

MINUTES – CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE

Monday May 21- Tuesday May 22nd, 2018

Special Town Meeting

Room 149 & Auditorium

Marshfield High School

Present: Bruce Spitler, William Bowers, Barbara Farnsworth, Daniel Burke, Robert Marzelli, Scott Borstel, Donald Gibson Alyssa Reed (alternate) Jonathan Grabowski (alternate),

Excused: Donald Gibson – serving as town moderator

Note: Mr. Gibson joined the committee as a member during the Special Town Meeting when he temporarily stepped aside as Town Moderator. He remained a member of the committee till the Charter Review proposal was completed on Tuesday May 22nd.

Meeting Convened: 6:30 p.m.

Public Comment: None

Old Business:

The committee met in a room prior to the meeting to review the presentation for that evening. Discussions were had regarding the presentation as well as an overview of the order of presentation.

New Business:

The committee, led by Bill Bowers presented the Charter Review proposal to town Meeting. Bill Bowers, the chair led the presentation. The members of the committee assisted Bill in his presentation, in the answering of questions and assisting in the presentation.

As planned, Don Gibson, the Vice Chair of the CRC, temporarily stepped aside as town moderator in order to participate in the presentation and discussion as a member of the committee. Discussions were had by the committee throughout the evening on Monday and Tuesday regarding amendments that were offered by Town Meeting participants, in order to assist the chair with responding to questions from the Moderator.

On Monday, the committee did conduct extensive discussion regarding the amendment offered by Barry Cornwall regarding the proposed change in the Town Manager –Article 4 regarding the role of committees. Mr. Cornwall's amendment proposed to change the language of the charter proposal, requiring the town Manager to get Committee approval for the hiring of department staff that work with that department. It was agreed that the committee would seek to have an additional amendment considered on Tuesday to clarify this amendment since members of the committee felt that the amendment passed by Town Meeting severely hampered the philosophy of the role for the town manager as developed by the committee. (Note: Mr. Kelleher, a member of the Board of Selectmen, after consultation with Mr. Cornwall offered a modifying amendment on Tuesday that when proposed, was supported by the committee and the committee needed to take no action)

On Tuesday, May 22nd, an amendment was made by a Town Meeting member to eliminate the Role of Town Manager and all changes that go with those, reverting back to Town Administrator.

Through the discussion of this amendment, the committee discussed this proposal and several members of the committee spoke in opposition to this amendment. The discussion centered around the committee's philosophy, as espoused in several meetings that the essence of our proposal was the role of a strong, centralized management supported by a more diverse five member Board of Selectmen. While the debate was ongoing, committee members expressed concern for the charter proposal as developed if the town manager was removed. It was the consensus feeling of the committee that without the Town Manager role, many of the other essential changes such as centralized leadership of town employees, improved coordination within town departments and town boards would not take place.

Town Meeting voted in favor of the amendment to remove the Town Manager section of Article 4 -151 to 141. Immediately upon the passing of the vote, Mr. Bowers asked Town Meeting for a five-minute recess in order for the committee to caucus. The Moderator granted this.

The Chair proposed, that based on the philosophy of our overall proposal and the discussion that had taken place by the committee, that the Charter Review Committee propose to withdraw Article 1 from Special Town Meeting. The committee voted 7-0 in favor of this proposal. Mr. Bowers made this proposal to the Moderator who placed the withdrawal up for a vote. The vote was in favor of the withdrawal of Article 1.

At the conclusion of Special Town Meeting, at approximately 9:30 p.m., the committee convened and voted to adjourn their meeting. The vote was 7-0 in favor of adjournment. Mr. Grabowski voted as the alternate.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Burke
Clerk, Charter Review Committee