

Charter Study Committee
Regular Meeting
September 29, 2011
Municipal Center - Room 302

Minutes

PRESENT: Robert Berube, Stephen Martino, Scott Saunders, Thomas Warnat, Christopher Wazorko

ABSENT: Richard Drezek, Robert Cornish

STAFF: Robert E. Lee, Town Manager, Daniel Grasso, Intern

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of the September 15 was made by Mr. Saunders.

Second by: Mr. Berube

All those in favor 5, Opposed 0, Motion passed unanimously.

3. Discussion of Town Charter

Mr. Martino arrived at approximately 6:45

Public comment was allowed. Four members of the public offered comment.

There was a discussion on the merits of combining the Town and Education financial functions (payroll and accounts payable) to eliminate duplication of services. Mr. Lee stated that he was still awaiting a legal opinion from the Town Attorney. Mr. Lee stated that he would provide them with information from people who have worked in towns with combined finance functions at the October 20th meeting. Mr. Lee will invite Rob Buden who worked in a combined finance office in Portland prior to working in Plainville.

A discussion followed on the reasons for low voter turnout at the budget referendums. Some discussion focused on whether the Council needs to do a better job of educating the voters about what is actually in the budget.

The Committee decided to discuss the following items at the October 20,2011 meeting:

- Returning to the town meeting format
- Combining the Education and Town finance functions
- Four-year over-lapping terms for Town Council
- Whether to elect Constables
- Duties of the manager allow Manager to adjust Education budget when presenting his budget recommendation
- Consider mandatory budget reduction if vote fails
- Change the 3rd budget vote (elimination or allow Town Council to make final adjustment)
- Quorum before being rejected on an all-day vote
- Council to approve budget
- Eliminate all-day vote

The Committee decided to propose the following changes to the Charter to the Town Council.

- Posting a summary rather than an entire ordinance in the newspaper
- Eliminating the language that states Planning and Zoning shall put together the capital improvement budget since the Town Manager is doing it now
- Changing Dog Warden to Animal Control Officer
- Clarifying language regarding joining regional health districts
- Changing the budget public hearing schedule

Motion was made by Mr. Saunders to cancel the October 6, 2011 meeting.

Second by Mr. Wazorko

All those in favor 6, opposed 0, Motion passed unanimously.

4. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Mr. Wazorko

Second by: Mr. Berube

All those in favor 6, all those opposed 0, Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Submitted by,

Daniel Grass, Intern