

CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING

November 7, 2023 Plymouth Town Hall Ropewalk Room 6PM In-person and Zoom

Committee Members Present: David Golden, Chair; Alan Costello, Vice Chair; Robert Zupperoli, Clerk (via Zoom), Joseph Hutchinson, Timothy Lawlor (via Zoom), Leon Levin, Laurence Pizer, Martha Vautrain, Steve Bolotin (alternate), Michael Hanlon (alternate).

Chair Golden announced that in the absence of Ms. Cavacco, Mr. Bolotin would be participating as a full voting member of the Committee this evening.

Public Comment: None

Discussion – Chapter 2: The Legislative Branch

Observers Note: Almost all of tonight’s discussion revolved around wordsmithing; however, the wordsmithing revealed two important tensions that I expect will run through the entire review of the Charter. The first springs from a desire to keep the Charter clear of operational and administrative detail and put that material in the by-laws. Yet, important powers and responsibilities that might be considered “operational or administrative” can be changed much easier if they are in the By-laws than if they are in the Charter. The second tension is between a “clean, just the facts” Charter and a Charter that tells the “story” of Plymouth and has a narrative.

The committee will keep a running list of everything eliminated from the Charter because it simply restated or referred to Mass General Law (MGL). The list will be reviewed again to be sure that nothing critical to the understanding of the Charter has been eliminated.

There was a lively discussion around Section 2-2-2 as to who is eligible to be a Town Meeting Member (TMM), questioning whether they should also be a tax-payer or why they had to be a “registered” voter, but it was decided to leave the section as is. There was another discussion regarding Section 2-2-3 as to what constitutes “posting” a notice in these modern times, and in Section 2-2-4 there was a discussion about what a “journal” meant. Mr. Pizer, former Town Clerk, stated that the journal is a written record of the proceedings.

The Committee voted unanimously to pull Sections 2-2-3 through 2-2-9 out and put them in a separate section, Responsibilities of the Town Clerk in Regard to Town Meeting. It also voted unanimously to add the voting record as well as the attendance record for TMMs to Section 2-2-8.

Respectfully submitted,
Lyle Lawrence