

**Charter Review Committee (CRC)**  
**Town of Groton, Groton, MA 01450 978-448-1111**

**Meeting Minutes - May 3, 2017**  
At First Floor Meeting Room, Groton Town Hall

**Present (5):** Jane Allen, John Giger (Secretary), Michael Manugian (Chair), Michael McCoy, Bud Robertson (Vice-Chair)

**Not Present:** Robert Collins, Stuart Schulman

**Recorder:** Stephen Legge

**Visitors:** Judy Anderson

**Call to Order:** Chairman Manugian called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

**Mr. Robertson moved to approve the meeting minutes of April 19th, 2017, as written.** Ms. Allen seconded. A vote was taken and the minutes were approved unanimously.

**Purposes of the Meeting:**

Mr. Manugian announced the purposes of this meeting were to ensure the final revised Charter reflected the results of the two Spring Town Meeting amendments and that this final revision was formally approved by the Committee. Town Meeting had passed two amendments to the revised Charter on Monday evening May 1, 2017 reflecting changes to Sections 3.2.6 and 4.3.

Mr. Manugian had sent clean and flagged drafts reflecting the Town Meeting amendments to the Committee this afternoon. The new versions were Release 1.3, dated May 2, 2017. He also sent the wording of the amendments passed by Town Meeting. It is as follows:

**Amendment, Section 3.2.6** - "I move to amend the main motion by inserting after the words 'Spring Town Meeting' subject to the following revision: deleting the text of Subsection 3.2.6 and inserting the following new text:

Day to Day Business - Except in the case of an emergency, nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize any member of the Board of Selectmen, nor a majority of its members, to become involved in the day-to-day administration of any Town board, department or agency."

**Amendment, Section 4.3** - "I move to amend the main motion by inserting after the words 'Spring Town Meeting' words subject to the following revision: replacing 'three members' in Subsections 4.3.1, 4.3.1.1, and 4.3.1.3 with the words 'four members'".

## **Discussion of the Final Charter Revision and Roll Call Vote:**

In Section 4.3.1.3, Mr. Schulman found an error in Line 2, no space after the paragraph number.  
In Section 3.2.6, Mr. McCoy found a comma missing after the word “department”.  
In Section 4.2.5, Mr. McCoy found an error in Line 1, an extra space after the words “fire chief”.

Mr. Manugian asked for a roll call vote to accept the final version of the revised Charter, as amended by Town Meeting, including the three corrections just presented.

**Mr. Robertson moved to accept the final version of the revised Charter, as amended by Town Meeting.** Ms Allen seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Ms. Allen voted yes, Mr. Giger voted yes, Mr. Manugian voted yes, Mr. McCoy voted yes, and Mr. Robertson voted yes. The revised Charter as amended by Spring Town Meeting was approved unanimously.

**Action Item #1:** Mr. Manugian will make the final revisions to the revised Charter as amended by Spring Town Meeting and forward the approved revised Charter to the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Manugian declared the Committee had met its charge from the BOS.

## **Administrative:**

**Mr. Giger moved to authorize Mr. Manugian to approve the minutes for this evening so that the Committee would have no need to convene another meeting for that purpose only.** Mr. Robertson seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

**Action Item #2:** Mr. Manugian will send the approved minutes for May 3rd to Mr. Giger who will then see that they are posted.

There was a consensus that no action items previous to this meeting remained open.

**Action Item #3:** Mr. Manugian will send an email to the BOS requesting that the Charter Review Committee be informed of progress on the steps taken as the revised Charter progresses to the state legislature and is acted upon by the various parties.

The Committee agreed by consensus to shut off its email address at townofgroton.org.

**Action Item #4:** Mr. Giger will ensure the Committee’s Town email address is shut down.

Mr. Manugian invited Committee members and other persons present to offer their comments about the process the Committee has undergone in the last two years since it was formed.

Visitor Ms. Anderson: The Committee worked long and hard for the last two years and should be proud of its accomplishment. By permitting and even encouraging reconsiderations of past decisions – sometimes agreeing with past decisions, and other times reversing course - the Committee developed an excellent and thoughtful process for making complicated decisions.

Mr. Robertson: The Committee members were dedicated and promoted a fair and transparent process for decision making.

Mr. McCoy: He enjoyed his time on the Committee. He felt that Mr. Manugian as Chair and Mr. Giger as Clerk were a unique, hard-working, and truly effective combination in ensuring the Committee made progress and kept on track with its process and decision making. He suggested that a future such endeavor might wish to adopt a rolling (cumulative) action item list to replace the process this Committee had where action item lists were attached to specific meetings.

Mr. Giger: He felt that the Committee had succeeded in keeping the public well informed and well involved in the decision making process throughout. He questioned the process by which the Committee approved matters “in concept” and later crafted the specific language to implement such decisions. Noting the occasional reversal of decisions as the Committee reviewed language, he wondered if it was the clearest and cleanest way to do the Committee’s work.

Mr. Legge: The Committee kept the door open too long for the public to make changes, and too close to the Spring Town Meeting presentation of the final draft Charter. As a result, the workload in the last two months was high and the schedule hectic. There was more than enough opportunity for the public to weigh in by the end of January 2017. The Committee, throughout the 23 months of deliberation, had some really excellent debates on the issues. The members offered different and interesting viewpoints, coming to difficult decisions carefully, always, however, weighting the public interest as valuable and first priority. In all his time in association with committees, Mr. Legge felt this one has been the best in terms of a thoughtful and well considered process.

Ms. Allen: The members seemed genuinely motivated to pursue the Town’s interest, not their own private interests. Misters Manugian and Giger put a tremendous amount of effort into the Committee’s work, and undoubtedly made a real difference in how much could be accomplished.

Mr. Manugian: He felt it was one of the best groups, if not the best group, he has ever worked with. He said he could always rely on everyone to do what they said they would do. Also, and very importantly, no one had personal axes to grind.

Ms. Anderson: She said it was extraordinary that the Committee made its presentation to the Town Meeting with such comprehensive and meaningful participation by its members. She felt that this had an impact on voters.

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**Mr. Robertson moved to adjourn the meeting.** Mr. Giger seconded. The Committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:25 PM.

**\*\* Tonight’s meeting is expected to be the last scheduled meeting of the Charter Review Committee 2015-17. No further meetings are scheduled. \*\***