Charter Review Committee

Thursday, August 3, 2023

1:30 P.M.

Williamstown Municipal Building

Members Present: Andy Hogeland, Jeffrey Johnson, Jeff Strait, Nate Budington, Mary Kennedy.

Members Absent: Joe Bergeron and Anne Skinner

The meeting was called to order at 1:35 PM by Andy Hogeland.

1. Taking of minutes - Mary Kennedy will take minutes.

2. Approval of minutes of July 6, 2023 - minutes will be voted on at the September meeting.

3. Review of Revised Draft Interim Report - Andy stated that we will get the draft report out at this point to get public feedback, then later in the Fall we will make specific recommendations and will work with the consultant with those changes. Jeff Strait took issue with the wording on the bottom of page 17 , “...... the Select Board acts as a Board of Directors and its responsibility is to set policy” and would rather see the phrase “set policy” changed to “guides policy” Following a discussion on the authority of the Select Board the wording will be changed to “.....the Select Board acts as a Board of Directors and its responsibility is to set policy subject to town meeting.”

The committee members expressed appreciation to Joe Bergeron on the slides he created for use at public engagement. No further changes or comments were made on the slides.

4. Outline plans for public engagement sessions - Nate stated that he had two conversations while manning the table at National Night Out. One was from a resident in the 20-30 year old age group stating the difficulty of attending town meetings when you have children. The second subject was the need to evaluate the separate taxing authority of the fire department. The committee discussed the procedure of how the town and fire department could potentially merge, as well as the issues with that process. It was agreed we would add a paragraph in our charter report about the concept of fire department merging with the town and note that we didn’t discuss it as part of the process.

The committee made a suggested list of locations for public engagement, which are as follows: Select Board meeting, WES committee, farmers market, Willinet show, press release with iberkshires and Berkshire Eagle, Holiday Walk, Harper Center, Sweetwood, 330 Cole Ave and at the Elementary School when parents are picking children up.

5. Next meeting - the next meeting will take place on Thursday, September 7, 2023 at 1:30 P.M.

6. Pubic Comment - none

7. Adjourn - the meeting was adjourned at 1:55 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary C. Kennedy