

Short Report of Charter Commission Meeting April 11, 2022 at Town Hall

Present: D. Peck, B. Hall, D. Malaguti, L. Pizer, B. Abbott, A. Keohan, S. Vecchi. Attending via Zoom: W. Brewster and F. Mand.

Opening Remarks: Mr. Abbott proposed that since the preliminary report was due in 5 months that the Commissioners meet weekly.

Discussion and selection of Charter Counsel and/or Collins Center of Public Management: After discussion a motion was made by B. Hall that Collins Center be chosen, and that Mr. Abbott work out the financial arrangements. Motion carried unanimously. Later in the meeting, after further discussion, Mr. Keohan moved to utilize the Anderson law firm and authorize Mr. Abbott to work out the financial arrangements. Motion passed 5-2-2.

Continued Discussion of Big Topics:

A. Role of COPC (Committee of Precinct Chairs) – Many thoughts were expressed, and suggestions made including

1. Call the COPC the Executive Committee of Town Meeting, from whom the COPC gets their authority, and do not think of the COPC as competing with SB,
2. Allow COPC to recommend all non-financial and zoning articles to T.M.
3. Allow the Planning Board to also recommend zoning articles.
4. Take care not to overwhelm COPC and to insure that COPC is respected by other boards and committees, including T.M.
5. COPC might also appoint Charter Review Committees, enforce the charter, act between T.M. as well as recommend Special Town Meetings to SB.
6. COPC appoint 5 Fin Com members, with SB appointing 5 members and Moderator appointing 5 members.

Public Comment:

Joe Hutchinson shared his Power Point presentation about Communication and Community Engagement in local Municipal government, recommending that Plymouth's new Charter include these topics, to improve government

transparency and community voter turnout. Discussion followed about redesigning the Town Website, as other towns have done and about whether a new director position is necessary or not.

B. Role of Advisory and Finance Committee (Fin Com) – short discussion including further discussion of who would appoint the Fin Com members, Fin Com qualifications, how deep Fin Com members dig into financial issues, concern that no minutes are kept at subcommittee meetings that might also include TMMs, as well as concern that Fin Com members are not attending beginning budget discussions.

Old Business: Concerns were discussed regarding lack of full information available prior to Fire Station vote at Town Meeting this year and fact that every Fin Com recommendation vote was 11-0-0 at this TM.

For detailed information read meeting minutes at Charter Commission page at Plymouth-ma.org and/or view PACTV video.

Martha Vautrain

LWV Plymouth Area Observer Corps