

## Introduction to the Workshop held September 14, 2020

We are The Charter Review Group, formerly known as the Charter Review Committee.

Our mission is to review the Town Charter and update as necessary to keep up with the changes in standard practices and technology as our Community continues to grow and evolve.

Every ten years the Town Charter tasks the Selectmen with appointing a Charter Review Committee. Unfortunately, we were not appointed until Fall of 2019. We started weekly meetings in November with an 8 member Committee and continued our work after a hiatus of 4 months due to Covid as a Group of 7.

The Committee had several goals we established at the outset, and we believe we have accomplished those. We hoped to make the document known as the charter more clear, concise, user friendly and up-to-date, incorporating and clarifying any previously approved changes. There are some obvious changes in that we are recommending creating appendices which contain the original charter reports, the description of how the Charter was adopted at town meeting and by ballot, and the summaries of changes to the document made to date which were previously inserted in the document, but not a part of it. These appendices represent the history of the charter, but not the content.

For the Fall Town Meeting we will be submitting two articles for approval, one which represents housekeeping or editorial changes to the document, and the second which contains substantive changes to the document. This format of two articles has been discussed with Town Counsel as well as the Moderator, and is, we believe, the least cumbersome way of recommending the changes we believe are necessary.

Our first article incorporates all those changes that may be primarily deemed editorial: such as capitalization, punctuation, formatting, word order, repair of scrivener's errors, and spelling. Those changes are documented in a chart on file in the Town Clerk's office, as well as on line.

Our second article contains the substantive changes we are recommending, and those changes are also on file with the Town Clerk and on the website. Those changes include:

- 1 Amending the Charter's different sections that deal with when the Fall Town Meeting shall be held,
- 2 Changes the membership of the Capital planning committee by substituting the Town Finance Director for the Town Accountant,
- 3 Adding the words Sewer Commissioners as elective officers
- 4 Rewriting the section dealing with the Board of Assessors to correctly reflect the duties and responsibilities of the elected body as well as the director of assessment
- 5 Recommending the Town Clerk become an appointed position, appointed by the Town Administrator,
- 6 Specifies the appointment of the sewer superintendent be made by the Town Administrator
- 7 Recommending the Board of Road Commissioners be abolished which duties will revert to the Board of Selectmen,
- 8 Specifies that the BOS only have the opportunity to affirm or deny the appointment of department heads made by the Town Administrator

- 9 Clarifying the language concerning the proposed removal of a Town Administrator
- 10 Adding language enabling more regular review of the Charter, to ensure timeliness,
- 11 Clarifying the procedures and record keeping and meetings of multiple member bodies
- 12 Adding definitions of terms used in the document
- 13 Clarifying the removal or suspension of employees
- 14 Removing the section referring to the executive secretary to BOS
- 15 Removing the no-section last sentence referring to publication.

Madam Moderator has indicated that she will present the two articles we are recommending much the same way she has the Town Budget presented. She will read the heading of the section and ask if there are any holds. If there are, those sections will be held for discussion. Subsequent to the discussions the sections will be voted on.

Again, all of this information may be found in the Town Clerk's Office as well as on the Town of Wareham website.

9-16-2020 read into record at workshop held 9-14-20