

ELIOT TOWN CHARTER COMMISSION

MINUTES – JANUARY 17, 2014

PRESENT: Charles Rankie, Jr., Gary Sinden, Rosanne Adams, Roland Fernald, Robert Fisher, Dennis Lentz, John Murphy, Maryann Place, Edward Strong. Three (3) members of the public in attendance.

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM

BUSINESS

- MINUTES
 - January 6, 2014: Motion made by Fisher, 2nd Strong to accept, as corrected. VOTE 8-0. Chair concurs.
 - January 11, 2014 Public Hearing: MOTION by Fernald, 2nd Murphy to accept the minutes as corrected. VOTE 8-0. Chair concurs.
 - It was suggested and AGREED that in the future full names will be used in the minutes when referring to people.
 - The Secretary informed the public that any correspondence and other papers the Commission references will be attached to the minutes and posted on the town website.
- FILE CABINET: The Chairman reported that the file cabinet was approved and the Town Clerk Wendy Rawski will be working with Barbara Thain to obtain it. In the meantime Wendy will give the Commission a place to store things if needed.
- CODE OF ETHICS: The question is whether the Commission wants to adopt such a statement and also a statement for the Charter. It was suggested by the Chairman to look specifically at 3.7 A-E. MOTION by Fernald, 2nd Strong to table this for discussion at the next meeting. VOTE 8-0. Chair concurs.
- DISCUSSION OF USE OF THE CHARTER OUTLINE presented by the Secretary at the last meeting: There was discussion of some specific items. No decision made other than it would be useful to have the Secretary mail it as a WORD document so that it could be used by members. She agreed to do this.
- CHARTER BUDGET: Denny Lentz presented a budget sheet he has been working on. It was determined that initially we are looking at two budget periods - (1) now through June 31st and (2) after June 31st. Jack Murphy read the Statute re: funding of the Commission. There was discussion about mailing costs, printings of mailings and reports, legal notices, legal fees, and possible sound system needs for each period.
 - Estimates for each: (1) - 1 mailing, 1 legal notice, 1 public meeting. (2)- 2 mailings, 2 legal notices, xx public meetings, printing of preliminary and final reports to make available to the public, legal fees.
 - Robert Fisher is to check on cost of a sound system and printing costs for mailings.

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- Maryann Place is to check to see what Kittery had for legal fees as well as cost for the whole charter process.
- Charles Rankie is to check with Scott Tilton, town manager in Chelsea, Maine concerning cost of the charter process there.
- Information will be given to Denny Lentz who will then revise the proposed budget for our next meeting.

It was AGREED for the Chairman to write to the Selectmen and ask if the Charter Commission's operating expenses could be taken out of monies from the town's Legal Fund. It was felt it may be possible because the Commission is formed under State Statute.

- COMMUNICATION INPUT/OUTPUT AND PROCESS DIAGRAM prepared by Denny Lentz – In thinking about the public hearing and the give and take of information he drew it up what he was envisioning in a diagram for our consideration and as a tool moving forward. (attached)
 - It was suggested that to keep the public informed there could be a display at the town hall where handouts could be left for people to pick up – meeting schedule, charter item information, etc.
- PRESS RELEASE DISCUSSION: nothing at present to discuss. The Chairman reported that he has received information from Ralph Morang (Portsmouth Herald) re: press releases.
- PUBLIC COMMENT
Janet Saurman -
 - offered to purchase the Commission a bulletin board for use at the Town Hall and offered to work with Wendy to produce an ongoing display for the Commission
 - asked that the Commission consider allowing public comment on an agenda item before moving on to the next agenda item
 - that the Commission go to places where the public is and talk with them. For example – at the Library. Could use index cards for people to write and leave their comments suggestions.
 - Pointed out that there is an error on the Commissions letter heading. The Chairman said he would correct that.
 - Suggested putting inclusion of anything relating to the “School Board” last on our list
 - Commission would do well to find out how other towns have gone about this process
 - Suggest setting up a timeline so that the Commission can easily see what needs to be done
 - Conflict of interest policy that the town already has would be a good starting place rather than going elsewhereRobert Pomerleau –
 - Using another town charter as a template to work from when developing our own.
 - Move public comment to the beginning of the meeting as the Selectmen do.
- DISCUSSION
 - Taking an existing town charter as a template was discussed. It was AGREED to take the Rockport charter to use. The Secretary and Maryann Place will both see whether they can

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convert the PDF into a word document for the use of the Commission. If so they will send it to the members.

- Allowing public comment before a vote is taken on each agenda item was discussed. It was AGREED that before voting on an item on the agenda the Chairman will ask if there is any public input relevant to that item.
- Moving “Public Comment” to the beginning of the meeting was discussed. MOTION made by Lentz, 2nd Place to place “Public Comment” portion of the agenda after the approval of the minutes. Comment will be allowed for subjects NOT on the agenda and there will be a 5 minute time limit for each speaker. VOTE: 8-0. Chair concurs.

- ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

- Gary Sinden stated that there are 2 items that he felt strongly about being in a charter
 - Recall provision for elected officials
 - The two quasi-judicial boards should be directly elected by the people and not appointed. These are the Planning Board and the Board of Appeals

10. Next meeting: Tuesday, January 28th, 7:00 PM. We will attempt to have regular meetings on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month. February meetings will on the 12th and 26th at 7PM

Meeting adjourned at 9:13 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Approved: 1-28-2014


Rosanne M. Adams, Secretary

CC: Committee Members
Eliot Town Clerk