

**PROVINCETOWN FINANCE COMMITTEE
AD HOC CHARTER COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEE**

Judge Welsh Meeting Room – 4:03 p.m.

July 2, 2014

Members Present: Mike Canizales, Clarence Walker, Duane Steele, Doug Cliggott, Mark Hatch, Stan Sikorsky, Louise Venden (as a visitor), Lennie Alickman

Ad Hoc Charter Committee Subcommittee: Julia Perry, Chair, Tom Cohen, Mark Phillips

Others Present: Dan Hoort, Finance Director, Mary Jo Avellar, Town Moderator

Member/Public Statements: Lennie Alickman stated she was thrilled to be there. Duane Steele stated that the Finance Committee believes in expressing their opinions and delivering them to the Town Meeting for the best possible choices. Mike Canizales stated that there is much to do before the Fall Town Meeting, and that he would be contacting people 1:1 offline to discuss assignments for projects. He also stated the preparation would require Public Hearings and Advertising. Handouts were distributed. Dan Hoort stated that the Town Meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 3rd. Mark Juare asked to make a public statement, stating he understood the meeting was regarding financial procedures and to review the Charter that involves appointment of Finance Committee members. He stated that he was elected by voters to be part of the Charter Enforcement Committee at the last election and that the Committee elected him to be an alternate to the Ad Hoc which had to be approved by the Board of Selectmen. He went on to say that he was rejected by the Board of Selectmen. He expressed his concerns regarding the rejection vote. and that he was very suspicious as to why someone would be rejected for participation on an Ad Hoc Committee, especially when they are voted to be the representative from the Commission as well as the voters.

Discussion: Tom Cohen stated that he and Mark are members of the Financial Procedures Subcommittee, and that earlier they had a meeting with the Acting Town Manager and the Finance Director to discuss the budget process and how it could be improved compared to what is in the Charter now. He stated that this involved discussing timelines (handouts were provided). Tom Cohen stated this came down to a few important points:

- 1) The date of the annual Town Meeting
- 2) Date of annual election
- 3) Number of days between
- 4) Date of opening and closing of the war

Of the 14 towns on the Cape, only 4 towns have meetings in April, and the rest in May. Of the days between Town Meeting and election (some are a week and some less, and some are up to 30 days). In terms of warrant, the date the warrant closes and how many days before Town Meeting, there is a very wide range of days, with Provincetown being 30 days (the shortest window). Tom stated the process may be too compressed, and he is concerned about attendance at Town Meeting which may be affected by the date (people haven't returned yet and summer activities). He discussed moving Town Meeting to the first week of May, and moving warrant to 60 days to increase attendance, stating that voters will know issues before walking into Town Meeting. Mike states he read the report and understands issues. Mike went on to say that process has been very involved in the last few years, and he worries about increasing the time of warrant. Julia stated warrant basically closes at the same time, but information is given on articles, but the process would stay the same. Petitions are accepted at any time so that shouldn't be a damper. Mike state that it also depends on whether the Board of Selectmen is a disciplined Board. He stated that too far out may decrease the influence of other Boards. Tom added that the additional 30 days gives time to bring people up to speed. Mike stated that the creation of warrant is critically important, and there is a need for more than one branch of government to discuss the warrant. Mike Canizales was adamant regarding his concerns about the additional 30 days. Doug voiced his opinion that having meeting later would increase attendance, and that he agrees with Mike on the 30 days. Julia asked about considering 45 days to close warrant or as close as possible to the close of fiscal year. Mark stated that if it's not broken, should we fix it, and he would need more information regarding a change. Doug stated that Town Meeting had a public open debate regarding the parking revenue, but well after meeting, several members of business community were surprised at what preceded the town meeting so that going to May might increase attendance and awareness. Duane stated the need for prior publicity on articles (like newspapers). He went on to say that a long Town Meeting may be an asset. Clarence shared that he backs Doug Cliggott's opinion that moving to May would help attendance, but that he is disinterested in Nantucket's business because in essence what matters is quality, not speed. Clarence also stated the need to incorporate more to inform the public in advance and have debate. Mike states that if subcommittee wants to change the date based on a theory to increase attendance, it would be good to do a post card to everyone and ask if they would be interested in May instead of April, and possibly a Saturday date instead of several nights until 10pm. He feels that a weekend event would increase attendance, and have care for children. Mary Jo stated that business is back in town in the beginning of April. Tom stated that Saturday is not good for a business person, especially in May so it probably wouldn't work. Tom also stated that a Capital Improvement Plan so by the end of August would have an updated CIP. Mike stated plans need to be thought through and stop having CIP separate. Mike stated they would table the

possible weekend, and proceed with caution on the 30 days. Julia verified that Committee would be on board with a change to May, but not on changing the 30 days. Mike agreed as long as there was evidence that changing to May would improve attendance, but no change in the 30 days. Julia reiterated that if there was evidence documented by a survey, the Finance Committee would agree to changing from April to May. Julia stated there would be a 2 hour workshop on August 11th for the Charter Review and the Board of Selectmen. Mike recommended putting things through in sections. Julia made a general statement regarding the Finance Committee and lack of public trust, but she feels it's because the public really doesn't understand what the Finance Committee does, and there is a need to make it more clear with a description of the Finance Committee's role in general. She stated that it would benefit the Town so they understand what the Financial Committee does. Mike stated there should be a reference in the by-laws, that it should be in a living document, that can reflect changes as they come about and modify it as necessary. There was much discussion about the Finance Committee's responsibilities which Mike suggested using a document prepared by Tom Cohen some years prior, and the Finance Committee handbook from the State of Massachusetts. It was agreed upon that neither the Charter nor MGL provide information on the Finance Committee's roles and responsibilities. Town Moderator Mary Jo Avellar spoke in favor of "the less is more" plan of action. She laments that the elected Boards have been stripped of much responsibility, and that fiscal responsibilities has been ceded to non-elected boards, an example being the Pier Corporation who has not been fiscally responsible. She states that their books are not balanced after five years, that they have not paid their rent of \$118,000, that they are spending money like "drunken sailors", and the pier is one of our largest assets and should be managed by an elected board.

Doug Cliggot, speaking on Chapter 9, stated most municipalities who find themselves in financial trouble do not do so because of their operating budget, but instead because they do not manage their assets, liabilities, OPED, debt structure, trust funds, etc. We need to formalize the practice of managing these issues with Town Meeting and the Board of Selectmen. Mike asked Tom Cohen and Doug Cliggott to work together on this project and also to work with the DOR.

At one hour and seven minutes, the Ad Hoc Charter Committee left, and Dan Hoort stated that the Finance Committee needs to meet by July 15th to sign budget transfers. Mike Canizales set the meeting for July 15th at 1pm.

The minutes of March 6th and April 24th were read and approved 5-0-2 with Lennie and Mark abstaining because they were not participants.

Respectfully submitted,

Maghi Geary