

Town Charter Commission Organizational Meeting Freedom, Maine

Minutes of March 28, 2022

Present: Tyler Hadyniak, Maryann Bennett, Joseph Freeman Sr., William Pickford, Eleanor MacMakin, Phil Bloomstein, Tim Biggs, Rene Ouellet, Meredith Coffin

Meeting called to order at 6 pm, followed by member introductions.

Brief discussion clarifying a town's charter purpose. This included opportunity for funding and providing orientation to new residents.

Committee rules and procedures addressed.

- Tyler Hadyniak elected as chairman, Maryann Bennett elected as vice-chair, Meredith Coffin elected as secretary with Rene Ouellet as alternate.
- Robert's Rules of Order adopted
- Quorum of 5 identified as needed for full committee meetings.
- Dates of committee meetings will be posted for the public. Tyler H. will put it in the local paper in his column no later than 10 days before the meeting. It will also be posted at the town office and on the town's web site.

Date and times set for future meetings:

- Meeting the first and third Tuesdays , 6-8 pm, beginning April 19, 2022. This is within the 30 day window from the organizational meeting. Next dates are May 3 and 17, June 7 and 21.

Timeline discussion:

- Timeline of the project needs to align with the state statute.
- As funding opportunity is key for Freedom, it was decided to try and present the charter for vote at the November 2022 election day. It is also noted that a final town vote could happen at a special town meeting or at the March 2023 Town meeting.
- Working backwards from November we will need to present a rough draft presentation to the residents in August
- Using resident feedback the draft will be edited and reviewed by our attorney with a final report presentation to selectmen in October
- Final report is then voted on by residents within a month, in November.
- Public hearings on the charter can be set up at our regular committee meeting times.
- Throughout this process the committee will ask the selectmen for feedback to ensure there will no be conflicting statements.
- It was noted that looking at how a charter can be amended in the future is important. It was suggested that we look at Bucksport's charter with this in mind.

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Before the next meeting committee members are asked to become familiar with town charters. An email will be sent where all Maine towns with charters will be listed as well as population of the towns. It is noted that it is important to find charters of towns who have similar forms of government , ie using a selectboard, and clerk. This may be more key than a town of similar size. Steve Bennett will be contacted regarding recent grants he was interested in but couldn't use because of our lack of a charter. This can shed some light on what they might be looking for in a charter.

Respectfully submitted,

Meredith Coffin, secretary