

**Charter Review Advisory Committee
Charlestown Town Hall, Council Chambers
4540 S County Trail, Charlestown, RI 02813
June 25, 2018**

Minutes

1. Call to order 7pm by Chairman Larry Dunn
2. Roll Call: Larry Dunn, Marge Frank and Jan Knost all present
3. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the May 30, 2018 meeting. It passed unanimously.
4. Discussion and potential action concerning the solicitation of proposals for changes to the Charlestown Town Charter.
 - a. Chairman Dunn had a meeting with the Town Administrator who educated us on the time restraint in order to get a question on the November, 2018 ballot.
 1. All proposed revisions must be sent to the Town Council for the July 9th meeting in order to possibly have each the Town Council and the Charter Review Advisory Committee hold public hearings before forwarding the charter revisions to the state by August 8, 2018
 2. Dr. Dunn stated that a message was left for the Administrator to solicit input from the employees, but he did not hear back from the Administrator.
 3. After much discussion, in order to meet the above deadline another meeting of the Charter Review Advisory Committee will occur on June 28 if posted and if the Town Solicitor is available.
 4. The following concerns were discussed as brought up by the citizens:
 - a. Nonpartisan elections: after a discussion which included the fact there is no longer a party lever it was moved and seconded to keep present system in place. The motion passed unanimously.
 - b. Need to have registered Charlestown voters 18 years or older serve on the boards and commissions. After a discussion, a motion was made: All voting members on boards and commission shall be domicile and eligible to vote in the Town of Charlestown. This was seconded and passed unanimously.
 - c. Appointed Planning Commission versus elected Planning Committee. After much discussion a motion was made and seconded to maintain an elected Planning Commission. The motion passed by a vote of 2 to 1.
 - d. Method of filling a vacancy on the Town Council with less than a year until the next election. After a lengthy discussion, a motion was made to amend Article vic-24 regarding Town Council vacancies that occur with less than one year of the term remaining to require the Town Council to announce the vacancy and solicit applications from interested persons. The following month a public hearing will be held and each of the applicants will be interviewed in public by the Town Councilors and then the applicant will be chosen by the Town Council. This motion was seconded and passed unanimously.
 - e. Amend Article XXVI-C86 of the Charter to require the Town Council proposed warrant items to be consistent with the restriction placed on voter-initiated referendums. Specifically that any Town Council proposed warrant items be

voted upon at regularly scheduled general elections. However, in case of emergency the Town Council will be allowed to present warrant items at the Financial Referendum. This was tabled until the Solicitor could meet with the Charter Review Advisory Committee.

- f. Town Council terms to be staggered in order to have an increased level of consistency on our government. A suggestion of 2 candidates with the most votes receive a 4 year term. Next election 3 top vote getters would get 4 year terms and so forth. This matter was tabled until the solicitor is available to meet with the Charter Review Advisory Committee.
- g. Items which the Charter Review Advisory Committee felt should be handled be “Rules for conducting business” established by the Town Council keeping in mind that all the Councilors are equal:
 - 1. Attendance requirements
 - 2. Motion made and seconded that the Town Council President be elected by the 5 Council members, not by popular vote. This was seconded and passed unanimously.
 - 3. Agenda setting meeting insuring all members and people’s concerns are placed before the entire Town Council. Need an explanation of “Informal agenda setting meeting” to the Town Administrator, Solicitor, Town Clerk and Council President prior to the agenda setting meeting. There appears to be a need for transparency.
- h. Budget process to stay as Financial Referendum. Chairman will follow up.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marjorie Frank
June 27, 2018

APPROVED July 23, 2018