

Town of Sturbridge

Charter Review Committee

Public Hearing Meeting Minutes October 4, 2016

Public Hearing convened at 7 pm in the Center Office Building conference room by Chairperson William Haggerty. Present: Paul Zapun (PZ), Sandra Gibson-Quigley (SG-Q), Bruce Boyson (BB), Larry Morrison (LM), and William Haggerty (WH). Also: Mary Blanchard (MB), who chairs the Selectmen.

(Immediately prior to the close of the Public Hearing it was decided to review the minutes of the August 30, 2016, meeting at the Charter Review Committee's next meeting.)

WH, referring to the year-long work of the Committee, stated: the Committee's review found no major problems; adjusted language to remove gender references; corrected grammatical errors; identified and removed language dating from 29 years ago, when the Town Administrator/Open Town Meeting format was established and which now has lost its relevance; met with Department Heads and Officers; sought, through suggestion boxes placed in Town Hall and the Library, public input, which produced none; and generally asked 'what if' questions to test both the current text and proposed revisions. WH asked whether there were questions from the public at that juncture in the presentation, and there was none.

BH performed a line-by-line reading of the Committee's recommendations. At the outset of that reading, the Committee agreed that these minutes would document said reading by reference to the proposed revisions themselves, rather than to engage in the alternative, which would cause these minutes literally to recite the document that prior minutes have incrementally so stated; such reference is hereby made.

WH noted that all revisions received the Committee's unanimous vote; therefore, there are no majority and minority views. In the reading, a handful of typos and inadvertent missing words were discovered, and suitable corrections will be made in the document's next iteration. The discoveries resulted in no change in meaning or intent.

MB queried the proposed omission of certain entries in Section 6-2, asserting the usefulness, as she saw it, of the Charter serving as the location of a comprehensive or master list of the departments, appointees, and terms of office. LM mentioned the offer of the Town Administrator and the prior Town Clerk each to maintain a coordinated, matched complete list. It was agreed that the Committee's final submission to the Selectmen will reflect Committee discussion taking into account all comments brought up in the Public Hearing.

The next meeting was set for 6:30 pm October 17, 2016.

BB moved, PZ seconded a motion to close the Public Hearing and adjourn the meeting at 8:22 pm. Passed 5-0. Respectfully submitted, Larry Morrison, Clerk