

**MINUTES
TOWN OF GROTON
CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION
JULY 23, 2007
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 2**

1. Members Present: Shirley Dunbar-Rose, Stan Dziurzynski, Robert Frink, Nancy Moffat, Richard Moravsik, Raymond Munn, Frank “Mick” O’Beirne, Ed Stebbins, and John Wirzbicki.

Also Present: Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox and Office Assistant Elga Concepcion

2. The meeting was called to order at 7p.m. The Chairman noted that Commissioner Frink would arrive at a later time.

A motion was made by Dziurzynski, seconded by Moravsik to approve the meeting minutes of July 9, 2007.

MOTION TO AMEND

A Motion to Amend the meeting minutes of July 9, 2007 to insert “the City of Groton, and Groton Long Point” at the end of line f. on page 2, was made by Munn.

Moffat moved to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Dziurzynski, and so voted unanimously.

3. COMMUNICATIONS

a. The Chairman sent an email to the Town Clerk in which he requested that the Town Attorney be asked for possible records exhibiting the current Charter’s lack of compliance with State statutes. If such a report exists, this information will be distributed to Members. Mr. O’Beirne sent an email to the Town Manager requesting that each department head review and revise the description of his or her department. After this review is completed, a report will be forwarded to the Commission. He requested that a review of the Town of Madison’s Charter be placed on the agenda of the meeting on August 13. The Chairman received a letter from a citizen regarding the definition of “elector” and “voter”. Wirzbicki stated for the record that he would not be able to attend the next meeting as he will be on vacation.

b. Secretary: No report.

c. Members: Munn received input from citizens who are interested in providing input to the Charter Revision Commission.

4. CITIZEN COMMENTS – None.

5. OLD BUSINESS

The Chairman discussed the ground rules for the Public Hearing scheduled for July 30. He reiterated that members may ask speakers for clarification and that a time limit cannot be placed on speakers at a Public Hearing.

There was extensive discussion regarding the receiving and forwarding of emails from citizens.

6. NEW BUSINESS

The Chairman proceeded to review Wirzbicki’s Charter copy with markups to highlight what the previous Commission had completed. He stated that tonight’s review was not intended as an

opportunity to express agreement or disagreement. The Chairman directed members to particular sections in which extensive work will need to be done.

Commissioner Frink arrived at 7:40 p.m.

The Chairman asked members to contemplate including land use agencies into the Charter.

(A short recess was taken at 8:10 p.m.)

Members asked the Town Clerk to bring the "Guidebook to the Boards, Commissions and Committees" to the meeting on August 13.

Upon the request of Dunbar-Rose, the Town Clerk will provide her with a copy of the Town's purchasing manual.

The Chairman asked members how they would prefer to approach the editing of the Charter. The Members' feedback included major updates, a total rewrite, and transferring changes that were made by the Charter Revision Commission in 1998. A few members cited subject matter/sections which are out of order and duplicated. Munn noted that the inclusion of an index, addendum, and definition sheets would be helpful.

The Chairman asked members to come back with an organizational outline of the Town Charter for the next meeting. Dunbar-Rose stated that older charters should not be used as examples or as guidelines.

A Motion to Amend the Rules of Procedure adopted July 9, 2007 to include the Pledge of Allegiance at the beginning of every meeting, to include public hearings, was moved by Moffat, seconded by Stebbins.

Discussion:

Responding to Moffat, Wirzbicki stated that it is contradictory for a free person to be required to take a pledge or oath and profess a religious faith which he or she may not believe. Dunbar-Rose does not believe that the Pledge of Allegiance is necessary because these are not formal meetings. Stebbins stated that Wirzbicki's comments are valid and that he is not aware of any other commissions that incorporate the Pledge of Allegiance. Moravsik would like to say the Pledge but understands the opinions of the other members. Moffat offered to amend her amendment so that those who do not wish to participate, would not be required to do so. Several members did not feel this would be an appropriate alternative.

The Vote on the Motion to Amend the Rules of Procedure failed with four in favor (Mr. Dziurzynski, Ms. Moffat, Mr. Munn, and Mr. Moravsik) and five opposed (Ms. Dunbar-Rose, Mr. Frink, Mr. O'Beirne, Mr. Stebbins, and Mr. Wirzbicki.).

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 9:05 p.m. was made by Moffat, seconded by Stebbins, and so voted unanimously.

Shirley Dunbar-Rose

Secretary

Approved: August 13, 2007.