

Town Charter Commission Meeting Freedom, Maine
Minutes of May 17, 2022

Present: Tyler Hadyniak, Mary Ann Bennett, Rene Ouellet, Eleanor MacMakin, Meredith Coffin
Absent: Phil Bloomstein, William Pickford, Joseph Freeman, Tim Biggs

Meeting called to order at 6:04 pm. Quorum achieved.

Review of last meeting minutes. Amendments: first bullet- change “meeting” to “committee,” third bullet – change “fixed” to “decided”, fourth bullet – change “organization” to “format”.

Five typos identified. Tyler moved to accept minutes as amended, Eli seconded. **Motion carried** with 3, abstentions 2.

Discussion:

Rene: what is our task? In 15 years this charter document can show how things work in our town. The charter would have language to say what is done now. But it may also have language that will address the future and how it might work. We need to be very clear in this charter writing if we are adding anything new for the town to vote on. When presented to the town we need to keep separate what is now and possible amendments. These two could be decided separately. For example: if we want an administrative assistant, the charter can detail the process.

Eli: Is this a legal document? We may not be able to change how we operate. Referencing State Laws of Power of the Town, of incorporation, how to change a charter. Often seen at the beginning of charters.

Looking at the charters of Danforth and St. George. There was a sense that St. George was more detailed and could help us more in navigating what articles we need to research. It was also felt that Danforth's table of contents was included in that of St. George.

Our work: we can take parts of sample charters and one or more committee members can work together and research and bring information back to the whole committee as long as they are not a quorum (5).

Shall we start rewriting the articles as we research?

Tyler: Suggested no, let's come together as a whole committee before we start writing. So, for our next meeting...each of us to take one article as outlined in St. George's table of contents and be ready to report out as to what Freedom does or doesn't do. We would get that information from all the Policies and Ordinances which we have (Tyler has sent us) or are on the web site. This should be all the documents we need to do the research.

Emphasized was that we need to be clear as to the homework for the four committee members not in attendance tonight.

We are researching, we are developing content, taking notes on what might be missing from Freedom's way of doing or what is notable, what could be improved, and linking current Policy and Ordinances. We are not getting into details but rather identifying where information can be found. We have yet to write a draft.

The following articles were assigned: (Using St. George table of contents)

Article 201 Tyler

Article 202 Mary Ann

Article 203 (not appropriate)

Article 204 Meredith

Article 205 Eli

Article 301 Rene

Article 302 Phil

Article 303 Joe

Article 304 Tim

Article 305 Bill

Mary Ann may be sharing her research notes on the google doc if she does not attend the next meeting.

Noted that any decision making will need to be transparent.

Our writing should use “Select Board” not “Selectmen”

Future: addressing our school

Meeting adjourned at 7:20

Respectfully submitted, Meredith Coffin

Next meeting : Tuesday June 7, 2022