

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

**TOWN OF WINCHENDON  
CHARTER BYLAW REVIEW COMMITTEE MINUTES  
Tuesday, December 15, 2020 3:00 P.M.  
Held Remotely via Zoom**

WINCHENDON TOWN CLERK  
RCUD JAN 19 2021 AM 8:14

**Present:**

Dr. Maureen Ward, Chair, Taylor Tower, Secretary, Don O'Neil, Callie Knowler, Chief David Walsh, Karen Kast

**Absent:**

David Alexander

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**List of Documents Presented at Meeting:**

- Current Town Charter
- Current Town Bylaw

- 1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 30, 2020** – Mr. O'Neil moved to approve the minutes of November 30, 2020, seconded by Ms. Knowler. With a vote of all aye, the motion carried 5-0.
- 2. DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATIONS ON CHARTER** – Dr. Ward noted that on page 4, Article 3, Item C, it notes that the term of all elected officials will begin July 1<sup>st</sup> (typically, Town Meeting is held in May). The last Charter Bylaw Review Committee proposed to change this to the day after Town Meeting. This change passed Town Meeting and is now before the State for approval.

On Section 6, page 5, the third sentence down addresses the protocol for a recall. The last sentence says in order for a recall to pass, 15% of the number of people registered to vote. The total number of registered voters in Town is just over 7,000, which would call for a fairly significant number of voters. On the next page, the top of page 6, it says to recall an elected official, 20% of the number of voters of the date of the most recent election. It was discussed that Ms. Knowler would obtain the numbers of voters at recent elections, and this topic would be revisited in the next few minutes.

Ms. Kast joined at 3:08 p.m.

Change it from 20% of the voters at the last election to state "20% of the registered voters"

On page 6, under Appointment Powers, C, the section was missing several Selectmen-appointed Committees. Ms. Tower moved to add the discussed committees to Section 3.2, C, seconded by Mr. O'Neil. It was unanimously approved 6-0.

It was agreed that Ms. Tower would correct basic grammatical errors, punctuation and typographic errors.

On page 14, 7-5, the title states "Number & Gender" but then does not refer to gender in any manner. It was decided that Ms. Tower would investigate as to the sentence that may be missing and report back to the Committee. Voted unanimously, 6-0.

On page 3, Section 2-7, B, Ms. Kast discussed the mandate of the Town Staff to "post the notice of such intention on the Town Bulletin Board" and asked the Committee if they would like to add the mandate to post to Social Media as well as the website. After some discussion, Mr. O'Neil moved to add "to the Town website" to this section, seconded by Ms. Kast. With a vote of all aye, the motion carried 6-0.

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Discussion returned back to Section 6, page 5, the third sentence down that addresses the process of a recall. Ms. Knowler informed the committee that the last Town election saw 291 voters. If it is not a presidential or senate race, attendance is very low. Ms. Ward proposed changing the verbiage to say "percentage of registered voters" rather than "number of voters at the last election". Ms. Tower moved to strike out "and provide at least 20% all the way down to such recall election", seconded by Ms. Kast. With a vote of Mr. O'Neil, aye, Ms. Kast, aye, Chief Walsh, no, Ms. Knowler, aye and Dr. Ward, aye, the motion carried 5-1.

**DISCUSSION/DECISION ON SCOPE OF NEXT MEETING:** Chief Walsh noted that the Animal Control Officer has some recommendations for the Bylaw, and that he will research further. Dr. Ward noted the second meeting in January (the 19<sup>th</sup>) should be addressing the Animal Control Bylaw.

Dr. Ward will be contacting each Department Head to ask them for their input on their applicable sections of the Bylaw.

Chief Walsh noted some concerns regarding the Regulation of Watercraft and said that he will be bringing these concerns to the coming meetings.

Articles 1-12 of the Bylaw will be reviewed at the next meeting.

**3. MEMBER COMMENTS** – None were heard.

**4. ADJOURNMENT** - Mr. O'Neil motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Knowler. With a vote of all aye, the meeting adjourned at 3:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Taylor Tower  
Recording Secretary