

## Charter Review Meeting Minutes

December 20, 2021 at 4:00PM

Virtual-WebEx - recorded and available for viewing at the following link: <http://trurotv.truro-ma.gov/CablecastPublicSite/show/5180?channel=1>

A quorum of CRC committee members was present: Brian Boyle, Nancy Medoff, Cheryl Best, Bill Golden, Chris Lucy, and Robert Panessiti. (Meg Royka was absent)

Also present were: Select Board member Sue Areson and members of the public.

The meeting was started at 4:00 PM. Chair Boyle invited the public to call in and gave the necessary information to do so.

### Public Comment:

- Ms. Areson, speaking as a member of the public not the Select Board, stated that the CRC had been publicly criticized in two consecutive SB meetings and that it was a shame. She suggested that if SB members have any issue with what takes place at committee meetings, she would prefer that the SB would go directly to the committee chair. She then suggested that the CRC separate the committees and consider them separately rather than lumping them all together in one vote.

### 1. Agenda Item – Consideration of Minutes

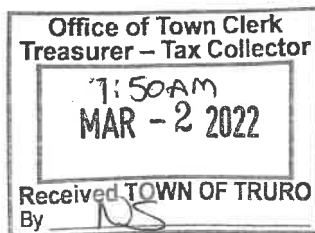
- Mr. Panessiti moved that the minutes be tabled for now. Mr. Panessiti shared his feelings that the minutes needed more detailed bullet points regarding the discussion on the motion about the committees being studied. Ms. Best seconded the motion and offered to put more details into them.
  - There was a procedural discussion about how to remand the minutes and edit them for the next meeting, leading to the action item below.
  - The motion to remand the minutes until the next meeting carried with a unanimous vote.
    - ❖ **Action Item:** Any members that have suggestions on the minutes should send them to Ms. Best. Ms. Best will review the meeting video and edit the minutes based on suggestions and video of the November 22 meeting. She will then send a second draft to committee members and the edited minutes will be up for approval at the next meeting.

### 2. Agenda Item – Committee's annual schedule and charge

- Chair Boyle shared that he added a second public hearing to the CRC calendar and posted the calendar on the website.

### 3. Agenda Item – Review summary language for areas of Charter reviewed for 2022 ATM -

- Chair Boyle explained that we needed to vote on the explanations introducing our recommended changes in Charter language, which was on the memo distributed to the committee members.



- Ms. Best made a motion to approve the explanatory paragraphs. Mr. Lucy seconded the motion for discussion. He then stated that the language being recommended for section 6.2.10, should read, "may" rather than "shall" in the last sentence of the section.
  - There was a procedural discussion regarding the motion on the table. Ms. Best offered that she was happy to make that change in the document but that she would like to go back to the minutes of the meeting when the recommendation language was approved – so as to be certain what the committee actually voted upon. She added that we first needed to vote on the motion to accept the introductory language.
  - The motion to accept the introductory language was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.
  - After further procedural discussion, Mr. Lucy made a motion to change "shall" to "may" in the last sentence of section 6.2.10. Ms. Best seconded the motion. The motion carried in a unanimous roll-call vote.
    - **Action Item:** Ms. Best will change "shall" to "may" in the recommended language and send the document back to the committee members.
    - **Action Item:** Chair Boyle will send the memo of recommendations to the Select Board.

#### **4. Agenda item – 2021 Annual Report**

- Chair Boyle stated that Ms. Royka was working on the CRC language for the Annual Report.

#### **5. Agenda Item – Status update on gender-neutral charter changes**

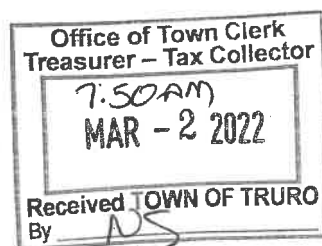
- Chair Boyle stated that there was no update on this item at this time.

#### **6. Agenda Item – Petition Form – review changes (if made by staff or Select Board)**

- Chair Boyle stated that there was no update on this item at this time.

#### **7. Agenda Item – Term limits**

- Mr. Panessiti reminded the committee members that the Select Board raised this issue. He and Mr. Lucy shared their opinions about why three years is better than five years, including by not limited to people's reluctance to commit to 5 years, 3 years keeping things fresher, and 5 years being too long for the public to vote someone off of committees.
- Ms. Areson, speaking as a citizen, suggested that the CRC look at all multi-member boards that have 5-year terms rather than just the Planning Board.
- Discussion continued with suggestions for a study to done.
- The establishment of questions and a deliberative process for such a study, with public input on the issue was suggested along with a timeline for a study, leading to a recommendation for the 2023 ATM.
  - **Action Item:** Committee members should think about suggestions and questions, as well as sources of information. They should bring this to the next CRC meeting so we can intelligently study the issue. This item will be placed on the next CRC agenda.
- Additional questions and discussion centered on the history of the Planning Board; when it was established



## **8. Agenda Item – Community Engagement in town government**

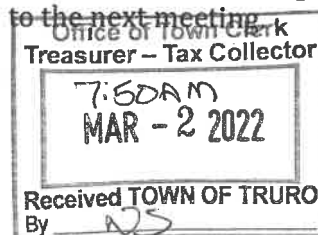
- Chair Boyle explained that this is not directly a Charter issue but that it is related to people filling multi-member boards. There were questions as to whether anything in the Charter may encourage or discourage participation in government. Ms. Medoff suggested that people be encouraged to contact the CRC because there is nothing more important than hearing from the town.

## **9. Agenda Item – Nepotism**

- Ms. Best shared her opinion that the CRC should be prepared for this issue to arise because people have come to her with concerns regarding the perception that the SB chair, through his wife, is essentially moderating ATM. She added that nepotism was also raised as a concern by the SB, when denying a committee applicant to a vacant and uncontested seat on the ZBA because of their concerns with nepotism.
- Mr. Panessiti shared his opinion that this was a policy issue that should be taken up by the SB not by the CRC. He suggested that people go to a SB meeting to voice these concerns.

## **10. Agenda Item – Committees/Boards: Appointed/Elected – continued discussions**

- Chair Boyle established that we still approximately 12 to 15 more boards to look at in phase 2 of our study.
- Ms. Medoff stated that we should think about other questions we would want to ask because we did not get excellent information from our survey. She suggested we include interviews with other towns that have appointed Planning Boards. She stated her thoughts about having an actionable process that should be applied to all committees, including the ones already studied.
- Ms. Best agreed that we could test a new process with four additional committees and apply it to all others if it yielded valuable information.
- Mr. Panessiti suggested that we might send out an RFP to find a consultant to engage in a comprehensive study on the topic.
- Mr. Lucy questioned what we voted on during the November 22 meeting and if it was permanent. Ms. Best clarified that it was a recommendation to leave things as they are in the Charter because after 2.5 years of study and discussion, we have not found any compelling reasons to make Charter changes.
- There was some disagreement on the committee as to the amount of work that has been done on the topic. Mr. Lucy stated that he did not recall any prior studies done over the years.
- Ms. Medoff shared that she felt we did not speak about the individual committees. She reiterated her desire for a comfortable process to evaluate the question of election vs. appointment. Chair Boyle asked what other information we need to gather. Ms. Medoff responded that we should find out what other towns are doing and have discussions with towns that are populating committees in the opposite manner in which are.
  - **Action Item:** Committee Members should bring to the next meeting any additional information they would like to gather for the study of this issue.
- Mr. Boyle stated that this project work should be done by the 2023 ATM and asked Mr. Panessiti to look into how we could get funding for a consultant to do a study.
  - **Action Item:** Mr. Panessiti will research the possibility of funding a study through an RFP process and bring that information to the next meeting.



Due to the late hour, the last two agenda items were not addressed:

- **Agenda Item - Select Board update meeting**
- **Agenda Item - Other issues from any Committee members**

Mr. Lucy moved to adjourn, Ms. Medoff seconded. All were in favor.  
The meeting adjourned at 5:55PM

***Next Meeting Scheduled for January 24, 2021 at 4:00PM***

Respectfully Submitted



Cheryl Best

