

MINUTES – DRAFT
TOWN OF GROTON
CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION
February 25, 2008
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 2

1. Members Present: Shirley Dunbar-Rose, Stan Dziurzynski, Nancy Moffat, Richard Moravsik, Raymond Munn, Ed Stebbins, and John Wirzbicki
Members Absent: Frank "Mick" O'Beirne, Robert Frink
Also Present: Office Assistant Lori Watrous

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Secretary Dunbar-Rose made a motion that in the absence of Chairman O'Beirne that Commissioner Wirzbicki be the chairman for this meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Munn and passed unanimously.
3. A motion was made by Commissioner Munn, seconded by Commissioner Moravsik to approve the minutes of February 11, 2008. The motion passed with 5 In Favor, 2 Abstain (Abstain – Dunbar-Rose, Dziurzynski)
3. COMMUNICATIONS
 - a. Chairman: No report.
 - b. Secretary:
Secretary Dunbar-Rose sent out a revised draft of the Conflict of Interest section.
 - c. Members:
Commissioner Moravsik received an email from Jack Sebastian. Mr. Sebastian feels that a referendum is needed if an increase in a proposed budget exceeds the cost of living increase as determined by the federal government.
4. CITIZEN COMMENTS
Jack Sebastian, 4 East Shore Avenue, is concerned that the votes reflected from the RTM do not reflect the voting public. He stated that the budget should not increase above the inflation rate that is determined by the federal government. This year that inflation rate is 2.2%, and he suggests that we keep the budget increase in line with inflation levels.

John Sutherland, 32 Neptune Drive, supports the proposal made by Jack Sebastian. He further remarked that it may be prudent to include a "safety" which would preclude a referendum if the proposed budget exceeds the guideline by a fraction of a percentage point. Mr. Sutherland also stated that some latitude needs to be worked into the budget timetable currently detailed in Chapter VIII of the current Town Charter.

Genevieve Cerf, 17 Crescent Street, suggested that a fixed portion of the mil rate be designated toward open space acquisition each year. She further suggested that the members of the Land-Use and Conservation Commissions be elected, and that the Town Council have a vote on all major zoning changes. Ms. Cerf went on to say that currently the Plan of Conservation is largely ignored, and she would like to see a more vigorous approach to its implementation. In closing, she stated that incentives should be given to developers for not cutting down trees, leaving larger buffers around wetlands, and abstaining from the use of pesticides and herbicides in environmentally sensitive areas.

Pat Sparkman, 52 Sound Breeze Avenue, supports the previous speakers regarding both the budget and open space issues.

5. OLD BUSINESS

Members continued discussion of the **OFFICERS AND ELECTIONS** Sec. __.7.3 *Conflict of Interest* as restructured by Secretary Dunbar-Rose.

- a. Sec. __.7.3 – *Conflict of Interest* – Secretary Dunbar-Rose will restructure this section.
 1. In the second paragraph, change the word “recluse” to “recuse”.
 2. Include verbiage regarding the following:
 - a) *Ethics Commission*. Establishment of an Ethics Commission consisting of five members (including a minority), their powers and duties, and an established procedure for complaints and issuing of decisions regarding those complaints.
 - b) *Code of Ethics*. Establishment of a Code of Ethics that would be drafted and enacted within a set timeframe after the acceptance of the new Charter, along with identifying the responsible committee for creating this document.

Members continued discussion of the **DEPARTMENTS** section as restructured by Commissioner Moravsik.

- a. Sec. __.7.1 – *Creation of Departments* –
 1. In the first sentence change “except those” to “or”.
 2. In the second sentence change “, unless this Charter or CGS specifically so provides, assigned to any other” to “assigned to any other, unless this Charter or CGS specifically so provides”.
- b. Sec. __.7.1.1 – At the end of the second sentence delete “provided that, in case the Town Treasurer is absent or unable to act, the Town Manager may sign checks”.
- c. Sec. __.7.2 – *Direction by Town Manager* – In the first sentence change “manager” to “Town Manager”.

A motion was made by Commissioner Dziurzynski and seconded by Commissioner Moffat to accept the proposed changes to the **DEPARTMENTS** section. The motion passed unanimously.

A recess was taken from 8:17 to 8:28 p.m.

6. NEW BUSINESS

Members discussed the **DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY SERVICES** as restructured by Commissioner Moffat.

The following changes were discussed, but not voted on.

- a. Sec. __.8 – *Department of library services* – no changes
- b. Sec. __.8.1 – *Library Services are unique among departments* – Change the heading “Library Services are unique among departments” to “General”.
- c. Sec. __.8.2 – *Powers and duties* – In the third sentence change “the general statutes” to “CGS”.
- d. Sec. __.8.3 – *Budget* – no changes
- e. Sec. __.8.4 – *Appointment of Library Director* – no changes

Before a vote is taken on the Library Services section, Commissioner Moffat will extend an invitation to Alan Benkert to address the Charter Revision Commission regarding the following:

- a. What state statutes govern the library?
- b. In regards to purchasing, why doesn't the library board purchase items through the Town purchasing department?
- c. Do we want a Library Board?
- d. Is it necessary to have nine people on that board?

At the next meeting, the commission will revisit *Sec. __.7.3 Conflict of Interest* and *Section __.8 Department of library services*, and then continue on with the **INCORPORATION AND POWERS**, **REFERENDUM**, **DEFINITIONS**, **ANNUAL BUDGET PROCESS**, and **FINANCE** sections.

7. ADJOURNMENT

By consensus, the meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Shirley Dunbar-Rose
Secretary
Approved March ____, 2008