

TOWN OF PROVINCETOWN
Charter Review Ad Hoc Committee
MEETING MINUTES OF
September 24, 2013

MEETING HELD IN THE CAUCUS HALL MEETING ROOM

Members Present: Judith Cicero, Thomas Coen, Marcy Feller, Doug Johnstone, Ann Maguire, Julia Perry, Robert Speiser, Robert Vetrick, Elizabeth Williams.

Members Absent: David McGlothlin (excused), Mark Phillips (excused).

Others Present: None

Chair Julia Perry called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

Minutes of the September 17, 2013 meeting were reviewed.

Robert Vetrick moved to approve the meeting minutes of September 10, 2013, Thomas Coen seconded and it was so voted, 9-0-0.

Public Statements: None.

Review of Introductory Letter to Board of Selectmen and Town Boards: Chair Julia Perry distributed a second draft of the letter for review that incorporated committee member comments from the last meeting, with the following comments made by members:

Robert Vetrick – Felt the overall tone of the letter was good.

Julia Perry – Will change the word “valuable” in the second sentence of item 3 to read “valued.”

Thomas Coen – Asked if the letter will be addressed to all committee members. Consensus was that the letter will be addressed to each individual board and e-mailed to each board member. Those board members without an e-mail address will have a hard copy mailed to them. Staff liaisons for each board will also be copied via e-mail.

Judith Cicero – Questioned how to handle an individual who may wish to respond separately from the board response sought in the letter. Consensus was that this was a first step to obtain information and that opportunities for individual input will occur later in the review process.

Robert Vetrick moved to approve the introductory letter to town boards as revised, Robert Speiser seconded and it was so voted, 9-0-0.

Thomas Coen mentioned Town of Truro Charter as a potential resource. Thomas Coen to e-mail the Truro Charter to Doug Johnstone, who will include it as an e-mail attachment to committee members for their reference, and bring hard copies to next meeting.

Chair Julia Perry announced that she has begun a glossary of terms that can be added to throughout the review process as needed and distributed a copy of the glossary to date. Chair Julia Perry also distributed a first draft of a potential reorganization of Chapters based on last week's discussion of organizational issues in current Charter.

Continued Discussion of Charter: The Committee resumed a review of the Charter beginning with Chapter 2, Section 4, highlighting areas that may need further attention and/or clarification, as follows:

Marcy Feller – Submitted written comments on earlier sections reviewed last week when she was not in attendance, and discussed specifically:

2-3-7 Phrase “except as otherwise provided by...” needs more explanation.

2-3-9 Questioned the ordering of warrant articles. Specify how articles are ordered?

Thomas Coen – Highlighted that the Truro Charter cites a specific MGL reference whenever applicable and that we should strive for the same in revised Charter.

Marcy Feller – Questioned role of Town Counsel in review. Response was that Town Counsel will be brought in to the review process in the future.

Chapter 2, Section 4

No comments.

Chapter 3, Section 1

Thomas Coen – Somewhere in this section the role of Ad Hoc committees should be defined.

Thomas Coen – Consider adding qualifications to membership on certain boards, and requiring a formal application and interview process.

Robert Speiser – Consider adding that all boards must have a chair, the process for selecting a chair, and the term for a Chair.

Robert Speiser – Modernize language throughout Charter eliminating term “Chairman” and replacing with term “Chair.” General consensus to make this change throughout the Charter.

Robert Vetrick – Reminded committee that this initial process was to identify those areas in need of further examination and not designed to resolve those issues at this point in the process.

3-1-2 Thomas Coen – Needs to be simplified in some way.

3-1-2 Robert Speiser – Only applicable to appointed boards but does not say so in section.

3-1-3 Doug Johnstone – Needs more specificity as to how an individual is removed.

3-1-4 Doug Johnstone – Needs more specificity as to how an individual is removed.

Chapter 3, Section 2

3-2-1 Doug Johnstone – Modernize language.

3-2-2 Thomas Coen – Needs clarification

3-2-3 Thomas Coen – Consider revising “selected by lot.”

3-2-4 Thomas Coen – Should reference Open Meeting Law.

Chapter 3, Section 3

Judith Cicero – Highlighted a need for general board education and helpful guidelines to each board.

3-1-1 Thomas Coen – Questioned need for training, or how to get *Roberts Rules of Order* to boards.

3-3-2 Thomas Coen – Investigate with boards if this is done or on file.

Chapter 3, Section 4

Robert Speiser – Whole section needs work. Also consider retitling section.

Thomas Coen – Need to consider how our General By-Laws are intertwined.

Robert Vetrick – Questioned if most items are already covered in the State Ethics Conflict of Interest law.

3-4-4 Doug Johnstone – Investigate section.

3-4-4 Thomas Coen – Consider separating section between elected and appointed boards.

3-4-9 Thomas Coen – Clarify section.

Discussion of the Charter ended at Chapter 4, Section 1, to be taken up at the next meeting.

Next Steps: Continued review of Charter beginning with Chapter 4, Section 1. Chair Julia Perry asked members to continue their review of the Charter with Chapters 5 and 6 and bring questions/suggestions to the next meeting.

Doug Johnstone to e-mail each member the Town of Truro Charter for future reference, as needed.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will take place on October 1, 2013 at 5:00 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT: *Ann Maguire moved to adjourn at 6:05 P.M. and it was so voted unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,
Doug Johnstone