



# Watertown Town Council

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

ELECTED  
OFFICIALS:

Mark S. Sideris,  
Council President

Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr.,  
Vice President &  
District C Councilor

Caroline Bays  
Councilor At Large

Anthony J. Donato,  
Councilor At Large

John G. Gannon,  
Councilor At Large

Anthony Palomba,  
Councilor At Large

Angeline B. Kounelis,  
District A Councilor

Lisa J. Feltner,  
District B Councilor

## MINUTES

### MEETING OF THE CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE TUESDAY, JUNE 1, 2021, AT 6:00 PM MEETING WILL BE LIMITED TO REMOTE PUBLIC ACCESS ONLY

Pursuant to Article 8, Section 8-1(b) of the Watertown Home Rule Charter, and pursuant to the Call of the Town Council President, I hereby called a Meeting of the Charter Review Committee, consisting of the Town Council as a whole and six additional voters to be appointed by the Council President, said meeting to be held on Tuesday, June 1, 2021 at 6:00 PM. in accordance with the Governor's Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G. L. c. 30A, §20, relating to the 2020 COVID-19 emergency and to avoid group congregation, this meeting had only remote opportunities for participation with public access provided as follows:

#### **ACCESS INFORMATION:**

- A. The meeting was televised through WCATV (Watertown Cable Access Television): <http://vodwcatv.org/CablecastPublicSite/?channel=3>
- B. Public was permitted to join the virtual meeting online: <https://watertown-ma.zoom.us/j/96419264286>
- C. Public was permitted to join the virtual meeting audio only by phone: (877) 853-5257 or (888) 475-4499 (Toll Free) and enter Webinar ID: 964 1926 4286#
- D. Public was permitted to comment through email: [vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov](mailto:vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov)

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss, consider, and act on the following:

#### 1. Call to Order

Council President Sideris called to order a regular meeting of the Charter Review Committee. Those present were Councilors Caroline Bays, Anthony J. Donato, Lisa J. Feltner, John G. Gannon, Angeline B. Kounelis, Anthony Palomba, Vice President Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Council President Mark S. Sideris, and members Marcia Ciro, Anne Fitzpatrick, Jonathan Hecht, Leo Martin, James Mello, and William Oates. Also present was Michael Ward, Director of the Collins Center.

#### 2. Review and Approval of Minutes

##### A. Minutes of the [May 3, 2021 Preamble Committee Meeting](#)

Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the minutes of the May 3, 2021 Preamble Committee Meeting; Member Mello seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

##### B. Minutes of the [May 24, 2021 Preamble Committee Meeting](#)

Member Mello moved to accept the minutes of the May 24, 2021 Preamble Committee Meeting; Councilor Piccirilli seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

### 3. Review Language for Remaining Items from the Last Three Meetings and Vote

Mr. Ward presented language for Section 2.10 that was discussed at the previous meeting. Councilor Piccirilli moved to add the new Section 2.10 relating to Annual Meetings; Member Mello seconded the motion.

Discussion of the matter was opened:

Member Ciro – She asked if language regarding the dissemination of these meetings needed to be included. Councilor Piccirilli stated that as public meetings, the Town Council rules would require a transcript of the events. Mr. Ward stated if there was a concern regarding communication methods, this could be addressed in other parts of Article 2 or in the definitions.

Councilor Kounelis – She asked if the voting on the changes would be as a whole or by each section. She stated that she supported subsections (a) and (b) but could not support (c). She believed this was not a prerequisite for inclusion in the Charter. Council President Sideris stated the items would be considered separately.

Councilor Feltner – She cautioned that there is a need for flexibility in the process and the method of completing the councilor meeting requirement.

Member Fitzpatrick – She asked if the changes would go on the ballot as one whole document or could there be separate questions? Mr. Ward stated at the last Charter Review in 2010, the changes were presented as one package. He cautioned about having questions because with several questions, voters may find it burdensome, and some questions would be skipped.

Member Ciro - In regard to the Councilor meetings, she was open to alternative methods, but her primary concern was the ability to provide two-way communication. Some councilors did have newsletters, but they tended to provide information and not with their opinion on issues or solicit opinions from their constituents. She believed that with the addition of staff for the Council, they would be able to assist with the set up and notification of the meetings. She offered the option of having a meeting or publishing a bi-monthly newsletter. She felt the district councilor meetings should be for the district people.

Councilor Palomba – He liked the idea of the meeting and asked what the purpose was of allowing the public to submit potential items for the agenda. Mr. Ward stated it added to provide the Councilors with the ability to put a frame around the agenda and prevent the meetings from getting too chaotic.

Councilor Gannon – Meetings should not be limited to district constituents because all councilors vote on town-wide measures and because legally people cannot be banned from a public meeting. He suggested setting up a schedule in January distributing the meetings throughout the year. This would give the councilor the opportunity to prepare and the public to be aware of the meeting.

Member Ciro – It is important for people to be able to submit questions before the meeting and helps the councilor to prepare for the meeting.

In the public statement portion:

Q&A Janet Hudson – The requirement of each councilor conducting one meeting a year may be an inconvenience, but it is outweighed by the benefits of transparency and communication.

Because there was an issue allowing people to speak through CATV, Council President Sideris asked Mr. Ward to go onto the next item until the public was able to participate actively. He asked those wishing to speak to submit matters to the Q&A as a way of responding.

Mr. Ward went on to Section 2.2 (b) where language was provided clarifying the duties of the Council President so that the person would be

1. The official spokesperson of the council
2. The chief advocate of policy
3. The leader of the development, periodic review, and updating of a long-term vision for the town together with the council, town manager, and the public

Member Hecht – He was fine with the spokesperson role but was uncomfortable with the chief advocate of policy role as he was uncertain about what that means. In the council form of government, there should be no policy formulation independent of the council and the language is potentially disruptive and destabilizing. For the same reasons, he had issues with the role of leading the vision development. He preferred using the words of “organizer” or “convener” of the process.

Councilor Kounelis – She agreed with Member Hecht and raised a concern of having the council president serving as the spokesperson of the council. The council in its regular course of action must approve the council president’s communications by a vote. She did not feel that councilors should be defending statements of the council president who did not receive prior authorization.

Councilor Gannon – He agreed with Councilor Kounelis; he felt the language could be interpreted that the council president should be the only spokesperson for council thereby limiting a councilor’s right to speak. He agreed with Member Hecht’s concerns about being the chief advocate and suggested changing the words “leading the development” to “coordinating the development”.

Councilor Bays – She had the same concerns as those already stated. She liked the word “coordinating”.

Councilor Piccirilli – He was concerned with the language. The council president at every meeting has the opportunity to serve as the council spokesperson under the President’s Report. Any statement of policy is approved by the council; the approval permits the council president to then act as the policy advocate. The council president at any time can make a motion to lead a collaborative effort to create a vision. He was concerned that this language could allow the council president to become a mini mayor.

Mr. Ward suggested the language be removed to prevent any waste of time. This issue might be taken care of in an ordinance or Council Rules.

Councilor Feltner – She stated this illustrates the difficulty of creating a clear definition of the council president’s role. Everyone sees the council president as serving in the ceremonial role, but does this carry over to controversial issues.

Member Ciro – The current language is vague. The town elects the council president as a separate position to do what? The role does need clarification.

Member Fitzpatrick - There is a need to clarify this position and have someone be responsible for the leadership and the vision of the community. There is a need to create more responsibility for the position but not more power. The language should be a starting point and not be dismissed because it is an attempt to respond to

concerns that are being raised. She was disappointed that the council members seem to want to dismiss this attempt at addressing an overall issue. Council President Sideris asked Mr. Ward to come back with tighter language on this section.

Mr. Oates – He believed that this language fits into a category of helping leaders lead. A frustration has been raised by all participants of not having ability to do things. The concerns raised are valid, but there should be language that helps raise the level of leadership for the council president.

In the public comment:

Ilana Mainelli – Returning to the previous section, she understood the concern of overburdening the councilors with a meeting but thought it could be made more flexible so that the councilor is talking to the voters. She favored any two-way communication; she would prefer more communication rather than dwell on the format. She would like the district meetings emphasis to be on the constituents allowing them to be heard and not overwhelmed.

Elodia Thomas – She agreed that each councilor has their own style and this should be considered. Requiring the annual meetings is over legislating and overprescribing. It is a matter of providing communication. In relation to the powers of the council president, she felt the council president has more than a ceremonial role. There have been situations such as the Marathon Bombing, the Arsenal Street lights failure, and the Covid response when the town was looking for a spokesperson who will provide information and regular updates to situations. The spokesperson should be the council president and not a department employee that many people do not know. She suggested using the word coordinating public policy and vision as the role of the council president.

Chris Penland – He supported the powers and duties section; it should not be written off because it speaks to an issue residents are concerned about. These duties and responsibilities should be an expectation for someone holding the office; the listing is not unreasonable. Every councilor can share their specific position, but with the president being elected, there does not seem to be a problem giving that person the responsibility. The council president should be someone that the public can turn to.

Councilor Bays - She had some concerns with the language but felt the Town needs someone to articulate the vision of the council and to speak to the community during emergencies. There is value in strengthening the role of the council president.

Council President Sideris stated Mr. Ward would work on the wording and provide another draft for the next meeting. He then went on to the Q&A

- Jackie – Because the Council President is elected, there should be some language included that allows the council president to facilitate the leadership role in the vision, oversight, etc.
- The council president is elected because the voters appreciate how that person addresses community concerns and discusses issues

Councilor Palomba moved to accept Section 2-10 subsection (a) as written; Councilor Piccirilli withdrew his motion and seconded this motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

The language adopted read:

“In addition to the annual budget meeting described in Section 5-1 and any other meetings the council creates by ordinance, the council shall hold the following meetings:

- (a) State of the Town: The council president, in conjunction with the town manager, shall prepare and deliver a yearly message to the residents describing the state of the town. The message will address the financial state of the town, strengths of the town, and areas that need attention, as well as potential opportunities for the betterment of the town.”

Councilor Palomba moved accept Section 2-10 subsection (b) as written; Member Mello seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote. The adopted language read:

- “(b) Annual Open Public Forum: The council president shall convene at least 1 meeting of the general public each year for the purpose of obtaining public input to the policies of the town. The meeting agenda and format shall be determined by the town council but shall be designed to facilitate 2-way communication between the town government and residents. Members of the public may submit potential items for the agenda of the meeting in accordance with rules adopted by the town council. The public shall be given at least 14 days’ notice of the date and time of such meeting.”

Councilor Palomba moved to accept Section 2-10 subsection (c) as written; Councilor Piccirilli seconded the motion.

Member Ciro – She asked if language was needed to provide for more flexibility as to how the meetings were conducted.

Councilor Piccirilli – He was comfortable with the language as written because it provides sufficient flexibility.

Member Fitzpatrick – She agreed that the language as written is flexible.

The motion was adopted 12-2 on a roll call vote. All members voted in the affirmative except for Councilor Kounelis and Member Hecht.

The language as adopted read:

- “(c) Individual Councilor Meetings: Each at large and district councilor shall convene at least 1 meeting each year open to all residents. The meeting agenda and format shall be determined by each councilor but shall be designed to facilitate 2-way communication between the councilor and residents. Members of the public may submit potential items for the agenda of the meeting in accordance with rules adopted by the town council. The public shall be given at least 14 days’ notice of the date and time of such meeting. Councilors shall schedule these meetings in a way that prevents more than one from occurring at the same date and time.”

Mr. Ward introduced language that would allow the council president to delegate a member to serve on the school committee.

Council President Sideris stated that after having had several opportunities to serve on the school committee, he felt this should not change. As an elected official, he has been able to facilitate better discussion between the school committee, the superintendent, and the administration on several issues including budgets and town activities and concerns. To appoint someone would be less effective as it does not carry the same authority as the council president. While the position may at times be burdensome, it is a responsibility anyone running for council president is aware of. He would not favor such a change.

Member Ciro – She pointed out that the language the delegation is an option but not a requirement. She is comfortable with the language.

Member Hecht – He was very uncomfortable with the delegation of power because the delegate would be a voting member of the school committee and would not be the person elected to fulfill that position. Being an elected member of the school committee is a responsibility that comes with the job. This is a critical seventh member of the committee and the option to delegate that power is not acceptable.

Member Fitzpatrick – While she shared the concerns raised, she felt there is a greater concern with burdening the council president with so much responsibility. It is necessary to unbundle some of these responsibilities to allow someone else to take on the position. She offered some suggestions such as the vice president serving in that position or whoever is there should be receive the stipend for serving on the School Committee. She agreed that this is a critical seventh vote and the language needs to be considered carefully.

Councilor Kounelis – She is uncomfortable with the language. When one runs for the council president, that person is aware of the dual function of council president and school committee member. If there were a designee, there would be a need to change the charter to indicate the compensation would be paid to the designee.

Councilor Piccirilli - He did not support the proposed language. The council president is the one person who speaks to the vision and the direction of the town. The school department is about half of the budget and is a major consumer of the budget. The election of the council president is a chance for the voters to have a person who provides a unified community vision that includes the schools; a designee would be someone who has not expressed an opinion on the schools and education. This is a responsibility that should not be outsourced; the council president has a critical bridging role between the administration and the schools. It would be a mistake to adopt the language.

Councilor Feltner – She was in favor of the language because she is not comfortable with the council president serving as a voting member of school committee.

Councilor Donato - He did not agree with the proposed language. When one is voting for someone, they want to know where that person stands on the issues. When there are multiple people running for council president, the voters consider all of the candidates' positions including the school related issues.

Mr. Martin – After hearing Council President Sideris's comments, he changed his mind on this issue and does not support the designee.

Councilor Gannon – In the past there has not been a contested seat for Council President. The Charter has created a super position. Due to the heavy responsibilities given the council president, it hinders more people from running. There is a need to create a competitive situation and delegation would allow for that.

Council President went to the public comments:

David Stokes – As a member of the School Committee, he agreed the council president has acted as a bridge among the parties

Elodia Thomas – The School budget is the major portion of budget; there is a need for an intermediary between town council, the administration, and the school committee. This change is an empty overreach for change and is unwarranted.

Rita Colifello – Asked if there were any defects in this relationship. Council President Sideris stated that he did not see any defects.

Councilor Gannon moved to approve the change as designated in Mr. Ward's text; Member Ciro seconded the motion.

Discussion of the matter continued.

Councilor Feltner – She suggested including the requirement the council president report back to the town council. Council President Sideris clarified where the language should be included – Should it be in the new language if passed or in the current language if it does not pass. She felt that it should be included whether or not the language is adopted. Council President Sideris offered including the words “on a periodic basis, the council president shall provide an update to the town council an update on school committee matters.”

Member Fitzpatrick – She wanted to ensure that compensation for serving on the school committee would go to the designee if there is one. She agreed that there should be a report back to the town council on school committee matters.

The motion failed on a vote of 2 – 12. All members voted in the negative except for Councilor Gannon and Member Ciro who voted in the affirmative.

Council President Sideris asked Mr. Ward to include the language regarding a report to the town council should be included for which the Committee can take up in the next meeting.

Mr. Ward moved onto Article 3 for consideration. He suggested a change in the Section 3-1 (a) by striking the words that the Town Manager would “serve for an indefinite term of office.” This would clarify town council – town manager relationship.

Councilor Gannon – This language is clear, and he endorsed it because having the current language and a contract are mutually exclusive.

Member Ciro moved to accept the language as modified; Councilor Piccirilli seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

3-1 (b) Qualifications He suggested striking the language which has a residency requirement for the town manager's position. Such language has a dampening impact on the pool of candidates. People may be interested in the position but may not want to change communities, especially if they have children. The era of long-term managers is over; the average tenure now is in the 6-8-10 year range.

Member Mello moved to strike the language; Member Ciro seconded the motion.

Councilor Kounelis – She understood the intent of the language but feels it should not be an open-ended statement and would be more comfortable with a statement that the town manager reside within a 10-20 mile radius. This position needs someone who can be readily available.

Councilor Feltner – She raised a similar concern. Mr. Ward understood the concern but felt the manager's performance would reflect an inability to perform if distance became an issue. Most people who apply will reside in the Greater Boston area or be willing to move to the area. These concerns can be addressed with the recruiter when looking to fill the position.

Councilor Kounelis – She did not want to give a carte blanche and would not be able to support the change stated.

Councilor Feltner – She made a friendly amendment stating if the town manager resides outside of Massachusetts, that person would establish residence in Massachusetts within twelve months. Member Mello was willing to accept the suggested change.

Member Fitzpatrick – She felt that traffic would be a significant issue and was concerned that those just outside the limitation would be eliminated. She preferred to leave the language open.

Member Hecht – He agreed with the removal of the language. People need to realize the town council will make the decision on hiring a town manager. The council would take such factors as the person's ability to be present and be accessible into account.

Member Oates – He concurred with removing the language. He has had experience with recruiting high level people for governmental positions and believes that the Town should cast the broadest net for the best candidates.

Councilor Donato – He felt the committee should move forward with the original language.

Councilor Gannon – He concurred with the elimination of the residency requirement.

Councilor Piccirilli – He concurred with previous statements to make any residency requirement.

In the Q&A, there was support for the radius requirement; others believed it was not relevant.

The motion to remove the language was moved. The motion passed 13-1. All members voted in the affirmative except for Councilor Kounelis who voted in the negative.

The language that was removed read: "The town manager need not be a resident of Watertown at the time of his or her appointment, nor the Commonwealth, but the town manager shall establish residence in Watertown within twelve months following his or her appointment unless excused from such requirement by the town council."

Mr. Ward then suggested adding a sentence after the first sentence in Section 3-2 that read: "The town manager shall be responsible for implementation of policies established by the town council, as reflected in the town council's votes and resolutions and in ordinances, appropriation orders, and loan authorizations." The purpose of this language is to clarify the relationship between the town council and the town manager.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to approve the suggested language; Councilor Gannon seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

Mr. Ward suggested adding a bullet to the enumerated powers and duties of the town manager after sub section (13) to read:

"(14) Be responsible for Town government communications, in coordination with the council president, including, but not limited to, developing a comprehensive communication strategy, coordinating the announcements and messages from

department heads, communicating regularly, via all available media avenue, with residents, and soliciting recommendations for greater communication from residents.”

Member Mello moved to adopt the suggested language; Councilor Piccirilli seconded the motion.

Member Fitzpatrick – There should be a place for language that the website be kept up to date; the insert could be: “The website must be kept up-to-date including calendar agenda, committee members, terms, minutes, and Town organization chart.” Mr. Ward raised the concern that it may contain too much detail for a Charter. Council President Sideris suggested adding the phrase “ensuring that all aspects of the town’s website are kept up-to-date”.

Member Oates – He felt this was too detailed; however, Member Fitzpatrick believed that it was important to include such language.

Member Hecht - He asked what the intent was for the phrase “in coordination with the council president” when providing communication. Mr. Ward stated the language was used when the committee was considering having the council president serve as the spokesperson for council; the purpose was there was to prevent conflicting messages.

Councilor Gannon - He mentioned that there is a request in the budget for a social media coordinator and keeping the website current would be a responsibility of that person. He spoke against overmanaging operations through the charter.

Member Ciro – She stated there should be some statement regarding communication being coordinated with the town council because it is important to see both parties working together on communications.

Councilor Feltner – There is a separation of powers between the executive and the legislative; she had misgivings about adding the language regarding communication coordination. The council president should not be speaking with one voice if the town manager and the town council have a conflict.

Elodia Thomas stated the language should not be weighed down with detail and that changes are coming about with the hiring of people in the IT Department.

Councilor Gannon – He supported having the town manager providing communication in coordination of the council.

Councilor Palomba – He would remove the language “in coordination with the council president” and he would not support the inclusion of the website because it is part of the communication strategy. Council President Sideris stated that the website would come under the umbrella of the “via all available media avenues”

Member Ciro – She agreed that the website need not be included but it would be helpful to have a statement that the information must be kept up-to-date or be timely.

Councilor Piccirilli – He agreed with Councilor Palomba that the website is part of the communication strategy; it should not be listed separately as if it were not part of the strategy. He suggested inserting the word “timely” so that the phrase would read “developing a timely and comprehensive communication strategy”; that language captures the intent of improved communication. He suggested removing the phrasing of in coordination with the council president because the town manager takes direction from town council. When the section is read in totality, all listed duties are completed in coordination with the town council.

Member Fitzpatrick – She concurred with the removal of in coordination with the council; however, she felt the website was more than an avenue for media and needed to be included in the language. The website is the town’s home on the internet, a home for documents, a knowledge base, a catalog of history. Because of its significance. The website should be specifically included.

Councilor Feltner – She mentioned that the website is the vehicle for legal notice of meetings and agendas under the Open Meeting Law and should be up to date. She wondered if including language in the charter would fix the problem and was not sure it should be part of the charter.

Member Oates - He agreed with the importance of the website and understood its need to be kept current; however, he felt this is not a charter issue. It is an administrative issue; there should be penalties for failure to complete a responsibility. If the town manager is seeing to its execution, that becomes an evaluation issue. The mentioning of the website should not be included in charter.

Member Ciro - Based on the conversation, she felt there is need to include language regarding the website. Maybe a comment should be included saying it is the legal voice of the town and needs to be kept up to date.

The discussion went to the public:

Devon Scott – She favored language that would language stating “including the website but not limited to” especially if the website is the legal method of communication. Failure to do so is a performance management issue and should be in the person’s evaluation. Stating it in the charter may help solve some problems.

#### Q&A

- The municipal website is out of date
- What happened to the request suggesting the publishing and replying to matters raised in the public forum
- In ten years, website might not exist
- As a consumer, if something is out of date, the group is considered less professional
- The inclusion of performance metrics will help

Councilor Piccirilli made a motion to accept the proposed language for paragraph (14) as amended; Councilor Gannon seconded the motion.

Councilor Palomba – He made a motion to remove the language “in coordination with the council”; Member Fitzpatrick seconded the motion.

Councilor Gannon – It is important to leave the language intact; the town manager should be working with the town council to develop a comprehensive communication strategy. The town council should not be left out of the process because it will result in a weakened strategy.

The motion was adopted on a roll call vote of 9-5. All members voted in the affirmative except for Councilors Donato, Gannon, and Kounelis, Member Ciro, and Council President Sideris.

Chris – He supported the need for timeliness in maintaining the website. It is the place where legal notices are recorded and is a primary source that needs to be maintained with care and diligence. The question of who is responsible for maintenance rests with the town manager and the evaluators because timeliness and accuracy is critical for

making decisions. Digital communication is critical to the infrastructure of the town, and ours has been increasing at a glacial pace. There is a need for accountability.

The motion to adopt the language as amended was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

The language regarding the town manager's duties reads:

"Be responsible for Town government communications, including, but not limited to, developing a timely and comprehensive communication strategy, coordinating the announcements and messages from department heads, communicating regularly, via all available media avenue, with residents, ensuring that all aspects of the Town's website are kept up-to-date, and soliciting recommendations for greater communication from residents."

Mr. Ward – He proposed discussing 3-6 (a). In order to have transparency and accountability, there is a need to strengthen the evaluating and assessing process. It is important to clarify this process, but the charter is not right place to do this. He suggested rewriting section 3-6 (a) to state:

(a) The town council shall conduct an annual review of the town manager's job performance in a manner provided by ordinance.

The ordinance would determine a process that is clear and stable, and it would build in some consistent structure.

Councilor Piccirilli – He informed the Committee that he would be leaving the meeting at 8:45 p.m. He then moved to adopt the language; Member Mello seconded the motion.

Councilor Gannon - He supported the language

Councilor Palomba – He disagreed stating the language was too broad and suggested the evaluation could be done by ordinance with detailing some metrics in the charter: The annual evaluation would determine the degree that the town manager achieved the goals and strategies presented at the annual meeting; the degree the assistant manager and department heads achieved those goals; the degree of communication with residents that occurred; and the degree the town manager had instituted the orders and resolutions of the town council. These measures could serve as the base for metrics of an ordinance.

Member Oates – The creation of an ordinance is not a problem; however, he asked if the charter needed to provide the nudge to reflect and influence what the ordinance will look like.

Councilor Feltner – The ordinance is the place to hash out the details. While an ordinance may take time to change, it may be very too difficult to change if there is a clash with the charter language.

Member Fitzpatrick – The metric suggestions were strong and she liked them, but she wondered if the inclusion was handcuffing the town. She strongly advocated for language that would permit public input.

Councilor Piccirilli - Without seeing the language of the metrics stated, it was hard to vote on. Any ordinance by law requires a public hearing. He agreed with the points raised regarding the evaluation, but it should be in an ordinance because he did not want to bog down future councils. Member Fitzpatrick clarified that she wanted to include public input in the evaluation.

Councilor Gannon – There seems to be a reluctance to accept that the town council would add public input into an ordinance; therefore, he suggested adding the phrase “with opportunities for public input” after the word “performance”. Mr. Ward suggested Language to read:

(a) The town council shall conduct an annual review of the town manager’s job performance in a manner provided by ordinance. This review shall include opportunities for public input.

Councilor Gannon was comfortable with this change.

Councilor Palomba - He suggested adding the following language:

(a) The town council shall conduct an annual review of the town manager’s job performance in a manner provided by ordinance that includes specific metrics regarding goals and strategies, communication, and engagement. This review shall include opportunities for public input.

It establishes a tighter evaluation method.

Member Ciro - She liked the simplicity of the changes and supported it.

Devon – She supported the language because it pushes accountability for performance management, a difficult thing to do. The public has the opportunity to provide input, but it does not control the process.

Council President Sideris - He asked Mr. Ward to review the language and ensure that it is appropriate and consistent with the Charter. The Committee would vote on the language at the next meeting.

Mr. Ward went on to the inclusion of language and began discussion of language regarding a Residents’ Advisory Committee to the charter. The language was basically adopted from the Amherst Charter. It addresses the issues of transparency and increased communication and ensures that a wide variety of voices are represented in government. It addresses concerns about people being given the opportunity to participate and the ability to attract people who are not aware of positions in government. The council would still retain the power to confirm or reject any candidate for a position and that language does not encroach on that responsibility.

Council President Sideris stated the matter would be considered at the next meeting.

4. Proceed through Articles 2 and 3 Chronologically for Other Items Raised by Committee Members
5. Begin Discussion of Remaining Articles with Potentially Non-Controversial Topics
6. Begin Proceeding Through Remaining Articles (Preamble 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9) for Other Items Raised by Committee Members
7. Preamble Committee Update  
Councilor Palomba mentioned that a final draft would be submitted for the June 15, 2021 meeting.

In the Q&A, a question was raised about the council president reporting back to the town council about school committee meetings. Council President Sideris stated it does not happen as often as it should. As the charter gets cleared up, this may be a periodic update to the council and the community.

8. Next Meeting – June 15, 2021

Mr. Ward stated the Committee needs to continue its work rapidly as the timeline for the ability to be on the ballot is soon approaching.

When asked, he stated the only item that might require legislative action would be any changes in the council president's duties.

9. Adjournment

Member Mello moved to adjourn the meeting; Councilor Gannon seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

The [questions and answers](#) for this meeting are available for viewing.

Minutes were prepared by Marilyn W. Pronovost.