

TOWN OF SOMERS
Charter Revision Commission
Meeting Minutes
May 7, 2025
6:00 PM
Selectmen's Conference Room



1. Call to Order

Chair Scott Kaupin called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

2. Members Present: Thomas Clark, Edward DePeau, Scott Kaupin, Kathryn Lerz, Michael Marinaccio, and Theresa Schmidt, and Town Hall liaison Karen Neal.

Members Absent: John Parks

Guests: Tim Keeney, First Selectman and Carl Landolina, Town Attorney.

3. Approval of Minutes

April 23, 2025 Meeting

Kathryn Lerz moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Tom Clark. Michael Marinaccio abstained with unanimous decision by the other members present followed.

4. Public Comment

There were no members of the public in attendance and no communications were received.

5. Discussion & Resolution – Additional recommendations:

- a) Shall the term of office for the Registrar of Voters change from two (2) year to four (4) years terms?

- i. Discussion – Michael Marinaccio shared information that this change in term can be done by ordinance instead of a Charter revision. Discussion followed.
- ii. Resolution – The Charter Revision Commission recommends to the Board of Selectmen to adopt an ordinance to change the term of office for the Registrar of Voters from two(2) to four(4) year terms.

Michael Marinaccio moved to approve the resolution, seconded by Ed Depeau. Unanimous decision followed.

b) Shall appointments to fill mid-term vacancies change from "until the next election" to the "end of the elected term"?

- i. Discussion – Members discussed the positive and negative side of having vacancies filled to next election as well as to the end of term.
- ii. Resolution – The Charter Revision Commission recommends appointments to fill mid-term vacancies change from "until the next election" to the "end of the elected term".

Theresa Schmidt moved to approve the resolution, seconded by Thomas Clark. Thomas Clark, Scott Kaupin, Kathryn Lerz and Theresa Schmidt voted aye, Ed DePeau and Michael Marinaccio voted nay.

c) Shall the language in Section 5-18 Emergency Preparedness Advisory Council be "modernized" to change all references of "Civil Preparedness" to "Emergency Preparedness" and change all references of "Superintendent of Highways" to "Director of Public Works, and the CERT Team Leader"?

- i. Discussion – Members discussed the need for updating language to reflect current practice as well as to recognize the impact on the number of questions on the ballot for the voters.
- ii. Resolution – The Charter Revision Commission recommends the language in Section 5-18 Emergency Preparedness Advisory Council be "modernized" to change all references of "Civil Preparedness" to "Emergency Preparedness" and change all references of "Superintendent of Highways" to "Director of Public Works, and the CERT Team Leader".

Thomas Clark moved to approve the resolution, seconded by Kathryn Lerz. Thomas Clark, Ed DePeau, Scott Kaupin, Kathryn Lerz and Theresa Schmidt voted aye, and Michael Marinaccio voted nay.

d) Additional recommendation brought forward by Michael Marinaccio concerning Chapter 6-7 Special appropriations. Presently the charter reads in section (a) "Any such appropriation in excess of the amount prescribed in CGS 7-348 shall require approval by a vote of Town Meeting upon recommendation of the Board of Finance." There is also another reference to CGS 7-348 in section (b).

Discussion followed on what this means, the connection to current policies, and what would be more appropriate now and into the future. Michael Marinaccio will work with CFO, Board of Finance, and the Selectmen to come up with a change that will be acceptable to each and present it back to the Charter Revision Commission. It was noted that the next Board of Finance meeting is on May 27th and that there will be a need to add additional meetings for the Charter Revision Commission.

6. Working Session with Town Attorney Carl Landolina – review draft of recommended charter language changes that address recommended changes approved by the commission.

Michael Marinaccio provided a draft of ballot questions and explanatory text that was reviewed by members and Attorney Carl Landolina. Attorney Landolina gave some additional guidance for the explanatory text and wished to have more time to review the draft.

7. Working Session – prepare draft of presentation to the Board of Selectmen.

Michael Marinaccio provided a draft of a report to the Board of Selectmen. Members discussed that the report will reflect the work done on the ballot questions and explanatory text so this will continue to be worked on.

8. Resolution – Set Public Hearing date, time, and location.

After a discussion on what more needs to be reviewed and the preparation for the the public hearing a motion was made to hold the Public Hearing on Wednesday, June 11th at 7pm in the Town Hall Auditorium by Thomas Clark, seconded by Michael Marinaccio. Unanimous decision followed.

The need for additional meetings for the Charter Revision Commission to discuss the new additional recommendation and prepare for the Public Hearing were discussed and a motion was made by Kathryn Lerz to add to the schedule June 4th and June 18th at 6 pm in the Selectmen's Conference Room, seconded by Theresa Schmidt. Unanimous decision followed.

9. Commission Member Comments

Thanks were given to Michael Marinaccio for creating the draft documents.

10. Adjournment

Tom Clark moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:27 pm, seconded by Kathryn Lerz, and followed by a unanimous decision.

Respectfully submitted,

Theresa Schmidt
Secretary, Charter Revision Commission