Town Council into the process and let them know its importance.
14. She has learned that it is important for the community to have a vision.
15. She feels that staggered elections could help and not hurt
16. Conflict of interest-not a good idea to have town employees vote on their own budget.
17. Zoning-Town Meeting does a good job
18. Theory – not to complain but fix them
19. Look at the language and who is responsible for this.

20. She was on the Finance Committee for 12 years
21. Look at what caused the problem
22. Town Council hired the Town Manager-it's the best power to have to hire
23. At the time she was the only women town manager in Massachusetts.
24. A Town Manager must care about the community and have passion for it.
25. She likes a Representative Town Meeting- Town Council is too small to do what Town Meeting does.
26. She feels a simple majority for hiring and firing.
27. They said that they would do evaluations but never did.
28. She felt that a Finance Director can be good for Finance Committee, Town Meeting and School Committee. This person would be familiar with every department in town. This person would work directly with the Town Manager, but you need the right person.
29. The Board of Selectmen should have public meetings on the budget. They should have more fortitude even if the manager doesn't agree, the public can see it.
30. She is strongly for a Strong Town Manager-feels the Board of Selectmen do not need more authority.
31. She prefers Town Meeting over a Council because there is a great deal of preparation behind the scenes to get them the information they need.

John Costin, 30 Susan Drive, Saugus, Ma

Mr. Costin asked about the size of Town Meeting.

Mrs. Chandler stated that 50 was too small because of the no conflict of interest

• **INVITED GUEST – PHIL GALLAGHER – BURLINGTON TOWN MODERATOR**

1. Diverse government not a strong government
2. September is their budget season
3. Annual Town Meeting is in May
4. They have a 5 members of the Board of Selectmen for 3 year terms
5. Open Representative Town Meeting – 18 each precincts total of 108 members
6. Moderator is at large with a one year term
7. Anyone can put an article on the warrant they would submit it to the Moderator or the Board of Selectmen
8. Moderator appoints 15 members to the Weights and Means Committee for a three year term
9. Town employees can serve on Town Meeting, but not on the Weights and Means Committee.
10. People voluntarily let the moderator know about a conflict of interest by giving him a note
11. The moderator had the Human Service Advisory to a study on defibrillators. They deal with health, senior citizens and children's issues
12. He is excluded from voting unless there is a tie
13. He ran un-opposed the first three times, he ran against one person and was re-elected
14. They had 3 sessions that ran from 6:30 – 12:00, next month 20-30 hours, not a real burden
15. Board of Selectmen have a 2-2-1 3 year terms
16. There is no recall provision – one person cannot do a lot of damage
17. They have guidelines for the budget that is determined by the Finance Committee
18. Budgets are given 14 days in advance for every meeting delivered to the home.
19. Board of Selectmen hires and auditor and Town Council

20. The Finance Committee has a recording secretary
21. Their post audit is done by the Weights and Means in December and February- they have a recreation, school and public safety sub-committees.
22. There are 5 members on the School Sub-Committee
23. They do not have a levy the CIP is 1.4bil – 1.1 bil, RES 2.4bil – 3.2 bil they are shifting the burden

Mr. Costin asked about quorum and support for the trade school.

Mr. Gallagher stated 82, no quorum and they support their trade school

5 minutes recess

CORRESPONDENCE

- **EMAIL FROM ANDY BUSALACCHI – RE WINTHROP**
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-----Original Message-----

From: Morbidtdgp@aol.com [mailto:Morbidtdgp@aol.com]

Sent: Wed 4/23/2008 6:04 PM

To: Charter Commission

Subject: Re: The Commission

Peter:

I just read the article in today's paper on the 43 items you will be looking into.

I just mailed an article on the Town of Winthrop and the problems they are having.

I believe every City and Town in the commonwealth are having the same problem thaT WE ARE HAVING AND REGARDLESS OF THE TYPE GOVERNMENT THEY HAVE, things will not change until we get some help from the Federal Government and the Commonwealth.

Andy B.

- **EMAIL FROM ROGER SACILOTTO – RE PROBLEM NARRATIVE**

----- Original Message -----

From: RSACILOTTO@aol.com

To: pm1963@comcast.net

Sent: Saturday, April 26, 2008 8:58 PM

Subject: Charter commission report

Hi Peter,

I read the Charter Commission's first report in the Saugus Advertiser and I found it well-written, compelling and timely given the events that have taken place in town since the formation of the commission. I know from personal experience how much work it is to get a group of people together, do research, discuss issues, arrive at conclusions and deliver a written report. The many hours of effort are evident in the letter you all published, and it should serve as a great foundation for further work. Congratulations on reaching this milestone, and best wishes for a successful mission.

Best Regards,

Roger Sacilotto
2 Limewoods Dr.

- **EMAIL FROM SUSAN RAICHE – RE YOUTH COMMISSION**

-----Original Message-----

From: susan.raiche@comcast.net [mailto:susan.raiche@comcast.net]

Sent: Thu 4/24/2008 11:48 AM

To: Charter Commission; Charter Commission

Subject: Youth and Rec Commission

Peter,

As we discussed yesterday, I apologize for not being able to respond to the questionnaire. I have been away.

My only message regarding the Youth and Rec Commission is that it is not a commission in any sense. We meet when the director needs us to meet, we have no power and the director serves at the pleasure of the Town Manager. There is nothing commission-like that takes place. When we meet, decisions have already been made for the most part and we seem to rubber stamp a lot of activity that we don't drive.

This is my opinion and may not be the opinion of others on the board.

Thanks,

Susan Raiche

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- **RESEARCH PROCESS – REVIEW – CHAIRMAN’S EMAIL AND FORM**

Below is the copy of the email that was sent out to all Charter Commissioners on April 26, 2008.

Hello All,

Below is the information needed to commence the next phase of research. Please select from WITHIN THE LIST OF COMMUNITIES ASSIGNED TO YOU **four to six charters** that you can examine to find relevant information to the topic problems you selected. Again, I repeat, **THERE IS NO NEED** to examine every single one in your grouping. I will send a separate e-mail with a standardized worksheet you can make copies of to fill in your findings. Be ready to share at our next meeting in mid May.

Please let me know that this is clear. I realize this is a lot of work but we cannot rest on our laurels and we certainly cannot expect "someone else" to do it for us.

Your criteria for selection might include:

- 1.) Form of government: Pick one city, one open town meeting, one council -manager, one rep town meeting
- 2.) How recent is their charter?
- 3.) Level of affluence
- 4.) Level of population

There are 155 Communities on the CD

4 DIVISIONS

First quartile: 39 communities ranging from **Abington to Dudley**
Second quartile: 39 communities ranging from **Duxbury to Maynard**
Third quartile: 39 communities ranging from **Medford to Shrewsbury**
Fourth Quartile: 38 communities ranging from **Somerville to Yarmouth**

3 DIVISIONS

First third: 52 communities: **Abington to Hanover**
Second third: 52 communities: **Harwich to Pittsfield**
Third third: 51 communities: **Plymouth to Yarmouth**

Problem Categories and Communities you can choose from

I - Debbie - Abington to Dudley
Tom - Duxbury to Maynard
Peter - Medford to Shrewsbury
Karen - Somerville to Yarmouth

II - Joan - Abington to Hanover
Karla - Harwich to Pittsfield
Billy - Plymouth to Yarmouth

III - Cam - Abington to Mashpee
Karla - Maynard to Yarmouth

IV - Gene - Abington to Dudley
Peter - Duxbury to Maynard
Billy - Medford to Shrewsbury

Karla - Somerville to Yarmouth

**V - Joan - Abington to Dudley
Tom - Duxbury to Maynard
Cam - Medford to Shrewsbury
Gene - Somerville to Yarmouth**

**VI - Debbie- Abington to Mashpee
Karen - Maynard to Yarmouth**

Below is a copy of the form:

**Saugus Charter Commission
Step 2 - Research May – June 2008**

Charter Commissioner _____ **Date** _____

Problem Category Roman Numeral _____

- I. Elections – Term of Office – Vacancies
- II. Accountability and Public Policy
- III. Town Meeting
- IV. Finance Committee – Appropriations – Budget
- V. Town Manager
- VI. Appointed Boards – Commissions – Human Resources

Research Source _____

Research Summary (explain why or how you think your findings would address the problem area.) Attach any information you feel is important.

NEW BUSINESS

- **RFQ – CHARTER COMMISSION CONSULTANT – MEMBER INPUT**
 - 1. BARNSTABLE’S RFP**
 - 2. SAUGUS EXAMPLE**

Mr. Manoogian spoke with Mr. Bisigani and he said that his purchasing agent will help us. We just need to put together the qualifications and specifications.

Mrs. Cote stated that the Budget and Finance Sub-Committee should reconvene to work on the consultants.

Mr. Decareau stated that he needs to step down from that Sub-Committee due to other commitments.

Ms. de Steuben handed out a sheet of consultants that the sub-committee talked to.

CHARTER COMMISSION CONSULTANTS

Leonard Kopelman
Kopelman & Paige
101 Arch Street
Boston, MA 02110
617-556-0007
617-654-1701
1-800-548-3522, Ext. 1701
lkopelman@k-plaw.com

Michael Curran
P.O. Box 361
Canton, Massachusetts 02021
781-828-5958
mikepcurran@comcast.net

Tom Groux
Chatham, Ma
(508) 945-3160

Marilyn Contreas also suggested looking at an issue of The Beacon magazine for ads by consultants. Apparently, the members of the Board of Selectmen receive The Beacon.

Mr. Diotte stated that we have three people already, why not have them come in to see what they can do for us.

Mr. Decareau stated that we should give the consultant's a copy of our narratives.

Ms. de Steuben stated that she will post a Budget and Finance Sub-Committee meeting for May 28, 2008 at 3:30p.m. at the Town Hall.

Mr. Decareau made a motion to have Mr. Manoogian be a member of the Budget and Finance Sub-Committee.

The Chairman seconded the motion.

Motion passed **9 – 0**

- **POSTING – CHARTER COMMISSION CLERK – MEMBER INPUT**

Mr. Manoogian stated that the rate is usually \$11 - \$12 per hour.

Mrs. Cicolini asked if the clerk would sit on the sub-committee meetings to take notes.

Mr. Manoogian stated that was a good suggestion.

Ms. de Steuben suggested that this person should take minutes of our regular meetings and sub-committee meetings along with typing the report.

Mr. Decareau recommended that Mr. Manoogian get a proposal of a clerk position together for our next meeting.

- **RESEARCH – EACH MEMBER TO SHARE RESEARCH COMPILED THUS FAR**

We went round robin style to give each of our reports. Below are the copies of each report given in no particular order.

MEMBERS ANNOUNCEMENTS / MOTION

Ms. Cote asked for a recap all meetings.

Dates are as follows:

May 28th at 3:30p.m. Town Hall – Budget & Finance Sub-Committee

May 28th at 4:30 p.m. Library Conference Room – Mayor of Amesbury

May 29th at 7:30p.m. Town Hall – Mr. Reilly of Winthrop

2 members of Barnstable Charter Commission

June 5th at 7:30 p.m. Town Hall – Town Manager of Tewksbury

June 12th at 4:30 p.m. no location as of yet – Lyle Blake of Newton

Mrs. Cicolini made a motion to adjourn at 10:36p.m.

The Chairman seconded the motion.

Motion passed **9 - 0**