

SAUGUS CHARTER COMMISSION

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

OF

JUNE 12, 2008

The twenty-sixth meeting of the Saugus Charter Commission was held on Thursday, June 12, 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 4:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS**

Seven members of the nine member committee were present at roll call: Cam Cicolini, Karen Cote, Eugene Decareau, Karla J. de Steuben, Joan L. Fowler, Peter Manoogian, Sr., and Thomas Stewart.

Albert W. Diotte, Jr. was not able to attend due to he had a rehearsal dinner for his daughter and Debra Panetta arrived at 5:10 p.m.

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

**NEW BUSINESS**

- **INVITED GUEST: NEWTON BOARD OF ALDERMAN PRESIDENT – LISLE BAKER**
  - They have \$300 million budget
  - He stated that he is honored to be here
  - He is impressed with our Problems & Needs Listing
  - Their controller is appointed by the Board of Aldermen and feels that person is very valuable
  - They do not have staggered elections
  - Turnover in the board is 2-3 people
  - They have a large board
  - He has served for 25 years off and on
  - School Committee have term limits
  - They have a Capital Improvement Plan that the Mayor prepares in the fall, they have a public hearing on it and then it is adopted to the budget
  - All is subject to the appropriation process
  - He feels it is important to do it
  - They have a 5 year Financial Forecast Report that is important
  - They have a comprehensive plan

- They have 8 wards, 24 aldermen, 8 representative from each ward and 3 representatives from each ward run at large
- Some argue that 24 is to large
- He feels that it is fine
- His personal view is that is it very beneficial to have a large diverse body
- He appoints committees and chairpersons
- This allows to divide the work
- They have special permits and zoning relief authority
- Legislation process is divided
- No group dominates the board
- At-large is responsible for the whole city
- Ward Aldermen would receive complaints on sidewalks and street lights and etc
- \$300 million budget includes water and sewer
- 57% is for the Operating Budget of the Schools
- 3% is for the buildings
- Population is approximately 83 – 85,000
- 2 at-large seats up all the time
- Ward at bottom of ballot
- Board President is the vote of peers, caucus – public meeting, someone will be nominated, they both talk, and then they have the election
- If an elected official moves out of ward before the last 9 months they will have a special election
- They are all sworn in on January 1<sup>st</sup>
- If an elected official moves out of ward in the last 9 months they will wait for the regular election and be sworn in right away
- They have about 150 police officers
- They have minimum manning for the fire department
- Zoning law is an ordinance
- Planning department makes recommendations
- Land use is R1 – Commercial
- They have a strong Mayor
- Comptroller is hired by the Board of Aldermen and that person reports to them also
- Comptroller sits with the Chairman of the Finance Committee regarding the budget
- The comptroller helps with the 5 year Forecast format
- Comptroller is very valuable to the Board of Aldermen
- The Board of Aldermen can only make cuts to the budget
- Mayor can only increase the budget
- Board of Aldermen will make a request to increase to the Mayor, he will have to approve it
- Mayor appoints a Licensing Board and the Board of Aldermen will approve the appointments
- They do not have common victual licenses
- The bars have to serve food to have a liquor license

- They will allow B.U. to receive a beer and wine license
- Mayor sits on the School Committee
- The Mayor gives the School Committee a bottom line number
- The school budget is \$150 million plus
- Committee (Citizens) historically goes through the zoning and planning board, they take the first action on the issue, every 2 weeks the Board meets, the committee will present a report or recommendation, The Board will vote all committee recommendation with one vote, 90% of work is done in 1 vote at the beginning, if someone disagrees with 1 committee they will vote that separately
- Normal vote is a majority, bonding and zoning takes a 2/3 vote
- School Committee and Board of Aldermen serve 2 year terms
- They do not have a recall process
- The cost of a special election isn't a factor due to you need that person
- Board of Aldermen appoint an audit sub-committee per request of the Finance Committee
- They have an outside auditing firm
- They have an AAA bonding rate
- Board of Aldermen set rates with a public hearing, but no one show up
- No one shows up for budget hearings
- Charter states that the Board of Aldermen are the policy makers
- They meet twice a month on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month except in July and August
- The committees meet on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays
- They receive quarterly reports
- The schools receive monthly reports
- He feels they may get more than enough information
- November to January is used for caucuses
- During this time they give a report on what has been done
- It is a close out time
- They are subject to the Conflict of Interest Law and feels it simplifies it
- He like the City model and feels it works for them
- Feels there is wisdom in numbers of the Board of Aldermen

## **2 MINUTE RECESSES**

## **READING OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (JUNE 5, 2008)**

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

## **Acceptance of previous minutes (May 29, 2008)**

Mrs. Fowler made a motion to accept the May 29, 2008 minutes.

The Chairman seconded the motion

Motion passed                                   **6 – 0 – 1**

Mrs. Panetta abstained from the voting due to she did not attend that meeting.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was none at this time.

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Mr. Manoogian read a summation of a book that he has ordered and feels it could help us. The name of the book is "The Adapted City: Institutional Dynamics and Structural Change, Authored by: H. George Frederickson; Gary A. Johnson; Curtis H. Wood"

Mr. Manoogian stated that our next meeting is on June 26<sup>th</sup> and our invited guest will be from Windsor Connecticut.

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Mr. Decareau passed out a copy of expense sheets from our previous guests that have put in for mileage, tolls and meals. The following is the breakdown:

Richard Clark of Hyannis interview on June 5, 2008  
173 miles @ \$0.40/mile, tolls of \$3.00 = \$72.20

Phillip Gallagher of Burlington interview on June 10, 2008  
40 miles @ \$0.40/mile = \$16.00

David Cressman of Tewksbury interview on June 10, 2008  
46 miles @ \$0.40/mile = \$18.40

Total of all three is \$ 106.60

Mr. Decareau made a motion to approve the expense reports.

The Chairman seconded the motion.

Motion passed                                **7 – 0**

Mr. Decareau stated that after the disbursement of the expense reports our balance in our account will be \$ 4,863.97. We will not see our appropriation of \$25,000 until July 1, 2008.

Mr. Manoogian stated that Mr. Baker declined reimbursement.

Mr. Decareau made a request that a dated receipt with the name of the person on it be submitted to him for reimbursement.

### **COMMITTEE REPORT**

There is none at this time.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Mr. Manoogian received an email from Howard Hansen who is a member of Mass. Moderators Assn from Stoughton.

Mr. Manoogian had a conversation with him and asked him for copies of the reports the “White Paper” Committee has presented and then our Commission can discuss whether or not to have them in for an interview.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS (INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH)**

- **ALLOW MEMBERS TO COMPLETE PRESENTATION OF INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH**

Mrs. Panetta and Mr. Decareau presented their reports.

Mr. Manoogian stated that the RFQ is out and that someone from out of state has responded. Also the purchasing department said that they mailed out 5 RFQ is different firms.

Mr. Manoogian stated that the Clerk’s position is posted at \$12/hour on the Town’s website along with the Advertiser today.

Mr. Manoogian asked the Commission to think if this is the way to approach entering into Step 3 (Develop possible solutions) Brainstorming.

An example would be:

Who voters would elect  
What would the executive branch look like?  
What would the legislative branch look like?  
Organizational Chart  
Statements

He asked that we come up with 2 or 3 models.

### **MEMBERS ANNOUNCEMENTS / MOTIONS**

Our next meeting will be on June 26, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. and we will have a meeting on July 10, 2008.

### **PUBLIC FORUM**

There was none at this time.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Decareau made a motion to adjourn at 6:39 p.m.

The Chairman seconded the motion.

Motion passed **7 – 0**

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

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

Request From: Howard Hansen  
Email: [elliott344@webtv.net](mailto:elliott344@webtv.net)

Address: 600 Pleasant St.  
City: Stoughton,  
State: MA  
Zip: 02072-1060  
Phone: 781 344-4282  
Organization: Mass. Moderators Assn

From: Howard Hansen  
Chair of Mass. Moderators Assn. Committee on Council vs Tow Meeting Government

To: Charter Commission Chairman

Dear Mr. Manoogian,

I would like to exchange information that this committee has regarding towns who are or have considered and/or did abandon town meeting. From the reports I have seen from the Mass Municipal Assn. and your web site listing, your approach appears to be quite thorough.

The Moderators Assn. has amongst its membership all types of town governments represented from little Gosnold to Massachusetts Largest Town of Framingham.

I am Moderator of Stoughton and have a similar "model" representative town meeting for larger towns to what Framingham has. This type of Town Meeting has Standing Town Meeting Committees which serve two purposes: 1. Requiring active participation of Town Meeting Members long before the gavel is sounded and 2. making public and petitioners aware of what issues are before town meeting.

For the past year, Joel Winett, former Moderator of Framingham and I have been sharing our experiences with this type of Town Meeting. We'd be willing to address your commission, to see if this is something you may want to adopt.

If you'd like, I can send you copies of the reports the "White Paper" Committee has presented over the past 4 or 5 years.

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