



Charter Commission

Administration Building
149 Main Street
Watertown, MA 02472
Phone: 617-972-6470

MINUTES

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

CHARTER COMMISSION MEETING TUESDAY, OCTOBER 5, 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 7:00 pm, in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Chamber, Administration Building. Present for the roll call were Commissioners Dennis J. Duff, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Rhiana Kohl, Angeline B. Kounelis, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., David Siegel, Athelia Tilson and Chair Mark S. Sideris. Commissioner Stephen Corbett arrived shortly after the call of the roll. Commissioners Donham, Lawn, Lenk, Piantedosi and Donohue were absent.

2. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES: [September 21, 2010](#). Commissioner Piccirilli moved to Table the draft minutes, seconded by Commissioner Duff and adopted by voice vote with Commissioners Stephen P. Corbett, Dennis J. Duff, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Rhiana Kohl, Angeline B. Kounelis, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., David Siegel, Athelia Tilson and Chair Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

3. INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATIONS by John Flynn, Town Clerk and Louis Fabrizio, Election Commissioner Chair as it pertains to Article 7 Nominations, Elections, Initiative, and Referendum:

Town Clerk John Flynn provided an overview on the following Sections of Article 7: 7-2 Town Elections; 7-3 Partisan Elections; 7-4 Preliminary Election; 7-5 Ballot Position; 7-6 Districts; 7-7 Application of State General Laws; 7-8 Petitions to the Town Council and School Committee; 7-9 Citizen Initiative Measures; 7-10 Citizen Referendum Procedures; 7-11 Ineligible Measures; 7-12 Submission of Other Matters to Voters; and Section 7-13 Conflict Provisions.

Following Mr. Flynn's presentation, the Chair introduced Election Commissioners Louis Fabrizio, Bob MacDonald, David Downes and Bonnie Baranowski. It is noted that their duties include performing voter registration, gathering the annual street listings, or census, and the conduct of primaries and elections in accordance with the Massachusetts Election Laws and Regulations. They establish policy in matters dealing with municipal election and also are responsible for drawing district, ward,

and precinct lines and the establishment polling places. Regarding term and vacancy, Election; two members must be from the Democratic Party, two from the Republican Party; serving four-year terms.

Ms. Baranowski provided an overview of Election Day and noted that the Election Commissioners' responsibilities on that day include preparing and testing the voting machines. Commissioners meet at 6am accompanied by a police officer to deliver the polling machines to precincts ensuring that operations are up and running. Commissioners make visits to polling locations throughout the day; dropping off ballots and fielding questions. That evening, after the polls have closed, Commissioners meet with clerks and wardens to review tapes in order to close the election for each of the districts. Training sessions are also provided to poll workers and wardens every few years.

Following the Election Commissioners' presentation, the Chair took up Article 7 for discussion. Commissioner Siegel asked Commissioners if they had encountered any problems related to Article 7 in the discharge of their duties. Commissioner/ Chair Louis Fabrizio stated that they have not encountered any problems or obstacles.

The Chair opened up the meeting for discussion and questions.

Charter Commissioners commented on Sections 7-8; 7-9 and 7-10 regarding Petitions, Measurers and Procedures. Mr. Flynn briefly elaborated on these sections and answered questions posed to him. There were a number of comments regarding Article 7 and suggested amendments/changes which will be submitted to the Clerk at the end of the Charter Review process.

4. OLD BUSINESS: Continued discussion on an Outreach Program.

The Chair stated that he would like the Charter Commissioners to divide into subgroups/subcommittees in order to provide informational presentations to various organizations throughout the town as discussed at the last meeting. The Chair suggested any and all proposed changes can be presented to the organizations with the intent to solicit ideas/comments from the public. He noted that Commissioner Kounelis has already provided an informational presentation to the Rotary Club. The Chair stated that the Patch, Tab and the Globe all are attending the meetings and can disseminate information to their readers.

Charter Commissioner Palomba outlined the procedure for proposed changes to the Charter. He suggested that, as previously discussed, proposed changes are to be forwarded to the Chair and the Clerk following the review of all sections of the Charter. The proposed changes or amendments will be collected and summarized by the Clerk and Chair and then redistributed to the Commissioners; placed on the website and published in the paper. The subcommittees, which will be made up of three or four Charter Commissioners, would then provide a presentation

of the proposed changes to various organizations. Following that informational process, a Saturday date will be selected and published in the local paper whereupon a complete presentation will be made to the public.

The Chair opened up the discussion to the public and recognized:

Clyde Younger, 188 Acton Street – asked for clarification of the process noting that the processes outlined would make it too late for public comment.

The process was restated by Commissioner Palomba.

Commissioner Kohl concurred with the process and stated that once the Charter has been reviewed by the Commission, an outreach can take place, which is the more appropriate time for that to happen.

Mr. Younger stated his views of why there has been low audience participation at Charter Commission meetings noting that it was his view people are intimidated, especially immigrant residents.

Pat Gold, Duff Street – concurred with the stated process.

Commissioner Kounelis thanked Commissioner Palomba for his work on the double-sided flyer sent to residents. To follow up on Mr. Younger's comments, she stated that people do not want to make waves with negative comments. She noted that it is her view that residents are intimidated by the closeness and close ties of the community. She noted that people are very concerned about the future of the community but that they will sit on the sidelines and let others do the talking and deciding for them.

The Chair indicated that this Commission has taken every step to notify residents of upcoming meetings. The meetings are televised on cable for those who cannot attend. The Chair also noted the Charter Commission's web page which posts the agendas, minutes and relevant information, as well as notices and articles that have appeared in the local paper.

5. NEW BUSINESS: The Chair stated that Articles 2 will be taken up on October 19th.

6. ADJOURNMENT – **9:00 pm.** Commissioner Duff moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Palomba and adopted by voice vote with Commissioners Stephen P. Corbett, Dennis J. Duff, Susan G. Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, Rhiana Kohl, Angeline B. Kounelis, Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., David Siegel, Athelia Tilson and Chair Mark S. Sideris voting in the affirmative.

I hereby certify that at a regular meeting of the Charter Commission where a quorum was present, the above minutes were adopted on October 19, 2010 by voice vote.

Mark S. Sideris, Council President