



Town of Burlington

CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES Monday, March 9, 2020 – Burlington Town Hall

1. Call Meeting to Order:

The meeting convened at 7:35 p.m., Monday, March 9, 2020. Present were: Dave Goshdigan, Chairman, Tony DiNicola, Vice Chairman, Toni Vosburgh, Secretary, Barry Faticoni and Laurie Gara, members, and Ginger Doherty and Jeff Vosburgh, alternate members. Jeff Vosburgh sat in for other member.

2. Citizen Comment:

There was no citizen comment.

3. Acceptance of February 10, 2020 Meeting Minutes:

Motion made (TD), seconded (BF) and passed unanimously to accept meeting minutes.

4. General Review of Charter Sections:

General Comments – Ginger Doherty suggested the committee revisit Chapter 7 Section 7-2 Preliminary Budget Estimate. The committee originally proposed adding language to default budget proposals to previous year's budget amount if certain criteria were not met. Ginger suggested we modify the language to specify that the consequence of not meeting certain criteria/ use of standardized form would instead be a default budget at the discretion of the Board of Finance. The purpose of this change would be to avoid a scenario where a department had a one-off high line item one year that could potentially over inflate a default budget the following year.

Ginger also kindly looked up the definitions of Board & Commission, two terms frequently used in the Charter. A Board is a group that manages something (i.e. Board of Selectman manages the town). A Commission is a group charged with a specific task (i.e. Charter Review Commission to review Charter). Ginger suggested the committee keep these definitions in mind when reviewing the Charter.

Section 7-8. Expenditures and Accounting – The committee questioned who was meant by "authorized agents" and if the term specifically applied to a Selectman acting in the absence or inability of First Selectman or Town Treasurer. The committee suggested adding language to Chapter 4 Board of Selectman to specify how a Selectman is chosen in case of incapacity of 1st Selectman or Town Treasurer.

The committee also considered adding punitive language such as "Any unauthorized purchase is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination" in the case of unauthorized purchases in the third paragraph of this Section. It was also suggested that this type of language be added in Chapter 1 – Incorporation and General Powers and

worded more generally to encompass all of Charter, such as “Any violation of rules of Charter may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.” Another suggestion by the committee is to separate the last paragraph in this section into two paragraphs beginning with “Any payment made in violation...” and update “may be removed” to “may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.” In addition, it was suggested to change “this chapter” to ‘Section 7-8.’

The committee also discussed modifying the fourth paragraph to remove Board approval requirement for transferring funds from one line item to another when within approved budget. Instead the suggestion by the committee was to get input from the Board, require any changes in line items to be identified in following year’s preliminary budget, and submit a document of change to the Director of Finance to be kept on record. The purpose of this change would be to eliminate tediousness of going to the Board when the purchases are still within the budget.

The committee also considered combining the 5th and 6th paragraphs of this section into one paragraph for clarity. There were general questions by the committee as to whether the terms “total budget” and “annual budget” meant the overall town budget or individual department, board, etc. budgets. In addition, the committee suggested changing “Municipal Reserve Fund” to “municipal reserve funds” in consideration of the town having multiple reserve funds in practice.

In reference to the 7th paragraph of this section, the committee suggested clarifying if the threshold amount is determined at Annual Town Meeting or any Town Meeting. The committee also discussed adding requirement that threshold amount be kept on file by the Board of Finance. The committee will consult with First Selectman Ted Schafer for more information regarding how amount is set and what procedures are currently in place.

Section 7-10. Auditors – The committee discussed adding language to mandate the selection of auditor go out to bid upon termination of each contract.

Section 8-4. Procedure – There are currently three exterior signposts located in the following places: Lake Garda, Whigville, and Collinsville. While the committee does agree with the Board that these exterior signposts are outdated, the procedures for public notice are mandated by the State of Connecticut. However, the Charter does not specify three public places, nor does the State. The committee unanimously agreed that the Board can limit the public notice location to one location without any changes to the Charter.

Section 8-6. Actions Requiring a Town Meeting – The committee will reach out to First Selectman, Ted Schafer for clarification on this section.

5. New Business:

There was no new business.

6. Adjourn:

Motion made (TD), seconded (LG) and passed unanimously to adjourn meeting at 9:23PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Toni Vosburgh
Secretary, Charter Review Committee