

TOWN OF PROVINCETOWN

Charter Commission

MEETING MINUTES OF

May 10, 2016

**MEETING HELD IN THE ART ROOM,
VETERANS MEMORIAL COMMUNITY CENTER**

Members Present: Judith Cicero, Thomas Coen, Julia Perry, Robert Speiser, Robert Vetrick, Elizabeth Williams, Michelle Crone-DeMarco, Steve Katsurinis.

Members Absent: Marcy Feller (excused).

Others Present: Doug Johnstone

Town Clerk Doug Johnstone called the first meeting of the newly created Charter Commission to order at 2:00 pm and distributed informational material to the Commission and reported to the members that a presence on the Town website has been created for the Commission, a mailbox established in Town Hall, and that he is working with the Municipal Finance Director to establish an account for the Commission in accordance with MGL Ch. 43b, §8b.

A brief description of the duties of Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk were discussed before the election of officers.

Robert Speiser nominated Julia Perry as Chair, Robert Vetrick seconded and it was so voted, 8-0-0.

Robert Vetrick nominated Steve Katsurinis as Vice Chair, Elizabeth Williams seconded and it was so voted, 8-0-0.

Steve Katsurinis nominated Thomas Coen as Clerk, Robert Vetrick seconded and it was so voted, 8-0-0.

Doug Johnstone relinquished the meeting to newly elected Chair Julia Perry.

Robert Vetrick discussed the need to establish standards of conduct within the meeting to create an orderly system of speakers and to insure that all are heard. There was general agreement that meeting standards be adopted and maintained. Chair Julia Perry to draft guidelines and bring back to the next meeting for review.

Julia Perry discussed her desire that the Commission operate in consensus. The role and necessity of voting was also discussed.

Role of Staff Liaison: Doug Johnstone relayed that he is available as staff support to the Commission including, in part, facilitating answers to questions they may have throughout the review process, helping to access information within Town Hall, helping to coordinate hearings, publication of materials or communications to the public, and updating information on the Town website related to their work, but he stressed the importance that they retain their independence, and the perception of their independence from Town Hall when working on potential revisions to

the Charter. The need for an on-call secretary to record minutes was discussed and all felt that a member of the Commission would not be able to both participate and take meeting minutes effectively. Julia Perry to investigate the possibility of hiring an on-call secretary for commission meetings and the cost for these services.

Review of State Material: Julia Perry discussed the Home Rule Charter Adoption or Revision material that was attached to their notification of election to the Charter Commission e-mail sent to them last week from the Town Clerk, specifically focusing on the requirement to hold a public hearing within 45 days of the election. It was agreed that Town Hall was the best venue in which to hold the public hearing. The purpose and direction of this initial public hearing was discussed. Steve Katsurinis suggested considering a more academic approach, with use of experts to come in to talk about the role of Charters, what they can do, and/or ways that our Charter is not currently effective. Tom Coen discussed taking a broader approach, perhaps partly educational and partly open-ended and asked if placing questions to the public beforehand might be useful, or focusing on those parts of the Charter that are perhaps more accessible to the public and therefore more relevant to them. Judith Cicero wanted to make sure the Charter was available to the public in as many venues as possible prior to the hearing so that people have ready access to the material. Robert Vetrick wondered if the public hearing might be used as a way of establishing hot button issues. Julia Perry will place the topic on the next agenda for further discussion.

Public Outreach Options/Discussion: Julia Perry invited comment on ways the commission can best gather information from the public and to keep them informed, and suggested a traveling roadshow of sorts to various venues/organizations, including the Council on Aging, Seashore Point, Provincetown 365, etc., and taking advantage of free publicity when available, such as a Banner news article and social media sites. Tom Coen suggested a monthly video update as was conducted by the Building Committee when they were reviewing options for a police station. Michelle Crone-DeMarco highlighted the need to consider production values when using video messages. Michelle also asked if a survey should be distributed to solicit input. Steve Katsurinis mentioned that mid-June through mid-September would be a good time to outreach to the second homeowner community, and that their input, as well as the input of visitors, be considered.

Meeting Schedule: General consensus was reached that the Charter Commission would meet every other Tuesday, beginning on May 24, 2016, from 11:00 am – 12:15 pm in Town Hall.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, May 24, 2016,
at 11:00 A.M.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Doug Johnstone