

**CHARTER COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
July 6, 2022**

**CALL TO ORDER**– Chairperson Gallagher called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM with members Lorraine Bernier, Arthur Berry, Gayle Chick, Suzette Moulton, James Porter, Stephen Robinson, and James Walker, Jr. present. Member Barbara Merrill was absent with notification.

**PUBLIC HEARING** – Member Berry move to open the public hearing at 6:32 PM. Member Chick seconded the motion. Discussion: This public hearing is to get the viewpoints of the public on what they would or would not like the Charter Commission to consider for changes to the Town Charter.

Vote: 8-yes 0-no

Nikki Pratt, Deputy Town Manager presented a marked-up copy of the Charter, attached to these minutes, describing what the Board of Selectpersons and Departments of the Town would like to see changed. The major item is to change town meeting from an in-person April, Saturday morning event to a referendum vote to be held concurrent with the State elections the second Tuesday in June. This suggestion includes offering two public hearings prior to signing of the warrant to give the public time to ask questions or be involved with the process. Other language changes relate directly to if the Town Meeting Referendum process is voted in the affirmative aligning other items to the new timeline. The other recommendation stated was to allow nomination papers to be accepted pursuant with the timeline given by MRSA Title 30-A which makes them due back to the Town Clerk 60 days prior to the election.

Chris Bithers, resident of the Town explained why he is not in favor of switching to a referendum vote. He feels that he would rather see 50 educated voters vote on the warrant articles than a larger amount who show up for an election but haven't done any research. He explains that if the town meeting does go to referendum style he would like to see recommendations omitted from the ballot so they do not sway voters one way or another. He also recommended that changing the Charter to state town meeting is to be held in June could be an advantage rather than changing the process.

Stanley Tetenman, Board of Selectpersons Member explained that he felt that moving forward with the referendum is ideal and that during the public hearings townspeople can still come in and get there questions answered.

Jane Pentheny, Board of Selectpersons Vice-Chair explained that she is in favor of changing town meeting to a referendum vote giving those who are not able to attend, due to mobility or other issues, a voice on the voting that takes place.

Fred Barlow, resident of the Town explained he would like to see town meeting stay as it is and that he likes the process that someone can get up and have a voice at town meeting and maybe influence others who are unsure about a decision.

Member Berry moved to close the public hearing at 7:04 PM. Member Porter seconded the motion. Discussion: None

Vote: 8-yes 0-no

**ADJOURN** – Member Robinson moved to adjourn. Vice Chair Moulton seconded the motion. Discussion: None

Vote: 8-yes 0-no

Recorded by: Nikki M. Pratt