

Town Charter Commission Meeting Freedom, Maine  
Minutes of July 5, 2022

Present: William Pickford, Eleanor MacMakin, Tim Biggs, Mary Ann Bennett, Rene Ouellet, Meredith Coffin, Joseph Freeman.

Absent: Tyler Hadyniak, Phil Bloomstein

Agenda 1. Meeting called to order by Mary Ann, vice-chair, at 6:05 pm. Quorum achieved.

Agenda 2. Review of last meeting's minutes of June 21, 2022. Rene moved and Joe seconded to accept the draft as written. ***Motion carried.***

Agenda 3. Discussion of MMA. As Tyler not present we went onto Agenda 4.

Agenda 4. Contact with St. George. Rene did not contact the town as he felt they wrote a very clear introduction to the 2016 Revision that explained why they were making key changes. He will contact them if questions from this committee arise. A key driver for St. George was to make their charter more of a framework for the town, rather than detailed instructions. Their first version was too specific. Freedom's committee agrees that we want to guide but not dictate.

Agenda 5. How to outline our charter. Eli thinks that the Waterville charter has an appropriate table of contents which is better than St. George's. Please refer to her section that she has worked on as an example. See St George's "Article 205 General Provisions".

At this time further guidance was put on hold. Perhaps after we have done a reading and all have worked on their sections we could have one member go through and re number.

Agenda 6. Revising "Selectboard" section. As Tyler not present we did not continue this work and so went onto another section for a "first read".

Meredith offered to share "Article 204 Administrative Organization". We first needed to figure out how we were going to do this. Rene, Tim and Meredith had laptops and finally got "service" and into the town's Wifi. This allowed us to access the google drive. No one had a zoom or Phil's knowledge. Mary Ann and Joe shared Meredith's screen. Bill and Eli had their phones. Many wished we had paper copies. Alas there were none. Yes, reading every sentence aloud to all and allow discussion can seem laborious. This is what we agreed to do, at least through the first "reading".

Meredith began to read, while members followed on their devices. Highlighted words were ones Meredith added. At times she suggested to delete the non highlighted words entirely. Some edits made on the google drive as it was read. For example reducing a paragraph down to 3 sentences. Discussed was need to add sources. Perhaps all that is needed is to say "Consistent with Maine Law", hence edit out "Maine Law followed". Following this first read Meredith will seek out a copy of the Municipal Employee's Handbook. Likely MMA can help. Article 204-3 will get cleaned up as per discussion. The school board director will be contacted to ask if she knows when the 3 year term became law, or if it is law.

Eli began to read Article 205 General Provisions. She was on her phone, but Meredith was able to make edits as the committee discussed. Some sections left with the expectation that all read and think about them. Section 205.4 addressed prohibitions. Eli drew from Danforth's charter as to wording which was much more detailed than St. George's.

Agenda 7 Suggested Homework

Committee agrees that highlighting new words and sections is desirable.

Mary Ann will prepare her section for a first read.

Meredith will print hard copy of draft minutes and Mary Ann's and Eli's sections for Joe. It was suggested that Cindy could print these for Joe if sections are emailed to Cindy.

As some members don't have laptops, it was suggested that hard copies be provided at the next meeting regarding sections to be read.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM. Eli moved and Joe seconded to adjourn. ***Motion Carried***  
Respectfully submitted, Meredith Coffin

*Next meetings : Tuesday July 19, 2022*

*Tuesday August 2, 2022*

*Tuesday August 16, 2022*

*APPROVED August 2, 2022*