



# Town of Bolton

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## CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2020 7:00 P.M. – TOWN HALL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

The March 12, 2020 meeting of the Charter Revision Commission was called to order at 7:00 PM.

### ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Gwen Marrion, Vice Chair Eleanor Georges, Adam Teller, Richard Hayes, Jay Brudz, Jim Aldrich, and John Toomey.

OTHERS PRESENT: Members of the Public Rodney Fournier and Morris Silverstein, and Administrator Joshua Steele Kelly.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – Act on the Minutes of the February 11 public hearing and meeting and the February 20 meeting.

MOTION by Teller, seconded by Toomey, to table the minutes of the February 11 meeting and public hearing.

VOTING IN FAVOR: Unanimous.

MOTION by Teller, seconded by Brudz, to approve the minutes of the February 20 meeting.

DISCUSSION: Hayes refuted the assertion made on the last page of the minutes that the Commission members were ever polled on the question of whether Teller should be allowed to serve on the Structural Subcommittee.

MOTION AMENDED by Teller, seconded by Brudz, to approve the minutes with the condition that the reference to a poll being taken be struck from the record.

VOTING IN FAVOR: Teller, Marrion, Aldrich, Brudz, and Toomey.

VOTING AGAINST: Hayes.

ABSTAINING: Georges.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

Morris Silverstein: spoke in favor of keeping the Board of Finance intact, as it currently stands in the Charter. He asked that the Commission not lose sight of the reason for a Board of Finance: to provide checks and balances. He stated that there should be more scrutiny than a combined Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance would allow. He also expressed an interest in keeping the form of government as a “Selectmen” form.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – Discuss Adopting Rules of Procedure for Meetings

DISCUSSION: Brudz presented information about the fact that the Commission is currently operating without rules of order. He proposed adopting Roberts Rules established for small

committees. Discussion was held on whether or not these rules would be sufficient to cover the needs of the Commission. Some Commissioners stated that they felt the rules were too formal, and others that the rules are too informal.

MOTION by Teller, seconded by Toomey, to adopt Robert's Rules of Order for small committees with the added condition that motions must be seconded in order to be considered valid points of debate.

VOTING IN FAVOR: Georges, Teller, Marrion, Brudz, and Toomey.

VOTING AGAINST: Hayes and Aldrich.

#### AGENDA ITEM 5 – Subcommittee Reports

DISCUSSION: Teller gave a report on a meeting of the Structural Subcommittee. Stated that the meeting was very productive, that the Subcommittee members had very similar mindsets on the question, and that the subcommittee would meet again before the April Commission meeting to come up with more concrete recommendations for consideration. Discussion was held on how the drafting of proposed language would occur. Brudz asked if Town staff could correct the Charter's Errata sheet, to which Kelly agreed.

Georges gave a report on the Procedural Subcommittee. Brudz gave a report on the Finance & Taxation Subcommittee. Brudz added information on the direction the Subcommittee was leaning on the subject of requiring Capital Reserve expenditures to proportionately match the budgets of the Board of Education and the Town, suggesting that the Subcommittee members did not feel as though that was a matter to be included in a Charter. He further noted that the Subcommittee wished to approach the Board of Finance to hear more about their members' feelings on the question of merging the Board of Finance with the Board of Selectmen.

#### AGENDA ITEM 6A – Review of the Town Charter.

DISCUSSION: Marrion stated that she wished to use some of this time to discuss form of government and the prospective merging of the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectmen. Marrion stated that she would like to hear more information about both subjects. Aldrich stated that he would like to meet with the appointed Town Treasurer about what a consolidation of that position may look like. Aldrich stated that he will also be attending a Board of Finance meeting to ask for their input, and that he has already met with Sandra Pierog and Robert Morra to discuss this matter and others. He would like to invite them to speak with the full Commission. Georges explained what outreach was being conducted with the Board of Education.

Marrion noted that the request to do away with the requirement that board and commission members must be "electors," and therefore US Citizens, it would be illegal under state statute to do so. She went on to say that the Procedural Subcommittee is leaning towards recommending mandatory coin tosses in the event of a tie.

On the matter of vacancies, Marrion stated that Aldrich gave her suggestions to review. Marrion and Georges, as part of the Procedural Subcommittee, suggested that vacancies should first be filled by alternates already on the board and commission, second by the next-highest vote getter if it has been less than a year since the election for that seat, thirdly by vote of the full board or commission in question, lastly the Board of Selectmen would have the authority to fill the seat in the event of inaction on the other steps. At all times in this case, minority

representation would have to be upheld. Conversation was held as to whether Town Committees, as defined by the Secretary of the State's office, are ever allowed to fill vacancies directly or if they may only make recommendations to some higher power. Aldrich noted that the question of minority representation would be difficult to cover.

Discussion was held on the subject of legality and home rule, and then returned to the question of how to best fill vacancies. Hayes and Teller spoke to the benefits of transitioning more boards and commissions over to smaller scales and being appointed rather than elected. Reasons for moving towards more appointed boards rather than elected bodies includes the idea that the Board of Selectmen will have a greater capacity to implement their vision for the town by being able to appoint as soon as they are in office as opposed to waiting for years for other election cycles to provide them with board and commission members who are willing to cooperate with their vision.

Aldrich asked that Kelly follow up on his initial request to provide the Commission with ten-year data on the state's budget and how much it allocates to municipalities, among other subjects. Members of the Commission expressed their desire to invite Pierog and Morra to a meeting sooner rather than later.

AGENDA ITEM 7 – Change the Date of the August Meeting.

CONSENSUS was reached that the August meeting would continue to be set for August 20.

AGENDA ITEM 8 – Correspondence.

DISCUSSION: None.

AGENDA ITEM 9 – Other.

DISCUSSION: None.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Joshua Steele Kelly, Administrator

*See minutes of subsequent meetings for approval of these minutes and any corrections hereto.*