

Harvard Charter Commission
Meeting Minutes
June 29, 2017
Upper Town Hall

Members present: Paul Cohen (Chair), Rick Maiore, Sharon McCarthy, George McKenna, Stephanie Opalka, Ron Ostberg, Charles Redinger, Cindy Russo, Peter Warren.

Paul Cohen called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. The commission approved the May 25 and June 1 minutes. The minutes from June 15 will be reviewed at a later meeting.

The commissioners reviewed the revised draft of the charter starting with Article 3 - Elected and Appointed Officers as Sharon McCarthy suggested, because a number of topics in the article still need to be resolved.

In the article-by-article review, the following areas were resolved or remain open:

Article 1: Incorporation, Existence, and Authority

1-7: Precedence of Charter Provisions - highlight for a legal review

Article 2: Legislative Branch

No changes

Article 3: Elected and Appointed Officers

Name changed to Elected and Appointed Boards and Committees

3-1: General

(f) Recall Provision for Elected Officers

2. Recall Petition - After discussion, commissioners agreed to raise from two to four the percent of voters required to file an affidavit naming the officer to be recalled and the reasons.

3-2: Select Board

(b) Powers and Duties - Cindy Russo and Sharon will review and re-order the list.

Article 4: Town Administrator

4-2: Duties and Responsibilities - General

(e) As to personnel matters - after discussion, Cindy agreed to rewrite the section to clarify the Town Administrator's role in interviewing, recommending, and hiring new employees. Sharon will look at other town charters to provide language ideas.

4-3: Duties and Responsibilities – Financial

The commissioners passed over to have more time to review.

Article 5: Administrative Organization

5-5: Building Inspector/Facilities Manager

After extended discussion, the commissioners agreed to leave the article as is for the time being.

Discussion points included:

- Separating the two positions.
 - Would lose the funding from fees that the combined position would provide.
 - No existing funding for a facilities manager.
 - Townspeople want to see buildings maintained.
- Including school buildings in the responsibility of the position.
 - School Committee would not support at this time because they have a person in place now who meets their needs.
- Placing the responsibility under the Town Administrator.

Article 6: Finance and Fiscal Procedures

No material changes.

Article 7: General Provisions

Article 7-8: Periodic Charter Review

After discussion, the commissioners decided to relook at the whole section.

- Stephanie Opalka will check the statute to see if a review sooner than the required 10 years needs a ballot as well as a Town Meeting vote.
- Clarify who initiates an earlier review and how it is done.
- Resolve the number of selectmen that should be allowed on the review committee.

Article 8: Transitional Provisions

8-1: Continuation of Existing Laws

Stephanie will reconcile the language with 7-1: Precedence of Charter Provisions.

At the BOS meeting July 11, commissioners will ask for feedback on the combined town-school financial director and the combined building inspector/facilities manager positions.

The next meetings are still scheduled as follows:

- July 11 at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall meeting room for a joint session with the BOS
- July 11 in the Volunteer Government room following the BOS meeting
- July 27 at 7 p.m. at the Town Hall meeting room

Paul adjourned the meeting at 10:15 p.m.

Laura Andrews, Recorder