

## CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE (CRC) MEETING

May 14, 2024 Town Hall – Ropewalk Room 6PM

**Committee Members Present:** David Golden, Chair; Alan Costello, Vice Chair (Zoom); Robert Zupperoli, Clerk (Zoom), Joseph Hutchinson (Zoom), Tim Lawlor, Len Levin, Laurence Pizer, Martha Vautrain, Steve Bolotin (associate), Michael Hanlon (associate)

**Tonight's Committee:** With the absence of Ms. Cavacco, associate member Steve Bolotin was recognized as a member with full voting powers for tonight's session.

### **Public Comment:**

Deb Iaquinto, speaking on behalf of the Open Space Committee proposed adding a section to the role of the Open Space Committee (see bolded section in excerpt): "An Open Space Committee...to act in an Advisory Capacity to the Planning Board and the Town Meeting with respect to the preservation of natural open space **in order to protect the environment and ensure appropriate access to public lands** shall be appointed..."

### **Section 3-14-8 Open Space Committee:**

The language suggested above was accepted by the committee. The committee also added the Select Board to the organizations advised by the Open Space Committee, and the appointments of the nine members were made subject to overlapping three-year terms.

### **Section 3-14-9 Land Use and Acquisition Committee (LUAC):**

Following recommendations from LUAC and from some committee members, additions and refinements were made. They are bolded below. This section of the Charter would now read: "A Land Use and Acquisition Committee comprised of seven (7) members [shall] ~~to~~ act in an advisory capacity to the Select Board with respect to the acquisition, **conveyance and disposition of real property by the Town or its subdivisions** pursuant to the provisions of Chapters 61, **61A or 61B** of the General Laws **or in any instance as requested by the Town Manager on behalf of the Select Board. The members of the Land Use and Acquisition Committee shall be appointed for three-year overlapping terms** as follows: Two (2) members shall be appointed by the Select Board, two (2) by the Planning Board, ~~two (2)~~ **one (1)** by the Conservation Commission, **one (1) by the Agricultural Commission**, and one (1) by the Open Space Committee.

### **Chapter 4 Section 3 School Committee:**

In keeping with simplifying the Charter language and not being redundant, the initial section. 4-3-1 referring to Mass General Law was struck. Sections 4-3-2 (a) (b) and (c) were kept intact, but **Section 4-3-2 (d) giving the School Committee the power to "have general charge and superintendence of all school buildings and grounds and furnish all school buildings with proper fixtures, furniture and equipment." was deleted on a 5-4 vote after a long and passionate debate (Voting in favor of NOT deleting the section were Mr. Pizer, Ms. Vautrain, Mr. Zupperoli and Mr. Hutchinson.)**

**Proposed New Chapter 8:**

Mr. Golden proposed moving a number of independent advisory committees to a separate Chapter. His original proposal included the following committees: Advisory & Finance (A&F), Committee of Precinct Chairs (COPC), School Committee, Board of Health, Open Space, Land Use and Acquisition, Building and Charter Review. There was much discussion around the School Committee and its most appropriate place in the Charter. The decision was made to pull it out of the new Chapter 8, and later determine its best location. There was also some discussion around A&F and whether it belonged in the new chapter, and the decision was also made to remove it from Chapter 8 and discuss later where it should be.

**Proposed New Committee:**

Ms. Vautrain proposed adding a Precinct Advisory Committee or Redistricting Committee as they are sometimes known. She mentioned that this proposal arose with the recent Charter Commission. After much discussion it was determined that the timing of appointing of the committee members in the proposal had to be adjusted because the proposed committee could not draw precinct lines until the census data were available (usually December of the census year) and the state had drawn its lines for state redistricting purposes. The committee would consist of 11 members (no two from the same precinct), 5 appointed by the Select Board and 5 appointed by the COPC, and the Town Clerk would serve as the Chair (with voting powers).

**Other Matters:**

Mr. Golden both thanked and congratulated the committee on finishing the review of each section of the Charter, but reminded them that it needs renumbering, editing and further review for consistency. The committee will also have to consider a request that the four at-large members of the Community Preservation Committee be directly elected rather than appointed by the Select Board, and another request that a Communications Department be added to the Charter. Mr. Golden also recognized that the Committee itself may need to reorganize pending the results of this weekend's election (If elected to the Select Board, Mr. Golden would have to step down from this committee). The committee expressed its appreciation for the job Mr. Golden did as Chair.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lyle Lawrence

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