



Charter Commission

Administration Building
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Commissioners:

Mark S. Sideris,
Chair

Stephen P. Corbett
Michael Donham
John A. Donohue
Dennis J. Duff
Susan G. Falkoff
Anthony Palomba
Rhiana Kohl
Angeline B. Kounelis
Cecilia Lenk
Pamela Piantedosi
Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr.
John J. Lawn, Jr.
David Siegel
Athelia Tilson

ADOPTED MINUTES
CHARTER COMMISSION MEETING
TUESDAY, JULY 20, 2010 @ 7:00 PM
RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO CHAMBER
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

1. **ROLL CALL:** A regular meeting of the Charter Commission was called to order at 7:00pm, in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Council Chamber, Administration Building. Present for the meeting were Commissioners Stephen P. Corbett, Michael Donham, John A. Donohue, Dennis J. Duff, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Rhiana Kohl, Angeline B. Kounelis, Cecilia Lenk, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., John J. Lawn, Jr., David Siegel, Athelia Tilson, Pamela Piantedosi and Chair Mark S. Sideris.
2. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:** [June 15, 2010](#) Commissioner Piccirilli moved to accept the minutes. Commissioner Donham noted the request to change the word "copyright" to "copyediting". It was noted by Commissioner Piccirilli that the request for the word change was emailed to all members last month. Commissioner Kounelis stated that she did not have the information in front of her. The Chair asked that the minutes be Tabled until the next meeting. The motion to accept the minutes was withdrawn. The Tabled minutes will be placed on the August Agenda.
3. **INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION:**
 - a) [Informational Presentation](#) by Commissioner Siegel regarding forms of government. Commissioner Siegel provided a power point presentation regarding forms of government. The overview included Source of Municipal Power; Home Rule and its Basic Framework; Cities versus Towns; and four forms of government – two city forms and two town forms as well as Basic Choices. Commissioner Siegel reviewed basic Home Rule framework noting that the legislative body must be elected (except in Open Meeting); the Chief executive may be appointed or elected; school committee must be elected; board and commissioners may be appointed or elected; and the four forms of government: Cities - Council-Mayor; Council-Manager; Towns – Representative Town Meeting; and Open Town Meeting. Mr. Siegel also reviewed pros and cons of forms of government as well as basic choices in Authority: concentrated or dispersed; Accountability: political versus professional; Citizen Participation: appointed versus elected.

Commissioner Siegel indicated the cons to a mayor as follows: the mayor will hold all the power; will be politically influenced and that a professional administrator will be needed. The pro to a mayor as follows: the executive has direct political accountability.

The presentation was opened up to discussion.

Commissioner Donham asked if a mayor form of government is more costly to taxpayers and requested salary ranges for mayors. The Chair stated that he will contact the MMA for answers.

Commissioner Piantedosi asked what direction the Commission is moving in. Commissioner Donham suggested that the Commission take a vote.

Commissioner Kounelis stated that it is not prudent to review the existing Charter.

Commissioner Corbett moved to maintain the current form of government, seconded by Commissioner Lawn.

The Chair recognized resident George Fosque, Barnard Avenue – who indicated that he is a long time Cambridge city employee and that the City of Cambridge is a model town manager/town council form of government noting that the Cambridge manager has brought stability, longevity and professionalism to government.

The Chair recommended that the Commission bring a recommendation to the September 21st meeting.

Commissioner Kounelis stated that she cannot make a decision right now to support the current form of government until she has heard both sides.

Commissioner Piantedosi stated that the reason why she had suggested the Commission move on this vote is because it does not make sense to review the Charter page by page if we are not going to accept this form of government. Once the Commission decides on moving forward with the existing government, the Commission can move forward on discussing changes to the Charter that benefits the residents she indicated.

Commissioner Piccirilli stated that the only question is whether or not we want to change from a town council/town manager form of government to a mayor/town council form of government and that he has heard no support of that from constituents. He noted that our town manager is isolated from politics and that a mayor is not and will have veto power over the town council rendering the town council a rubber stamp.

Resident Pat Gold, Duff Street – stated that she has not heard any resident say that they wanted to change the form of government.

She concurred with Commissioner Piccirilli in his point that there have been no outcries from the public for change.

Commissioner Palomba asked for a point of clarity in that voting in favor of the current form of government is not a vote on the details of the government as it pertains to the Charter. He further stated that a vigorous response to Commissioner Piccirilli's points would be informative.

Commissioner Corbett indicated that the balance of power is not limited to a mayor versus manager and that the Commission can modify power within the Charter.

Commissioner Donham stated that any criticism of the manager has been about his personality rather than his skill or positions on matters. He noted that there will always be exceptions to someone's personality.

On the motion to maintain the current form of government, it was adopted by a roll call vote of 14-1 with Commissioners Corbett, Donham, Donohue, Duff, Falkoff, Palomba, Kohl, Lenk, Piantedosi, Piccirilli, Lawn, Siegel, Tilson and Sideris voting in favor with Councilor Kounelis voting against.

4. NEW BUSINESS

The Chair stated that on August 17th the Commission will discuss Article 4 as it pertains to the school committee and library board of trustees with the two entities being invited and department head Leone Cole.

It was stated that Commissioner Lenk will be the go-between for the Charter Commission's website. All documents and requests for postings will go through her.

The one-page [flyer](#) was discussed with Commissioner Piantedosi asking to revisit the URL and Commissioner Donham requesting that the flyer be disbursed to school children in September.

Burt Greenberg, Duff Street – stated that the one page flyer is a good document which he will personally disburse to his condominium association group.

The Chair stated that Article 4 will be discussed on August 17th.

5. ADJOURNMENT – 9:00 pm

Commissioner Donham moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:00pm, seconded by Commissioner Piccirilli and adopted by voice vote.

A dvd of the meeting is available upon request.

I hereby certify that the minutes for July 20, 2010 were adopted on August 17, 2010 by voice vote as amended; with Commissioners Corbett, Donham, Donohue, Duff, Falkoff, Palomba, Kohl, Lenk, Piantedosi, Piccirilli, Lawn, Siegel, Tilson, Kounelis and Sideris voting in favor.

Mark S. Sideris, Chair.