

Williamstown Charter Review Committee
Hybrid – Town Hall – 31 North Street & Zoom: Minutes
Thursday, September 22, 2022

Present: Joseph Bergeron, Nate Budington, Andy Hogeland, Jeff Johnson, Robert Menicocci, Anne Skinner, Jeff Strait

Absent: Mary Kennedy

1. **Intro:** Meeting called to order at 10am by Andy Hogeland and Jeff Johnson. Brief opening remarks given by Andy Hogeland and Jeff Johnson welcoming the committee members and thanking them for their willingness to volunteer on behalf of the town.
2. **Taking of Minutes:** Jeff Johnson agreed to complete the minutes for 9/22/2022, and the committee discussed rotation of minutes to be completed by different committee members.
3. **Review of Charge to Committee and Scope:** Please see meeting packet for copy of official Charge to the committee. Discussed difference between Town by-laws and the Charter.
4. **Bases for current structure of boards and committees:**
Andy Hogeland presented a draft table he had prepared noting the structural bases of boards and committees, as a topic for future discussion of whether any changes should be made.
5. **Available Resources:** The co-chairs noted that we may have funds to hire consultant help. Two consultants identified are the Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management, and Bernard Lynch of Community Paradigm who is now working with Adams. Other resources include the Massachusetts Select Board Association (MSA), and bringing in individuals with specific areas of expertise as needed to assist with our work.
On 10/14/22 Andy and Jeff will be attending a presentation by MSA on *Trends in Municipal Charter Changes*. Andy will send the Zoom link to the committee.
6. **Discussion of ideas for process:**
Outreach is key:
External – EX: Citizens, Library trustees, Chamber of Commerce & other community groups.
Internal – EX: Town hall employees, consult our other town committees
We discussed putting creating a questionnaire for staff. We want to look what are other towns doing in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
7. **Discussion of ideas for community engagement:**
Committee members discussed need for deliberate efforts to reach people who have never been on any town committee and need to get an idea of how the average person feels. Reaching out to people who are not active is very important, as some members felt failures of town government in recent years are due to people who are very involved seeing ideas shot down and becoming frustrated. We need to reach out to new groups to get feedback and to go to where they are to ensure we are receiving feedback from as many citizens as possible.
8. **Establish standard meeting time and frequency:** Andy Hogeland will put out a doodle poll to obtain the best times for the committee to hold the monthly meetings. Per the temporary revisions to the Open Meeting Law (OML), all committees are approved to hold hybrid meetings until March 2023.
9. **Adjourn:** Meeting Adjourned at 10:38am