



TOWN OF CHARLTON

Minutes of Regular Government Study Review Committee Meeting

Tuesday, August 16, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

Zoom Meeting ID: 894 0867 1292

Zoom Passcode: 903228; Phone Access +1-646-558-8656

In-Person: Meeting Room 1 - Town Hall

Committee Members Present:

Mr. Joseph Haebler, Chairman

Mr. Gerald Doble, Vice Chairman

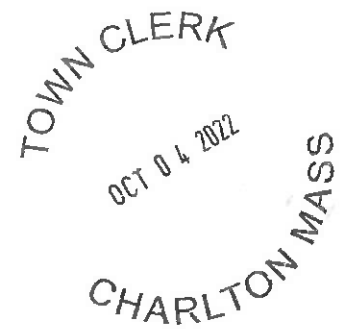
Mr. Adam Kelly, Clerk

Mr. James Nee, Committee Member

Committee Members Absent:

Mr. Tom Ciras, Committee Member

Ms. Jeanne Costello, Committee Member



Others Present:

Mr. Andrew Golas, Charlton Town Administrator

I. Call to order:

A. J. Haebler called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

II. Approval of previous minutes:

A. Motion by G. Doble to approve the June 21, 2022 minutes, seconded by A. Kelly, unanimous vote with exception of J. Nee who abstained due to nonattendance of subject meeting.

B. Motion by G. Doble to approve the July 19, 2022 minutes, seconded by J. Nee, unanimous vote.

C. Minutes for June 21 and July 19, 2022 were submitted in person to the Town Clerk office once signed by the committee members who were in attendance at the August 16, 2022 meeting.

D. The Committee discussed the appropriate amount of time for minutes to be drafted, reviewed and approved. A. Golas stated that most committee minutes are submitted on a monthly cadence, although Open Meeting Law states that minutes should be provided in a "reasonable" amount of time.

III. Old business:

A. Questions regarding weaknesses as cited in the 2016 Government Study Review Committee White Paper

1. Present committee members who were assigned to develop questions reviewed their questions with the rest of the Committee. All developed questions are attached. Below is a record of the conversations revolving around the questions:

- CHARLTON MASS. TOWN CLEAR GOV
- a) J. Haebler asked if the Personnel Board was still convening. A. Golas stated the Personnel Board has not been active in the past 3 years. Additionally, A. Golas stated that Selectmen have established pay grades that are for non-union members and is based on job qualifications and roles. Further, union members have their own rates, the Administrative union has dissolved, and annual reviews are completed on all employees.
 - b) J. Nee asked how many personnel are in a union. A. Golas responded that Fire, Police, Dispatch and DPW are in collective bargaining units, in total about $\frac{2}{3}$ of employees are union members.
 - c) J. Haebler stated that employee evaluations were lacking previously which made it difficult to hold staff accountable and/or remove poor performers. J. Nee stated that evaluations are good for employee feedback regardless of positive or negative and that even a negative evaluation can result in a positive outcome if corrective actions are taken. A. Golas stated that he is doing evaluations for appointed personnel and is pushing all staff members to complete evaluations and document performance, all of which has been occurring for the past 2 years. Further, evaluations are standardized to the greatest extent possible (i.e. managers vs. non-managers) by the new Human Resources Director.
 - d) A. Golas stated that the Board of Selectmen currently act as the bills payable/receivable function. The Police Department bills out for details and all turnover is provided to the Town Collector.
 - e) J. Nee asked if younger persons are engaged in Town Committees or other Town-related positions outside of the Board of Selectmen's student positions for Shepherd Hill and Bay Path. A. Golas stated that the Town had 2 interns this past summer and that 1 intern in particular was working on moving the Town's paper records into a digital format.
 - f) A. Golas stated that the Town budget is published and released to the public 2 weeks prior to the Annual Town Meeting. J. Haebler asked if the Town Departments have a 5-year plan, A. Golas stated that they do to an extent for capital but it's harder to project operationally. Also, A. Golas stated that Departments begin their budgeting process in November every year.
 - g) A. Kelly asked how long the ClearGov website has been in use for the town to openly share budget information. A. Golas stated that the site became available to the public is March 2022. A. Kelly

asked if the site has more capabilities beyond just data publishing. A. Golas responded that ClearGov also provides workflow management and a number of those benefits for budget management. A. Kelly asked if there has been any feedback from the public or from Committees and/or Departments. A. Golas responded that not much feedback has been received to date, also noting that himself and the Finance Director are the primary users at this point.

h) J. Haebler indicated that weakness “m” is resolved.

i) J. Haebler indicated that weakness “n” is still in discussion on solutions.

j) J. Haebler indicated that weakness “o” is definitely an opportunity.

B. Discussion on procedures of the committee

1. No further discussion regarding this topic took place.

IV. New business:

A. Further review of the 2016 Government Study Review Committee White Paper

1. No further discussion regarding this topic took place.

B. Develop questionnaire for town offices and officials

1. No further discussion on this topic took place.

C. September 20, 2022 “All Boards/Departments/Commissions/Committees” Meeting

1. J. Haebler indicated that the subject meeting aligns well with the mission and goals of the Committee and asked the Committee if the next Committee meeting should coincide with the subject meeting, unanimous agreement.

D. Google Group setup

1. A. Kelly indicated that during the July 2022 meeting, that an Information Technology specialist for the Town had offered to check with the Town Administrator about the possibility of issuing town email accounts to the Committee members for the purpose of official communications as well as utilizing the Town’s file share system as a repository for official documents.

2. A. Golas mentioned that other committees have utilized other services such as DropBox for official digital record repository capabilities.

3. A. Golas also mentioned that A. Kelly is being issued a town email account in order to manage the Committee’s dedicated page on the Town’s website. Apart from the Committee Chairman and Clerk, additional email accounts for other committee members are being tabled at this time.

V. Other business:

A. Board of Selectmen inquiry about the Department of Public Works

1. A. Golas indicated that one member of the Board of Selectmen asked about whether consolidation of the Department of Public Works should be researched. A. Golas reminded the Selectman that the Government Study Review Committee is currently formed and such a recommendation will likely be included in the Committee's final report.
 2. J. Haebler recommended that the Department of Public Works Director and the Selectman with the inquiry should attend a Committee meeting together in order to discuss the subject inquiry further.
- B. Committee membership termination
1. J. Haebler brought to the committee's attention that T. Ciras is listed as a committee member and was appointed by the Board of Selectmen but has not been sworn in and has also been unable to be contacted. J. Haebler left the decision of T. Ciras' membership to the rest of the committee for discussion and voting.
 2. A. Golas confirmed that T. Ciras was appointed, never sworn in, and that the Board can vote to appoint someone else in T. Ciras' place.
 3. J. Nee stated that if a vote were to take place which results in T. Ciras being removed from the committee roster, that J. Nee would like to see the conditions such that T. Ciras would not be precluded from consideration for readmittance to the Committee in the future. Additionally, J. Nee stated that the Committee and the Town should continue advertising the Committee's vacancies and seek to fill them with qualified candidates as quickly as possible. All present committee members agreed.
 4. Motion by G. Doble to remove T. Ciras from the Committee due to nonattendance without precluding T. Ciras from consideration for reappointment later, also with the condition that the Town of Charlton should continue to seek qualified candidates to fill the Committee's vacancies as quickly as possible. Seconded by A. Kelly, unanimous vote.

VI. Next meeting and adjournment:

- A. Motion by J. Nee to set next meeting for Tuesday, September 20, 2022 in conjunction with the "All Boards/Departments/Commissions/Committees Meeting" hosted by the Charlton Board of Selectmen, seconded by G. Doble, unanimous vote.
 1. Follow-on motion by G. Doble to establish September 20, 2022 meeting start time as 5:45 p.m., seconded by J. Nee, unanimous vote.
- B. Motion by G. Doble to set the October 2022 meeting date as October 4, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in Meeting Room 1 at Town Hall (and also via Zoom), on the condition that the Town Clerk, Ms. Karen LaCroix, is also available to attend. Seconded by J. Nee, unanimous vote.
- C. Motion by J. Nee to adjourn, seconded by G. Doble, unanimous vote at 7:12 p.m.

D. Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 20, 2022, at 5:45 p.m. in the Senior Center at Town Hall.

VII. Attachments:


- A. Questions compiled by committee members pertaining to weaknesses identified in the 2016 Government Study Review Committee White Paper.
1. J. Haebler had Analysis, 2. Weaknesses, sub bullets a-d.
 2. G. Doble had Analysis, 2. Weaknesses, sub bullets e-h.
 3. A. Kelly had Analysis, 2. Weaknesses, sub bullets i-l.
 4. J. Costello had Analysis, 2. Weaknesses, sub bullets m-o.

Respectfully submitted by:

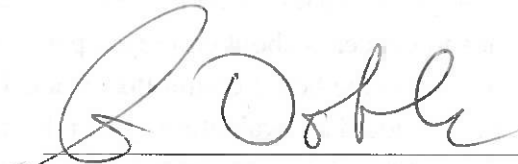


Mr. Adam D. Kelly
Clerk
Government Study Review Committee

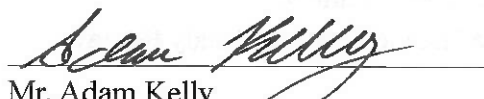
Accepted by:



Mr. Joseph Haebler
Chairman




Mr. Gerald Doble
Vice Chairman




Mr. Adam Kelly
Clerk

Mr. Tom Ciras
Committee Member



Ms. Jeanne Costello
Committee Member



Mr. James Nee
Committee Member

Attachment: Questions compiled by committee members pertaining to weaknesses identified in the 2016 Government Study Review Committee White Paper

- a. Roles and responsibilities of employees and boards are not always clear. They should be clarified to better educate the public and town employees alike.
 - i. What problems have or might have existed when boards/employees claim to have the same powers/duties?
 - ii. Has the situation improved?
 - iii. Has your committee/board clarified any problems in this area?
- b. The posting of meeting minutes is something lacking across boards and committees.
 - i. Should there be a standard time period between a meeting and the posting of minutes?
 - ii. Who is responsible for the posting of the minutes and the submissions to the Town Clerk?
- c. Pay scales are not equal for positions that should be interpreted as being within the same scale.
 - i. Has the Personnel Board clarified this?
 - ii. Is there now a standard pay grade system?
 - iii. Do any employees feel slighted by this?
- d. Employee evaluations are not being conducted consistently throughout town, and this leads to concerns about employee performance.
 - i. Has the board/committee enacted an evaluation system?
 - ii. Should an evaluation system be adopted for all employees?
 - iii. What should be the purpose of evaluations?
 - iv. How has it been determined in the past as to keeping or releasing an employee?
- e. The lack of uniform financial policies is a real concern, and this puts the town budget at risk when money isn't being properly handled in an efficient manner.
 - i. What financial policies were enacted since the last Government Study Review Committee study?
 - ii. Have the cash payments been standardized?
 - iii. Does a single entity make all the billings and receive all the payments?
 - iv. How are the payments handled?
- f. Not keeping the public engaged in town government and allowing apathy.
 - i. How is the town bringing citizens into the town government?
- g. There is a perception of an abuse of power by way of management style leading to a "fear factor" mentality in local government.
 - i. Do employees feel intimidated when asked questions from citizens?
 - ii. Does the town have a dictatorial management style?
- h. Not enough is being done to promote our town and encourage work with other communities.