

CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE (CRC) MEETING

January 2, 2024 Town Hall – Ropewalk Room 6PM

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

Guests on Zoom: Gail Butler, Al DiNardo.

New Proposal:

Larry Pizer began the meeting by stating that the Town needs a handbook for citizens and town meeting members covering how the town works. Drawing up the handbook would be a duty of the Town Manager. Mr. Pizer proposed a motion to that effect. A long discussion followed as to whether a handbook was needed (“can’t they just Google it?”); whether the Town Manager had the time (“he’ll be an editor, not a writer”; he is the natural choice because all departments ultimately report up to him). Mr. Levin felt that the Town’s institutional knowledge needed to be codified before it is lost. Mr. Bolotin thought Town Communications should create access to the information rather than relying on a static document that would need to be updated to be relevant. After 30+ minutes of discussion, a vote was taken and 4 voted yes to the handbook, 4 voted no and one abstained. As a result of the tie, the motion did not carry but may be reconsidered later.

Discussion – Chapter 2: The Legislative Branch (cont’)

At the December 5th meeting after a long discussion and impasse, a small group was formed to examine proposed paragraph 2-Z-1* regarding committees that “shall” be appointed by the COPC to make recommendations to Town Meeting on the Warrant Articles. CRC members had been emailed the proposed language a few weeks ago and received a handout last meeting. Mr. Hutchinson, Mr. Costello and Mr. Bolotin reported that the small group had decided to keep wording very general so that committees “could” be appointed as needed. Furthermore, they felt that the Committees should make any necessary technical corrections to articles, but should not be making recommendations since that is the purview of the Advisory and Finance Committee. A motion was made to approve the proposed paragraph, and it passed 7 to 2.

Next followed a discussion of town meeting procedures. Proposed language around a quorum and adjourning a meeting was approved, but only after a lengthy discussion about the numbers needed to adjourn and whether language should be “those present” or “those present and voting.” It was decided to stick with just “those present.” (Section 2-4-2 of current Charter). Section 2-4-3 of the current Charter calling for Town Meeting to operate in an open session and prohibiting secret ballots was okayed as is as was Section 2-4-4 of the current Charter dealing with the order of consideration of articles on the warrant. There was some discussion regarding Section 2-4-5 of the current Charter which allows Town Meeting to adopt rules and regulations regarding its procedures and methods of operation. Mr. Pizer believed that rules and regs needed to be adopted at

the beginning of each Town Meeting, but, in practice, they seemed to carry over from one meeting to the next. The example of allowing Town Meeting Representatives to speak before any member of public could was cited as an example. Finally, Section 2-4-6 of the current Charter was greatly shortened on a unanimous vote to read: " A roll call vote, electronic or otherwise, shall be required for all motions. That wording allowed the CRC to strike Section 2-4-7 of the current Charter.

Old Business:

The meeting ran over its two hour "budgeted" time and Mr. Golden stated that it will be necessary to schedule meetings more frequently if the CRC is to finish its task in the expected time-frame.

Specific wording for the above changes may be found in the minutes of the Charter Review Committee when they are published.

Respectfully submitted,
Lyle Lawrence

**This number refers to a draft proposal Mr. Golden introduced at the beginning of the review process. The exact wording can be found in the meeting minutes.*

When the minutes of this meeting have been approved, they will be available at plymouth-ma.gov website. Go to the Government tab, click Agendas and Minutes, scroll down to and click Charter Review Committee, look to the right and click the minutes icon.