

## **Town of Sturbridge**

### **Charter Review Committee**

#### Meeting Minutes, January 20, 2016

Meeting convened at 6:34 pm in Veterans Memorial Hall of the Town Hall by Chairperson William Haggerty. Present: William Haggerty (WH), Sandra Gibson-Quigley (SG-Q), Laurance Morrison (LM), Bruce Boyson (BB) and Paul Zapun (PZ).

PZ moved, SG-Q seconded a motion to accept the minutes of December 16, 2015, as submitted. Passed 5-0.

Discussion resumed from the last meeting as to the Committee's subsequent meeting dates, the advisability and feasibility of gender neutral language throughout the Charter while avoiding unduly awkward phrasing (LM noted that state law refers to Select Boards as Boards of Selectmen [male] and that the Charter could be footnoted, in light of that state law, to explain the use throughout the Charter of male pronouns as referring to all persons) ; Committee consensus pointed to gender neutrality).

SG-Q was asked to consult the Town Clerk with respect to which official serves as the appointing authority of Registrars (N.B.: subsequently SG-Q reported via email [with no ensuing email exchanges among or between Committee members] that the Selectmen make that appointment.

LM was asked to consult the Moderator with respect to Art. 3-2/2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, Art. 4-3/last sentence and the means or method by which, at the Annual Town Meeting, the Moderator would accept Committee recommendations, on the Warrant, concerning the rendering as consistent of capitalizations and similar non-substantive changes of linguistic styling from the current Charter, in the interests of clarity and accuracy (N.B: LM sought and received such information in writing, and those documents will be made public as appendices to the Committee's final, formal written report to the Selectmen).

The Committee embarked on actual wordsmithing, from the beginning of the Charter, taking fully into consideration its own prior analyses, which are documented in previous meeting minutes, as well as documents received by the Committee, which are also referred to in previous meeting minutes, and BB's section drafts, and PZ's re-writes that aim for gender neutrality.

It was agreed that all future Committee meeting minutes, commencing with these minutes, will dispense with the documenting of Committee discussions and decisions, to avoid literally duplicating, word for word, the output or work product of the Committee, which, in full, will be made public in due course. It was noted that the Committee will furnish to the Selectmen a complete set of its minutes when it delivers its recommended revised Charter, accompanying documents received in the course of its work, and a letter stating its collateral observations and comment.

BB presented drafts of specific sections, which were discussed. BB's offer to draft various other sections was readily accepted, with much thanks.

SG-Q moved, PZ seconded a motion to adjourn. Passed 5-0 at 8:34 pm.

N.B.: Subsequently, WH emailed a memo, which did not receive a response from Committee members, assigning wordsmithing tasks and cross-checking responsibilities, with the aim of achieving textual accuracy, comprehensiveness and clarity. Those assignments are being pursued.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurance Morrison, Clerk