

SAUGUS CHARTER COMMISSION

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

OF

MAY 29, 2008

The twenty-fourth meeting of the Saugus Charter Commission was held on Thursday, May 29, 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**

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

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

Cam Cicolini arrived at 7:32 p.m. and Debra Panetta was unable to make the meeting due to a work commitment.

Mr. Manoogian asked if we could take our Invited Guests out of order to accommodate them. There was no objection.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**1. INVITED GUESTS: BARNSTABLE CHARTER COMMISSIONERS AND FORMER COUNCILORS RICHARD CLARK AND LUCIEN POYANT**

Mr. Clark stated that accountability is a pitfall. They have a 13 member council. They started with 18 member council, 2 from each of the 9 precincts were elected. They now have 13 precincts and one councilor is elected in each precinct. They in turn appoint the Town Manager.

Mr. Poyant stated that only electing one person is a pitfall. There is no recourse to change anything. They have 7 distinct villages within Barnstable.

Mr. Clark stated that the Town Manger is hired and fired by a majority vote. This person has a 3 year contract and review annual by the Councilors. This person can be terminated for any reason. The review is spotty at best.

Mr. Poyant stated that the Councilors appoint the Town Manager.

Mr. Clark stated that they have a strong manager and they do not have a Finance Committee. They do have a Finance Director that is appointed by the Town Manager with the Councilors approval. He feels that if you have a good Finance Director things will work well. They merged the Finance Department with the Schools.

Mr. Poyant stated that there budget is \$160,000,000 a year combined, school and town.

Mr. Clark stated that they have 5 fire and water distribution centers and is separate from the budget and not subject to proposition 2 ½.

Mr. Clark stated that they do not have any councilors at large. He stated that they received 7,000 signatures on a petition to start the charter commission. There class rate is a 1 – 1 ratio, but feels that the businesses should pay more. The residents wanted accountability with out giving a definition to it.

Mr. Poyant feels that residents want to vote for one councilor, have a Board of Selectmen, a Mayor with Town Manager and if isn't broke don't fix it.

Mr. Clark stated that 5 to 7 years ago the schools had financial difficulties and they had an agreement that an oversight committee works best through one system.

Mr. Clark stated that town councilors do the review of the town manager.

Mr. Clark stated that the councilors can change everything. They appoint the town manager and negotiate his/her contract.

Mr. Poyant stated that Barnstable has been a city since 1988. He feels that the councilors try to micro manage.

Mr. Clark stated that they had 9 precincts with 18 councilors and after each federal census it changes. They had 11 precincts with 11 councilors and now they have 13 precincts with 13 councilors. He stated that zoning is a thorny issue.

Mr. Poyant stated that the biggest zoning issue is affordable housing, mainly in Hyannis.

Mr. Clark stated that there population is approximately 50,000 and in the summer it is about 125,000 and this includes the 7 villages.

Mr. Clark stated that the political dynamics change with each council. It depends on who you vote for.

Mr. Poyant stated that the Town Manager can maneuver the councilors to go his way.

Mr. Clark stated that they have had 3 Town Managers in 20 years. The first manager was proficient, he new his job, he was not a fuzzy person, even when he lost support from

council he was not voted out. The current manager is keeping votes were he needs them, it's difficult to get to him, he is more laid back.

Mr. Clark stated that the Town Manager does not prepare zoning articles the Councilors and the Planning Board does zoning.

Mr. Poyant they also have the Cape Cod Commission who can be brought in and can be costly.

Mr. Clark stated that they have about 120 – 130 police officers.

Mr. Poyant they are trying sub-stations.

Mr. Clark stated that the Councilors do the transfers of monies from department to department and once a budget is adopted they can't move into articles. He stated it is working at the moment because they have a Finance Director under the Town Manager.

Mr. Clark stated that the Town Manager has to live in town but not necessary to own land in town. The manager makes about \$125,000 or more and they have not had problems.

Mr. Clark stated that they adopt an article and votes on it.

Mr. Clark stated they have between 3 – 4 years terms and feels it is good to keep new blood. They have staggered elections except in census years when half the board changes.

Mr. Poyant stated that 4 years is to long and they hold November elections.

## **TWO MINUTES RECESS**

### **2. INVITED GUEST: WINTHROP TOWN COUNCIL PRESIDENT THOMAS RILEY**

1. They have 6 precincts, 2 Councilors at large that serve 4 year terms and a Council President that serves a 2 year term and sits on the School Committee.
2. He feels it is a better link between the town and school.
3. Budgets start in November, the long term financial projections, the School budget is submitted to the manager in April and by May 1<sup>st</sup> he gives the total budget to the council who has 45 days to adopt it. From January – April they have department heads in.
4. They have a strong manager, the councilors can hire and fire him and they do annual evaluations.

5. They have a Citizens Financial Advisory Committee who is appointed by the Council President. The Finance Committee is a sub-committee made up of councilors. Both committees have to recommend as a joint committee to town council
6. They do not have a residency requirement for the town manager, the Charter states that the councilors can waive it.
7. Council sets policy by the Charter but in reality it's done by the recommendation of the town manager.
8. The Council President is automatically on the school committee by election.
9. The town manager is hired and fired by a majority vote. The manager does not have a contract but an Employment Contract for 3 years.
10. The manager gives his goals and objectives to the councilors. A public form is emailed to each councilor to score between 1 -5 and make comments, all nine are compiled and the scores are averaged and submitted to the manager.
11. The charter vote was 53 – 47, they equate issues with form of government, because of the result they don't like government, they had 270 town meeting members and felt involved, they are still not sure if it is good or bad
12. Feels they should have spelled out the role of the council, defining expectations, sending expectation to people, trying to put this into practice
13. Feels the creation of the town manager made things more efficient.
14. Feels there is more accountability knowing the 9 councilors.

**READING OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (May 22, 2008 and May 28, 2008)**

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

**ACCEPTANCE OF PREVIOUS MINUTES (APRIL 24, 2008)**

Mr. Decareau made a motion to accept April 24, 2008 minutes.

The Chairman seconded the motion.

Motion passed            **8 – 0**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was none at this time.

**CHAIRMAN’S REPORT: UPDATE ON CALENDAR**

On June 5, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. the Town Manager of Tewksbury, Mr. Cressman will be here along with the Mayor of Chelsea, Mr. Ash at 8:30 p.m.

Mr. Manoogian thanked Ms. de Steuben for having Mr. Riley from Winthrop come in to see us. He also thanked Mrs. Fowler for having Mr. Keezer of Amesbury come in to see us along with booking the Library for his interview.

**TREASURER’S REPORT**

Mr. Decareau stated that there is no change at this time.

**COMMITTEE REPORT**

There is none at this time.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

There is none at this time.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS (INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH)**

**3. ALLOW MEMBERS TO COMPLETE PRESENTATION OF INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**4. SPECIFICATIONS FOR CONSULTANT QUOTES**

Mr. Stewart made a motion to accept the Specifications for Consultant Quotes.

The Chairman seconded the motion.

Motion passed **8 - 0**

**5. CLERICAL HELP – POSTING**

Mrs. Cote made a motion to accept the Clerical Help posting.

The Chairman seconded the motion.

Motion passed **8 – 0**

**MEMBERS ANNOUNCEMENTS / MOTIONS**

There was none at this time.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

There was none at this time.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Diotte made a motion to adjourn at 10:36 p.m.

The Chairman seconded the motion.

Motion passed **8 – 0**

**APPROVED ON** \_\_\_\_\_

**SUBMITTED BY** \_\_\_\_\_