

TOWN OF PLYMOUTH

CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

January 2, 2024

*Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020, Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18 and further updates, this meeting was conducted in a **Virtual format only**. A Zoom Meeting link was provided.*

These minutes are not verbatim – they are the recording secretary's interpretation of what took place at the meeting, per Open Meeting Law, G.L. C 30A, § 22.

The Charter Review Committee held a scheduled meeting on Tuesday, January 2, 2024, 6 PM, at the Plymouth Townhall, Ropewalk Meeting Room, 2nd Floor, 26 Court Street, Plymouth, MA 02360.

In attendance: Chair David Golden, Vice Chair Alan Costello and members Joseph Hutchinson, Tim Lawlor (via Zoom), Len Levin, Laurence Pizer, Martha Vautrain (via Zoom), and Robert Zupperoli (via Zoom).

Alternates: Steve Bolotin was in attendance and Mike Hanlon was absent.

Staff assistant, Michelle Turner, was not present.

CALL TO ORDER

David Golden, Chair called the meeting to order at 6 PM, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

December 19, 2023

Len Levin MOTIONED to approve the meeting Minutes, as presented. 2nd by Alan Costello.

	YES	NO	ABSTAIN		YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Betty Cavacco	X			Martha Vautrain			X
Alan Costello	X			Robert Zupperoli	X		
Joe Hutchinson	X			David Golden-CHAIR	X		
Tim Lawlor			X	Steve Bolotin-Alternate	X		
Len Levin	X			Mike Hanlon Alternate			
Larry Pizer	X			*Alternate votes are taken but their vote is not included in the vote tally unless the alternate replaces an absent full standing member.			

MOTION PASSED 7-0-2.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Proposal for a Handbook, presented by Laurence Pizer

Rationale: This Committee has mentioned in its discussions the value of a handbook both for Town Meeting Members and for the general public interested in understanding Town government. The following motion would commit the Charter Review Committee to formalizing such a proposal.

Mr. Pizer moves to add Subsection w to Section 5 of Chapter 3 (Town Manager: Power and Duties): The Town Manager shall be responsible for the creation and maintenance of a Handbook for Town Government describing processes the Town follows to accomplish its ends.

Discussion ensued.

Laurence Pizer MOTIONED to approve, 2nd by Joseph Hutchinson.

	YES	NO	ABSTAIN			YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Betty Cavacco		X			Martha Vautrain	X		
Alan Costello	X	X			Robert Zupperoli			X
Joe Hutchinson					David Golden-CHAIR	X		
Tim Lawlor		X			Steve Bolotin-Alternate		X	
Len Levin		X			Mike Hanlon-Alternate			
Larry Pizer	X				*Alternate votes are taken but their vote is not included in the vote tally unless the alternate replaces an absent full standing member.			

MOTION FAILED 4-4-1.

2-Z-1 Town Meeting Article Subcommittees

The Committee of Precinct Chairs shall appoint subcommittees to review articles in advance of each Annual and Special Town Meeting in order to discuss those articles and make suggestions for corrections of technical deficiencies.

The Committee of Precinct Chairs shall appoint such subcommittees as are appropriate for each specific Town Meeting.

Such subcommittees shall be chaired by a member of the Committee of Precinct Chairs but may be comprised of members from the Committee of Precinct Chairs and/or representative town meeting members.

The Chair of the Committee of Precinct Chairs shall be vested with the authority to delegate article review to the various subcommittees.

Discussion ensued.

Joseph Hutchinson MOTIONED to approve 2-Z-1 as proposed, 2nd Alan Costello.

Betty Cavacco left the meeting, and in her absence, Mr. Bolotin became a full voting member. Correction made and Ms. Cavacco returned to the meeting. Mr. Bolotin remained an alternate.

	YES	NO	ABSTAIN			YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Betty Cavacco	X				Martha Vautrain	X		
Alan Costello	X				Robert Zupperoli		X	
Joe Hutchinson	X				David Golden-CHAIR	X		
Tim Lawlor		X			Steve Bolotin-Alternate	X		
Len Levin	X				Mike Hanlon Alternate			
Larry Pizer	X				*Alternate votes are taken but their vote is not included in the vote tally unless the alternate replaces an absent full standing member.			

MOTION PASSED 7-2-0.

Brief discussion on the combined Charter changes made to date. The Chair advised Committee members to refer to the posted Meeting Minutes.

- Section 4 Procedures (continued)

2-4-2 The quorum necessary for the conduct of representative town meeting business shall be two-thirds (2/3) of the total number of elected representative town meeting members. A majority of those present may adjourn any meeting forthwith to a stated date, time, and place, but no Town Meeting shall adjourn over the date of an election of Town Meeting Members.

Discussion ensued.

Len Levin MOTIONED to change the words “of those present” to “in person or remotely”-, No second/no motion.

Laurence Pizer MOTIONED to change the words “of those present” to “of those present and voting”. 2nd by Alan Costello.

	YES	NO	ABSTAIN			YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Betty Cavacco		X			Martha Vautrain	X		
Alan Costello	X				Robert Zupperoli		X	
Joe Hutchinson		X			David Golden-CHAIR		X	
Tim Lawlor		X			Steve Bolotin-Alternate		X	
Len Levin	X				Mike Hanlon Alternate			
Larry Pizer	X				*Alternate votes are taken but their vote is not included in the vote tally unless the alternate replaces an absent full standing member.			

MOTION FAILED 4-5-0.

2-4-3 *The representative town meeting shall always operate in open session and secret ballots shall not be allowed.*

No action/no motions.

2-4-4 *The order of consideration of the articles on the warrant may be changed only by a two thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting.*

No action/no motions.

2-4-5 *The representative town meeting ~~may shall~~ adopt rules and regulations relating to its procedures and its methods of operation at each Town Meeting.*

Joseph Hutchinson MOTIONED to adopt 2-4-5- as proposed above. 2nd Laurence Pizer

Robert Zupperoli MOTION to table remainder of agenda discussion items, 2nd by Betty Cavacco.

	YES	NO	ABSTAIN		YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Betty Cavacco	X			Martha Vautrain		X	
Alan Costello		X		Robert Zupperoli	X		
Joe Hutchinson		X		David Golden-CHAIR		X	
Tim Lawlor		X		Steve Bolotin-Alternate		X	
Len Levin		X		Mike Hanlon-Alternate			
Larry Pizer		X		*Alternate votes are taken but their vote is not included in the vote tally unless the alternate replaces an absent full standing member.			

MOTION FAILED 2-7-0.

Meeting Discussion Items continued.

2-4-6 *An electronic roll call vote, electronic or otherwise, shall be required for all final main motions, on every warrant article and on any matters with respect to the following subjects: adoption or amendment of zoning by laws; adoption or amendment of general by laws; and fiscal matters which are defined as any appropriation, borrowing, fund transfer or the creation of or re-authorization of such enterprise or revolving funds as may be authorized by state law; provided, however, that in the event of a vote which the Moderator reasonably believes is likely to be near unanimous, the Moderator may elect to take a verbal roll call of only those voting in the minority. In the event that the electronic voting system is unavailable, or determined in the Moderator's sole discretion to be malfunctioning, the Moderator may provide for a manual roll call vote in place of an electronic roll call.*

Discussion ensued.

Tim Lawlor MOTIONED to change 2-4-6 to read as follows: 2nd Len Levin.

2-4-6 An electronic roll call vote shall be required for all final main motions. <strike

remaining text>

Len Levin motioned to amend as follows:

2-4-6 A roll call vote, electronic or otherwise, shall be required for all final main motions.

Mr. Lawlor accepted the amended motion. Mr. Levin 2nd the motion.

Mr. Golden motioned to amend as follows:

2-4-6 A roll call vote, electronic or otherwise, shall be required for all ~~final main~~ motions.

Mr. Lawlor accepted Mr. Golden's amended motion, Mr. Levin 2nd the amended motion.

	YES	NO	ABSTAIN		YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Betty Cavacco	X			Martha Vautrain	X		
Alan Costello	X			Robert Zupperoli	X		
Joe Hutchinson	X			David Golden-CHAIR	X		
Tim Lawlor	X			Steve Bolotin-Alternate	X		
Len Levin	X			Mike Hanlon-Alternate			
Larry Pizer	X			*Alternate votes are taken but their vote is not included in the vote tally unless the alternate replaces an absent full standing member.			

MOTION PASSED 9-0-0.

~~2-4-7 An electronic roll call vote shall be required for all motions to close debate; provided, however, that in the event of a vote which the Moderator reasonably believes is likely to be near unanimous, the Moderator may elect to take a verbal roll call of only those voting in the minority. In the event that the electronic voting system is unavailable, or determined in the Moderator's sole discretion to be malfunctioning, the Moderator may provide for a manual roll call vote in place of an electronic roll call.~~

Laurence Pizer motioned to strike 2-4-7, 2nd Tim Lawlor

	YES	NO	ABSTAIN		YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Betty Cavacco	X			Martha Vautrain	X		
Alan Costello	X			Robert Zupperoli	X		
Joe Hutchinson	X			David Golden-CHAIR	X		
Tim Lawlor	X			Steve Bolotin-Alternate	X		
Len Levin	X			Mike Hanlon-Alternate			
Larry Pizer	X			*Alternate votes are taken but their vote is not included in the vote tally unless the alternate replaces an absent full standing member.			

MOTION PASSED 9-0-0.

Mr. Pizer motioned to table remainder of discussion items, 2nd Robert Zupperoli

	YES	NO	ABSTAIN			YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Betty Cavacco	X			Martha Vautrain	X			
Alan Costello	X			Robert Zupperoli	X			
Joe Hutchinson	X			David Golden-CHAIR		X		
Tim Lawlor	X			Steve Bolotin-Alternate	X			
Len Levin	X			Mike Hanlon Alternate				
Larry Pizer	X			*Alternate votes are taken but their vote is not included in the vote tally unless the alternate replaces an absent full standing member.				

MOTION PASSED 8-1-0.

NEW BUSINESS/OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Golden discussed a more frequent meeting schedule. He suggested a Zoom meeting for January 9. 3 members stated definitively they could not attend a January 9th meeting.

The next meeting date was stated as January 16.

Mr. Zupperoli noted that January 16 is a joint meeting of the Select Board, School Committee and Advisory & Finance Committee.

The Chair also asked members to hold January 23rd as a meeting date.

Mr. Hutchinson noted his proposed and submitted re-write of Chapter 2.

In an effort to save time in the review process, Ms. Cavacco suggested the Committee begin by reviewing the Chapters/Sections most important to each member.

No further business.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle A. Turner

Michelle A. Turner

Minutes Approved on: January 16, 2024