



TOWN OF CHARLTON

Minutes of Government Study Review Committee Meeting

Tuesday, March 21, 2023, 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

Ms. Jeanne Costello, Committee Member

Mr. James Nee, Committee Member

Committee Members Absent:

None

Others Present:

Mr. Stephen Koronis, Board of Selectmen, Town of Charlton

Mr. Andrew Golas, Town Administrator, Town of Charlton

Mr. Peter Boria, Water & Sewer Commissioner, Town of Charlton

Ms. Donna Neylon, Cemetery Commission, Town of Charlton

Mr. James Burlingame, Cemetery Superintendent, Town of Charlton

Ms. Diane Doherty, Recreation Commission Chairperson, Town of Charlton

Mr. Gerry Foskett, DPW Superintendent, Town of Charlton

Mr. Russell Jennings, water and sewer, Town of Charlton

I. Call to order:

A. J. Haebler called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Approval of previous minutes:

A. Motion by A. Kelly to approve the February 22, 2023 minutes, seconded by G. Doble, unanimous vote.

III. Department of Public Works Discussion:

A. Mr. Golas provided multiple examples of organizational structures to show what a Department of Public Works could look like in terms of administrative and operational alignments

B. Meeting participants agreed to hear from Mr. Gerry Foskett on his thoughts first

1. "What's wrong?" should be asked first before making any changes
2. Creating a DPW means more administration and oversight, less output

3. Contracting out work is “the way to go” (i.e. lawn care and general grounds maintenance)
4. Stating that “the town is growing” isn’t sufficient for a reorganization
5. Mr. Foskett proposed allowing the Recreation Commission to access and use the Highway Department break room for meeting and administrative space

C. Cemetery Commission

1. Commission members purportedly against a DPW consolidation
2. Fear of losing “personal touch” between staff and those in mourning
3. Concern that a larger department would mean less attention to details (i.e. grant applications, equipment maintenance, etc.)
4. Cross-department assistance is already taking place without reorganization
5. Cemetery staff perform small equipment maintenance and limited vehicle maintenance, otherwise relies on Highway Department or local businesses
 - a) Concerns raised regarding Cemetery Superintendent performing equipment maintenance alone in Cemetery facility
6. Facilities
 - a) Cemetery facility in need of major repair or replacement
 - b) A suggestion was made for a new Cemetery facility to built built on same lot as the current Highway Department facility
 - c) Cemetery staff objected to the above suggestion, claiming the 1.6 mile distance from Westridge Cemetery (current location) to the Highway Department is too great and adds additional fuel costs as well as wear and tear on Cemetery vehicles

D. Recreation Commission

1. Current inter-department partnerships and coordination needs to continue
2. Coordination cannot be based on person-specific relationships
3. Small town dynamics – everyone works together
4. Elected vs. appointed positions should be considered if a DPW is formed
5. Elected officials need a “playbook” as there’s many moving parts, relationships, etc. which is a lot for a newcomer to absorb and act on

E. Highway Department

1. Performs majority of their own maintenance actions
2. Current mowing contract is on a 3 year cycle
 - a) Recreation Commission used to run the contract, but has switched over to Highway Department “a few years ago”

F. Water and Sewer Commission

1. Pooling resources (e.g. administrative clerks already on various staffs/departments) would allow for more seamless operations and

improve services rendered to residents as there would be some redundancy in place to handle resident requests and interactions

G. Generalized comments and observations

1. Cemetery Commission is seeking assistance from Bay Path Regional Vocational High School for draft plans and estimates for a new building
 - a) None of the other Departments or Commissions in attendance were aware of this activity
2. Great small town with personnel who go “above and beyond” in duties
3. Can restructure without growing administration
 - a) Changes cannot be based on 1 person joining or leaving service
 - b) Government needs to carry on and provide services regardless of specific personnel in certain positions
4. A. Kelly commented that a reorganization could be as simple as solidifying existing relationships and responsibilities on paper so that coordination between departments outlasts any specific person(s) in certain position(s)
5. Mr. Golas asked about pulling just the Recreation Commission under the Highway Department – no consensus from meeting attendees on the suggestion
6. J. Nee asked if TIF funding could be used for a joint Recreation and Cemetery building?
 - a) Not apparent answer on yes or no
7. Question was posed about where a Facility Management new hire would be aligned. A. Golas suggested the position would likely fall under the Town Administrator to start and then move to the DPW (if formed)

H. The Government Study Review Committee would like at least 1 additional meeting to discuss the DPW topic further amongst the Committee

IV. Old business:

A. Bylaws

1. No bylaw created the Financial Director position
 - a) Position needs to be codified in a bylaw in order for the Financial Director to establish and enforce policies
 - b) Establishing a bylaw will require Town Meeting action/approval
2. Bylaw Committee not active, should be reinvigorated

B. Conflict of Interest training

1. Everyone on the Committee needs to complete it as soon as possible!

C. Survey

1. A. Kelly will send survey to the Town Administrator for dissemination

V. New business:

- A. Need to start putting the Committee’s report together

1. Suggested that an outline be developed first
2. Town Administrator and Board of Selectmen are seeking a final report, not in increments

B. Police, Fire, and the School Board all still need to be met with

1. Noted that these organizations comprise the majority of the Town budget

VI. Other business:

A. None

VII. Next meeting and adjournment:

A. Motion by G. Doble to adjourn, seconded by J. Costello, unanimous vote at 8:13 p.m.

B. Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 25, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the Senior Center at Town Hall and also available on Zoom.

VIII. Contact:

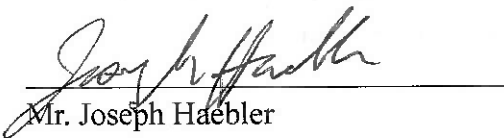
A. Any questions, comments or concerns should be addressed to the Committee via email at GovStudy@townofcharlton.net

Respectfully submitted by:



Mr. Adam D. Kelly
Clerk
Government Study Review Committee

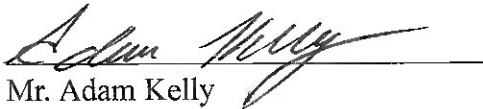
Accepted by:



Mr. Joseph Haebler
Chairman



Mr. Gerald Doble
Vice Chairman



Mr. Adam Kelly
Clerk

Ms. Jeanne Costello
Committee Member

Mr. James Nee
Committee Member