

Williamstown Charter Review Committee Minutes  
Thursday February 2, 2023  
Town Hall at 1:30 P.M.

Members present: Andy Hogeland, Chair; Joseph Bergeron, Jeff Strait, Anne Skinner, Town Manager Bob Menicocci, *ex officio*.

Members present via Zoom: Mary Kennedy

Members absent: Jeff Johnson and Nate Buddington

Also Present: Charles Bonenti, Library Trustee

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 P.M.

The minutes of January 5, 2023 and January 19, 2023 were approved by roll call vote.

**Minutes** - Will be taken by Mary Kennedy

**Approval of Minutes** - The minutes of January 5, 2023 and January 19, 2023 were approved by unanimous roll call vote.

### **Survey To the Public**

Andy presented the redrafted survey for residents for our review. It is currently three pages and we reviewed the 15 questions on the first two pages and considered the questions on the third page of whether or not they were needed.

Question #15, (In-person electronic voting) will be addressed on the May Annual Town Meeting warrant to gain voters' opinions and explain the process of using the electronic voting. Remove #15 and add question of "Lack of confidentiality in their vote" as an option in #14.

Question #20 (Opinion of Charter) - Do not use question as it is addressed in question #7.

Question #9, rewrite as- "The current Town Charter establishes a strong Town Manager form of government. The Select Board acts as a supervisory board. Most of the day-to-day operational and hiring decisions are made by the town manager."

The Town IT office is not comfortable creating this survey in house and will be getting a subscription on Survey Monkey to compile the survey questions and results. The hard copy of the survey will be going out to residents in March with the tax bills.

Concern was expressed about not incorporating renters in the survey. Health Inspector Jeff Kennedy has a list of rentals he inspects and will have an address list and the Town Clerk can print a list of the larger rental units.

## **Boards and Committee Survey**

Joe Bergeron stated that the committee survey will go out via Survey Monkey. Question is how far back with former committee members to send to, as well as ability of getting all the email addresses. Hugh Daley sent out an email last year to all board members and the town clerk should have emails on the oath papers so between those two we should be able to get a good range of past and present board member. .

## **Town Staff Meeting on Charter**

The Town Manager stated he had an informal conversation with the town staff. The staff addressed specifics to their own departments. The staff was adamant that the town should maintain a strong town manager form of government and discussed the disadvantages of a town run by a Select Board and Town Administrator.

The Town Manager stated he will forward a summary of that meeting to Andy.

## **Suggested Approach to Government Structure Questions**

The committee was presented with 21 issues that we will need to scrutinize during the Charter Review process. Discussion ensued regarding where each item belongs, as a Charter vs Bylaws. When we discuss each of these items we will decide then where we feel it belongs.

Anne Skinner will report on issue #1, Mary Kennedy will report on issue #3 & #4 and Joe Bergeron will report on issue #19 at the next meeting.

Charles Bonenti informed us there is a State handbook on how Library Trustees are to function and the Milne Public Library has a list of policy and procedures which he will forward to us.

Meeting adjourned at 2:16 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary C. Kennedy