

Waterboro Charter Review Commission

Minutes

January 17, 2011

Present: Chairman: Debra Wentworth, Dwayne Woodsome, Dianne Holden, Todd Abbott, Scott Ohman, Douglas Foglio, Sr., Willis Lord, Steve Ross, and James Carll.

Guests: Selectmen David Woodsome; Lisa Faith, RSU 57 Director; Cindy Durney, Chm. Old Homes Days Committee; Jim Gendron, Chm. Road Review Committee and Pat Aureli, Transfer Station/Recycling Committee.

Call to Order: 7:00 PM

Correspondence: None.

New Business:

Round Table Discussion with Committees: Discussion included: current Charter is vague, not directional, a lot of room for interpretation. Question asked why do we need a Charter if State has laws covering Towns. Charter = Home Rule. Some felt State Laws are more vague than our current Charter. Some committees are limited to five members, feel they would like more members due to lack of participation. The committees want to know what the chain of command is – who listens to who? Feels terms on committees need to be staggered. Some committees not included under Sec. 502. What happens if the Board of Selectmen can't adhere to advice of a committee? Need standards to cover all committees – including items like recordkeeping. Should members of committees only serve on one committee at a time? Noted that typically committees are advisory to Board of Selectmen – don't want to have the wording in the Charter so specific that the Board can't instruct a committee to do a particular task. Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is done each year covering a 5 year future plan. If it doesn't get funded, the Board wants to see another plan, should work with items in CIP and try to do at least 50% of the 5-yr plan. Voters feel they don't have a say in budget – change to line item referendum budget voting. Discussed the number of questions that would need to be on the ballot with a referendum budget. Questioned whether suggested changes to the present Charter will be voted on individually – usually voted as a whole. Noted that RSU 57 has its own laws. Under Article 7, perhaps the RSU referral to their policy? Under Section 705 – Clarification needed on the wording 'by law' = Town, State or School Law? What are the 'qualifications' for office? Felt 90 days is a long time to fill an RSU vacancy due to the weighted voting system that they have – suggested that Board of Selectmen be able to appoint until the next Annual Town Meeting. Feel a need for expectations and guidelines of elected and appointed people. Section 702 – All elected officials and committee members should only be residents of the town – not necessarily a registered voter.

Suggested that a Public Works Committee be established as a permanent committee and pay members. Discussed that there are 4 committees/boards that draw pay. Should that be looked at? Creation of a Budget Committee to work hand and hand with the Board of Selectmen for accountability. Three member Board of Selectmen. Five member Board of Selectmen. Review a Mayor form of government. Noted that some of the problems needs to be addressed/questioned with the current Board of Selectmen – not thru the Charter process. Felt that the Charter review can help prevent past errors from happening again in the future. What happens if a committee, who is only advisory, goes to great lengths to work and report to the Board of Selectmen and work doesn't get done, members get discouraged – how can Charter address this? Felt that committees that are advisory should not be telling a department head how that budget gets spent – they are advisory to the Board of Selectmen only. Budgets for committees should be established at the time committees are appointed, so they don't have to wait a year +/- to have monies to work with.

Approval of January 3, 2011 Minutes: Chm. Debra noted that the letter received from a resident also included suggested changes to the Charter. Scott made the motion to approve with correction. Willis seconded. Voted, passed.

Review of current Charter: Agreed to move discussion to next meeting.

Next meeting: February 7, 2011 at 7 pm.

Agenda Items: Review of current Charter – Beginning with Article 3

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM. Motioned by Steve, seconded by Doug. Voted, passed.

Respectfully submitted,



Dianne Holden
Committee Secretary