

Observer Corps Report

Town of Plymouth Charter Commission

Meeting of September 19, 2022 (Hybrid – in-person and Zoom)

Commissioners in Attendance: Peck, Brewster, Hall, Pizer, Abbott, Mand, Keohan (Zoom)

Announcements: Abbott stated that a Public Hearing will be held in 2 weeks Oct. 3 Monday 7pm in the Great Hall at Town Hall and will be advertised. Abbott also stated that the Preliminary Charter was delivered Sept 15 to the AG office and Dept. of Housing and Community Development, per state statute. The response regarding conflicts will be returned to Commissioners by October 15.

Discuss Anderson & Kreiger letter from George Hall, special Commission Council and suggested edits to Charter: Council did not note anything in the Preliminary Charter that was inconsistent with State law and stated that there was good separation between Legislative and Executive branches of government. Council did suggest a number of minor edits, as did Commissioners, such as:

- No need to define Annual Meeting; only need to rely on State statute.
- Define how to count votes taken at a joint committee meetings, but commissioners felt no need to do so, since joint committee meetings are for information sharing, not decision making.
- Hall wondered if 'precinct' needs to be defined, but members agreed not to do so since the word is defined in State law.
- Commissioners added a new Section 2-11-3 in Chapter 2, Conflict of Interest section 11,
- language suggested by Council. (I did not get the wording, but it will be in the minutes when they are eventually published.)

Discuss questions and suggested edits from R. Serkey, L. Lawrence and C. Mathewson: such as:

Moderator may or may not be a Town Meeting member. SB member could become Moderator but would have to resign from SB. Town Manager could become Moderator (without resigning) if s/he was Plymouth resident.

- No changes made to Section 9, after discussion about informing all mentioned in the section of their need to attend Town Meeting.
- No changes made after clarification of election processes for at large and district Select Board members.

Minority Report: Peck gave his Minority Report to Chair Abbott, saying he is ready to discuss it with other Commissioners, and that even though he obviously supports his report, he is also planning to work on behalf of the passage of the final Charter at the May election, because he believes it is better than the current Charter.

Publication of the Preliminary Draft in the OCM: As per State Statute, the Preliminary Draft was printed in the September 14 edition of the OCM. Commissioners noted the very small print size. Clerk Michelle Turner informed commissioners that print size cost \$9,947; a larger size would cost over \$12,000. She also said that the Preliminary Charter is available on the front page of Town website, as well as the Charter Commission website. A hard copy with readable print size will be at the Public Library.

Abbott said the Final Charter Report will be sent to all Plymouth households by Select Board, probably about February, in a readable print size.

Meeting September 26 is cancelled. Next meeting will be the Public Hearing Oct. 3.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Vautrain

LWV Observer Corps