**Town Of Medway**

**Charter Review Committee**

**Medway Middle School, 45 Holliston St**

**Presentation Room (1307)**

**MINUTES OF MEETING**

**November 20 2017**

**Present:** Chairman Jeffrey Segarra, Vice-Chairman John Scott Smith; Clerk Matthew McCabe; and Committee Members John Robinson and Jeffrey O’Neill.

Chairman Segarra called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

**Discussion Items:**

1. Process Discussion

Chairman Segarra discussed the process for presenting charter changes at Town Meeting, including the ability to put forward two warrants with charter changes – one warrant with grammatical and less substantive changes, and one warrant with more substantive changes. Chairman Segarra asked if the committee had finalized the list of grammatical and less substantive changes into a new baseline document, which had not been done. Mr. O’Neill asked if the committee wanted to change the gender pronouns in the charter, including changing the Board of Selectmen to a gender-neutral term. The members agreed this change should be made. Mr. Smith asked if there would definitely be charter amendments presented at Town Meeting, and Chairman Segarra answered that he believed there would be.

1. Interview with Chris Monahan, Chairman, Board of Library Trustees

Mr. Monahan proposed that the charter be amended to reflect that there are six members of the Board of Library Trustees, which is the status quo even though the charter spells out five members. He noted that there are minutes reflecting six members going back to the 1990s. He also noted that the board likes having six members to create a more diverse group, and would consider going to seven members except for the issue of trying to recruit people to serve. Several committee members noted that having an odd number of members avoids ties and asked what the board does in the case of a tie. Mr. Monahan said he had no experience with a tie vote. Chairman Segarra asked about the proposed charter amendment from the town administrator to put the maintenance of library property under the town administrator’s office. Mr. Monahan said the board is fine with this change, and that it reflects current practice. Chairman Segarra noted that the board might want to vote to confirm they support this change. Mr. Robinson noted this proposed charter amendment might be better accomplished with an agreement between the board and the town, and that the board should want to exercise control over spending by the town on library maintenance. Mr. O’Neill added that the board should vote to adopt a formal agreement. Mr. Monahan said he believed the town already owns the building and thus has the responsibility to maintain even without an agreement.

1. Discussion of Currently Proposed Charter Amendments

The committee agreed that changing the word “ballot” to “vote” and moving language about the election of town officers in Section 2-1-2 made sense. The committee also agreed with capitalizing all titles and moving to gender neutral terms.

The committee discussed the proposed change to add social media as a required option when posting Finance Committee vacancies. Mr. O’Neill noted that the town needs to communicate better, and this change would help. Chairman Segarra, Vice-Chairman Smith, and Mr. Robinson stated that this change might not be warranted. Mr. McCabe noted that the charter should serve to tie the town’s hands, and agreed that this change might not be important enough to include. Chairman Segarra stated that the group should recommend that the town do a better job at communicating.

The committee agreed to change the name of the Industrial Development Committee to the Economic Development Committee.

The committee discussed changing the Parks Commission to an appointed board. Mr. Robinson, responding to a question from Chairman Segarra, noted that the committee should talk to the Park Commission about this change. Mr. Robinson also noted that shifting more positions to appointed positions give more power to the Selectmen, while having elected board provides a counterweight to the Selectmen. Chairman Segarra noted that the committee should talk to the Board of Selectmen about the issue of elected/appointed positions, but also noted that the charter feedback from the Town Administrator generally reflects the board’s views. The committee discussed Section 3-1-9 which spells out a process to change boards from elected to appointed and vice versa. After the issue was clarified in the committee, the group decided this section was not going to be amended. The group also discussed how the Park Commission was controlling revenues and directing money. Mr. Robinson noted, and Mr. O’Neill agreed, that all management of money should be handled by the town. Mr. O’Neill noted that this issue was the reason that the Finance Committee proposed to appoint Parks staff and create a Community Advisory Committee to maintain public input.

The committee discussed the proposed change to eliminate a fixed term for the Town Administrator. Chairman Segarra noted that Maryjane White agreed that because of Selectmen can always remove a Town Administrator, the current three-year term is artificial. Mr. Robinson noted that having a term allows the Selectmen to let a Town Administrator go at the end of his or her term without having the remove them.

The group discussed the addition of Affordable Housing Trust in Section 4-1-1. The committee agreed that more information was needed about the difference between the Trust and the Affordable Housing Committee, and the group should reach out to Ann Sherry.

The group discussed the proposal to limit fixed terms to only a few town officials. Mr. Robinson argued that no change was needed.

The committee discussed changing the title from Administrative Assessor to Principal Assessor.

The committee discussed the proposal to create a town-wide facilities manager. Mr. Robinson noted that he didn’t think state law allowed to town to take away this authority from the school committee.

The group discussed the proposal to change the name of the Department of Public Services to the Department of Public Works. Mr. Robinson noted that the original charter used “Services” to make it clear the mission was to serve the community. Mr. O’Neill asked if there was a cost to change the name, and Chairman Segarra said there was a minimal cost. The committee generally agreed that the proposal was fine.

The committee discussed the proposal to add the position of Assistant Town Administrator to the charter. Mr. Robinson noted that the charter shouldn’t be amended to reflect every staffing change. Mr. O’Neill said he did see another charter that discussed what happened when the Town Administrator was incapacitated. The group agreed that adding new positions to the charter should be avoided.

The group discussed changing the title of Inspector of Buildings to Building Commissioner, and agreed this change made sense.

The committee discussed the proposal to change financial reporting from monthly to quarterly. The committee agreed that monthly reporting was preferred.

The group discussed the schedule laid out in the charter for the review of the charter itself and the review of town bylaws. The committee agreed that changing the interval of charter review from seven to ten years made sense. The committee noted that Maryjane White should be consulted about the current status of the bylaw review.

The committee discussed adding an Investment Committee to the charter. Mr. Robinson argued against this change and noted that the job of managing town finances should be focused on safety and liquidity.

1. Committee Meeting Calendar

Meeting set for December 6, 2017 at 7:00 PM.

Agenda: Interview Town Administrator Michael Boynton

**Adjournment:**

***A motion to adjourn the meeting made by Mr. O’Neill, seconded by Mr. McCabe and approved unanimously.***

The Board adjourned at 8:49 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew McCabe

Clerk