

SAUGUS CHARTER COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
OF
AUGUST 14, 2008

The thirty-first meeting of the Saugus Charter Commission was held on Thursday, August 14, 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 7:00 P.M.

Completion of STEP 3: DEVELOP POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

All nine members of the nine member committee were present at roll call: Cam Cicolini, Karen Cote, Eugene Decareau, Karla J. de Steuben, Albert W. Diotte, Jr., Joan Fowler, Peter Manoogian, Sr., Debra Panetta and Thomas Stewart.

READING OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (August 7, 2008)

Minutes were distributed to all of the Commission Members to review before the next meeting.

ACCEPTANCE OF PREVIOUS MINUTES (July 24, 2008)

Joan Fowler noted one correction to the minutes.

Debra Panetta made a motion to accept the July 24, 2008 minutes as amended.

The Chairman seconded the motion.

The motion passed **9-0**

PUBLIC COMMENT

None at this time.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- Chairman Manoogian thanked Rich Garabedian and CTV-8. He also sent a letter to the Town Manager regarding all of the work that Mike Donovan is doing to keep the website updated.
- He advised the Commission Members that a legal decision has come down, out of Barnstable, concerning all Charter Commissions, stating that a Charter Commission is not subordinate to a Town, but rather, is separate. The specific importance to our town is that, in 1983 Dennis Gould could not run for both Charter Commission and Selectman. Because the question was raised about current Commission Members being Town Meeting Members, Mr. Manoogian explained that they are exempt.
- Mr. Manoogian announced that Lauren Goldberg, the consultant from Kopelman and Paige, was scheduled for an interview at 7:15 P.M. He explained that the cost of services was sealed in the purchasing department, and would not be revealed until the entire interview process is finished.

NEW BUSINESS

- **7:15 Interview with consultant proponent Kopelman and Paige**

Ms. Goldberg thanked the Commission for inviting her. She explained that she has been a principal with Kopelman and Paige since 2000. She gave a summary of her background in municipal law, working in public records and the election division. In the private sector, Ms. Goldberg is actively involved with numerous Charters, including Plymouth and Barnstable. She also explained that, because Kopelman and Paige represent so many communities, her exposure to different types of government is quite broad.

A question and answer period followed:

- Mr. Decareau asked her to explain how she would get started, if she were to be chosen.
Ms. Goldberg replied that it depends on the individual community's needs, and where they are in the process. She would be the contact person, attend meetings, answer phone calls, and give as much insight into different types of governments as possible. She strongly believes that the Charter should come from the people, and is skilled at getting what the people want onto paper.
Mr. Decareau asked if she would go through the current Charter and let the Commission know if anything was incorrect.
Ms. Goldberg replied that she has gone line by line, and would have suggestions.
- Mr. Manoogian asked Lauren Goldberg, what, if anything, jumped out as she was going through.
Ms. Goldberg pointed out several things, including no mention of Board of Selectmen duties, the high number of 1500 votes necessary to fill vacancies, and 25% being very high percentage necessary for recall.
- Ms. Panetta asked how many towns Lauren Goldberg is working with right now, to which she responded that she is working with Webster, just finished Groton, and worked with Barnstable.
- Mr. Diotte asked if Ms. Goldberg would be able to give enough time to Saugus, would the Commission be working with her or someone else from the firm, and if she would attend the meetings.
Ms. Goldberg answered the three part question, explaining that her workload is just where she likes it, she would attend the meetings, and although the Commission would be working with her, she would keep one of the other principals up to date in case of emergency.
- Ms. de Steuben wanted to know if Lauren Goldberg usually communicates with one member of the Commission, or if any of the members can call with questions.
Ms. Goldberg explained that, typically, it is just the Chairman, but

sometimes it is both the Chairman and Vice Chairman, and occasionally other members are allowed to call, but if it is over ten minutes they must get permission.

- Mr. Decareau asked if Ms. Goldberg would help to facilitate if an argument occurred during a meeting.
Ms. Goldberg explained that if she had information that would help settle the dispute, she would present it unless told otherwise.
- Mr. Stewart asked Lauren Goldberg what she knows about the Town of Saugus.
She explained that, thus far, she has looked more at the structure of the government, and if she does become the consultant, she would look more at the demographics, voter turnout, newspaper articles, etc.
- Ms. de Steuben asked how long Ms. Goldberg would be helping; would she be finished as soon as the charter is written?
Ms. Goldberg explained that she would stay after the new Charter is written to offer advice on campaign issues.
- The final question from Mr. Manoogian pertained to the Accessibility issue, and whether Ms. Goldberg would be able to supply models of open governments.
Lauren Goldberg assured him that she would be able to provide the Commission with actual Charters to view.
- After thanking Ms. Lauren Goldberg for coming, the Commission returned to the scheduled Agenda.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Eugene Decareau stated that there is no change.

COMMITTEE REPORT

None at this time.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - Additional details or proposal from members (if any)

None at this time.

NEW BUSINESS (Continued)

- **Ranking analysis for three consulting firms**
 - **Shall we create a composite score for each proponent?**

Ms. Panetta expressed her opinion that it would be better to wait until next meeting, after all of the interviews were completed. This opinion was shared by Ms. de Steuben, Ms. Fowler, and Ms. Cicolini.

Members Decareau, Stewart, and Cote did not have any objection to scoring the written proposals.

The Chairman felt that, because some of the members were not comfortable evaluating the written proposals prior to completing all of the interviews, and because some of the Members had not completed the Evaluation Form, it would be best to discontinue the discussion at this time to preserve the integrity of the Commission.

- **Discussion – next steps**
 - **Process to evaluate member proposals?**

Members asked each other questions about their proposals, and how they arrived at the various components, noting similarities and differences.

 - **Is now the time to discuss “non-negotiables?”**

Members discussed the things that were most important to them in their proposals, such as size of legislature and conflict of interests.

An eight minute recess was called from 9:02 until 9:10.

Discussion of “non-negotiables” resumed with term limits, residency requirements, School Committee, elected positions vs. appointed positions, and finance issues.

- The Chairman noted that the updated Pugh Charts were in each Member’s folder, and asked how Members would like to proceed with *Step Four, Selecting the Best Possible Solution*.

Ms. de Steuben expressed her opinion that the Members should not evaluate their own Proposals.

Mr. Manoogian believes that everyone should have the opportunity to present the Proposals, perhaps drawing names and setting a time limit for each to speak. Evaluations will begin on August 28th, as the August 21st meeting will be used to complete the consultant interviews.

- **Next Meeting Date – August 21st, 2008**

Members agreed that the next meeting will be August 21, 2008 at 7:00 P.M. in the Town Hall Auditorium.

Members also agreed to move the starting time of the August 28th meeting from 7:00 to 7:30 P.M. The clerk will change the posting at the Town Clerk’s Office.

MEMBERS ANNOUNCEMENTS / MOTIONS

None at this time.

PUBLIC FORUM

None at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Decareau moved to adjourn at 10:30 P.M.

The Chairman seconded the motion.

The motion passed **9-0**

APPROVED ON _____

SUBMITTED BY _____