

COMMITTEE OF PRECINCT CHAIRS
MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, JANUARY 19, 2023 7:00 p.m.
GREAT ROOM, TOWN HALL/HYBRID

7:00 p.m. Kathryn Holmes, COPC Chair, called the COPC meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

GUESTS PRESENT: William Abbott, Chairman, Charter Commission
Martha Vautrain, Plymouth League of Women Voters
Jerry Sirrico, TMM, Precinct 3
Pat McCarthy, TMM, Precinct 18
Everett Malaguti, TMM, Precinct 2 & Chair of Energy Committee
Matt Muratore, State Representative (not present)

Those present participated in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Holmes noted a modification in the agenda: Mr. Muratore will be here at 7:20 p.m. Motion to approve the revised agenda made by Mr. Brewster, seconded by Ms. Adelman, motion approved unanimously.

INTRODUCTION OF PRECINCT CHAIRS:

Precinct 1	Christine Pratt - remote
Precinct 2	Thomas Pinto
Precinct 3	Dale Webber
Precinct 4	Clare Montanari, Clerk
Precinct 5	Kevin Lynch
Precinct 6	Maureen Renaud - remote
Precinct 7	David Golden
Precinct 8	George McKay
Precinct 9	Kathryn Holmes, Chair
Precinct 10	Alan Costello
Precinct 11	Frank O'Brien - remote
Precinct 12	Pat Adelman - remote
Precinct 13	Susan Wentworth - remote
Precinct 14	Jeannette Kelly
Precinct 15	Wrestling Brewster
Precinct 16	Pompey Delafield
Precinct 17	Joe Hutchinson
Precinct 18	Alyse Bruneau - remote

Ms. Holmes reviewed the agenda for this meeting. Mr. Lynch made a motion to shorten the time for the review of the changes to the Charter, Mr. Costello seconded the motion. Discussion: Ms. Holmes reported that usually an hour would be scheduled for the presentation but she has scheduled an hour and 20 minutes should more time be needed; Mr. Brewster noted that this meeting was to primarily discuss the changes to the Charter. Ms. Vautrain, PLWV, explained how the review would take place and indicated that the amount of time should not be lengthy. Mr. Lynch said his intent is to only have an hour to accomplish this review. Mr. Lynch withdrew his motion.

7:10 p.m. Charter Review Changes: Ms. Vautrain, representing the Plymouth League of Women Voters and an observer of the Charter Commission meetings, addressed the group. She and the LWV are now focused on educating Plymouth's citizens regarding the changes. Ms. Vautrain gave an introduction of the function of the LWV: it is a three tiered, grass roots organization with local, state and national chapters with both men and women members. When the group studies issues they study those at the local, state and National level; she noted the group is a non-partisan league, they do not support candidates for public office nor do they support political parties, but the group does take positions on current issues and does support those positions at meetings. She noted her League recently supported climate change and partnered with other organizations in this area to declare a climate emergency and also supported hiring a "climate resiliency and sustainability planner". The League is involved in voter service activities, education, holding a candidates' night and now the Charter Commission revisions which will be voted on in May. She noted the local League decided not to take a position on the Plymouth Charter question so they can devote their time to educating citizens. She noted that the documents are all on line. Ms. Vautrain reviewed the "Major Changes to the Plymouth, MA Charter" document.

Mr. Abbott reviewed the history leading to the present Charter Commission: in May of 2021 the question was on the ballot regarding whether there should be a Charter Commission and on that same ballot there was an election of candidates for the Charter Commission; there were approximately 20 candidates and 9 were elected. The review had to be accomplished in two years, Chapter 43B which is 14 sections long and is very detailed. He reviewed the different types of government the Charter Commission could propose. He noted that every 5 years the Charter is reviewed but those changes are minor, you cannot change the form of government by amendments, you only do changes in the form of government by a Commission. Since 1990 this is the 5th Commission. He noted the Commission of 1999 wrote the Charter that we have today, which changes included holding caucuses, duties of Town Meeting members, the Committee of Precinct Chairs was formed; he emphasized the large size of Plymouth geographically. He noted that consultants were hired, Colins Management Institute, which group has basically provided guidance to all of the Charters in the State. The Commission heard what other towns have done, and experts gave advice and guidance. He said the Commission did not start off unanimously, 3 members wanted a different type of government, ie. Town Council, the others preferred to keep Town Meeting. In February, 2022, a vote was taken and the Commission voted 6-3 to stay with a Town Meeting form of government; in May, 2022 there was ballot question as to what form of government the voters wanted and the vote was in favor of keeping a Town Meeting form. He noted that representatives from towns appeared before the Commission and issues were presented and discussed, so the Commission decided to improve what we have in place. He noted there is an issue of how to get the Charter to the people, Charter is 50-60 pages; statute indicates the Charter needs to be mailed to the voters, however, in Plymouth we have over 40,000 voters and it would be a large expense; the Select Board and Town Manager proposed sending a postcard giving information as to where a voter could obtain a copy of the proposed Charter, but the issue has not been resolved as the Statute is very specific; the cost of mailing to every voter could be between \$20,000. to \$100,000. He noted that the Attorney General has given no advice with respect to this issue. The new Charter will be voted on in May. He noted that if it fails, the vote can come back a second time. He noted there was a lot of deliberation and thought that went into the discussion and the vote with respect to the proposed changes. Mr. Abbott noted that if the people vote in favor of this proposed Charter, it will take effect July 1, 2023. He noted that the elections are different and will not take effect until the next election in May, 2024. He noted the "Transition Section" which provides for fixing any errors.

Mr. Costello asked about the Precinct Advisory Committee (Chapter 2-1-1 (a)(c), noting that a committee has to be appointed every year that ends in "9", and asked why can't a committee be formed 5 years prior to that? Mr. Abbott said the census is done every ten years, and this will allow for this committee to start earlier to start gathering information. Mr. Costello asked about Chapter 2-2-8 regarding attendance and voting record and indicated that it is already in the Charter but not adhered to and asked about a time frame with respect to this. Mr. Abbott said the language was amended for clarity. Mr. Costello said if the statute says the Charter has to be sent to the residents why doesn't it just get sent out: Mr. Abbott said an opinion was rendered by the new town counsel and another rendered by the special town counsel because the Attorney General would not commit and said that the Town needs to seek their own counsel. Mr. Golden asked which counsel are we discussing; Mr. Abbott said that the Charter Commission hired its own counsel to help with drafting at a cost of \$15,000. Mr. Golden asked if it is the Town Counsel who advises if there is risk if postcards are sent out; Mr. Abbott replied that the opinions are available and are on the website, he was told by counsel that the Charter is on the website and people are familiar with computers. Mr. Golden said there is additional work load on the staff, etc., and asked if there is any additional cost to implement this Charter. Mr. Abbott said there is no known figure about staffing; he said Lynne Barrett was in discussion with how this affects the budget. Mr. Abbott said that this Charter's success depends on volunteers just as it has in the past three decades; he pointed out that the COPC has more functions under this Charter and if people don't want to serve there could be a problem, he further noted that this is the strength of Plymouth, there are so many volunteers. Mr. Abbott said he was the first Chair on the COPC, no one really knew what their responsibilities were but the job was defined, it worked, the COPC became more professional. Ms. Holmes noted that those who have been on the COPC for years have been anxious for the ability to have more control over article review and the articles meet the objective when voted on, whether it is a budget item we approve, etc., and there are a lot of "Chairs" who are eager to have this Charter approved because it will give more authority to have the Town work with us. Mr. Golden said he is for additional/deeper review of the articles but feels there will be additional staff added to the Town's payroll; he asked if a financial component could be produced which would say if this Charter will cost and how much. Mr. Abbott said the members did not anticipate that this would require any additional staff, it was discussed among the Charter Commission members. Mr. Abbott noted that the third Town Meeting was introduced because criticism existed that Town Meeting does not meet often enough, the Commission discussed this issue and couldn't see any cases where this has happened, but as option the third Town Meeting was added, but that option could be waived. Mr. Brewster said in the past when additional Town Meetings were required, there was no additional staff, so a specific number can be sought to hold an extra Town Meeting; he said that with our current infrastructure the Town can do this, the COPC might need an admin staff. He further commented that Spring Town Meeting was always budgets, now they are also in the Fall and the Town could get back to having only budgets in the Spring as it was previously. Ms. Holmes noted discussion regarding the third Town Meeting, that Town Meeting form is slowing down our ability to manage our Town and the third Town Meeting suggestion was put in place to address that need if necessary.

Mr. Hutchinson asked how will this be organized among the COPC to accomplish the new functions; Ms. Holmes said she has ideas but suggested that if this gets approved the COPC will meet as a group to discuss the best way to address the changes; there are a lot of strong people on this Committee with experience. Ms. Holmes said she feels that there are people serving as Chairs that are eager for more change and have more control; she noted that several Chairs over the years have struggled to get information from different departments, noting such as the status on Articles, or the budgeting on Articles and whether the Town was over or under, and people will step up as they have been asking for a while.

Ms. Pratt said one component that is long over-due is Section 2-7-1; at the end of the statement for that change is “to provide a voice for the Legislative Branch as a co-equal branch of government”. She noted that she, Mr. Costello and Mr. Brewster can attest to the frustration and investment of time that was dedicated to this Legislative Over-sight Committee, established a couple of years ago, and the frustration that was felt by others involved with gaining information on articles, questions by the community as to the status and progress of an article and it fell on deaf ears. She noted that sometimes they received information requested, other times they did not; there was no obligation from the Town in providing this information, a lot of time was invested to no avail. She noted that a committee of that nature being formally established by the Charter will make the COPC a more efficient body and more accountable to our constituents who ask questions. She acknowledges that this may take more resources and more time, but it will be offset that the COPC will be now an accountable body and people will be obligated to provide us with the information because this Charter will require them to do so. She said she commends Mr. Abbott and the Commissioners for all their hard work and this Charter will make the Legislative Branch more cohesive, more influential and afford a lot more checks and balances which has been a struggle to do in the past without any power to do so. Mr. Abbott thanked Ms. Pratt for her comments. He said the Legislative Over-Sight Committee was a very important committee, many hours were spent discussing it and how it should work, there was a lot of input including the Town Manager who was very helpful and cooperative, he understands what we are looking for, the spread sheet which is on line where a person can go on line and actually see an article of a prior Town Meeting and track the progress of it, and input can be made to the spreadsheet with people involved with the article to show its progression; he noted that the reports have to be done within a certain number of days following Town Meeting, which is specified in the Charter, and then there is “catch up” for the older Articles and Town Manager is in agreement with this; this is fixing something that we know is broken. Ms. Pratt said she agrees with Mr. Abbott and commented how easy this would have been for Mr. Costello when he was Chair of the COPC.

Mr. Lynch asked if the letters from the two Town Counsels and the Charter Counsel are in hard copy form? Mr. Abbott said they are, they are posted. Mr. Abbott said it is his understanding that Mr. Bergeron’s opinion was sought, but he has no information that they went to KP. There are two opinions, the Town Counsel’s and the Charter Commission’s opinion. Mr. Lynch noted that it is his opinion that the Town is not in favor of spending a lot of money to send out the hard copies of the Charter, there is the digital form and there is the hard copy that the Statue calls for and asked if the Town would be in violation of the Statue if we do not send out the hard copy? Mr. Abbott advised Mr. Lynch to read the opinion of Counsel, he said the Statue says the Town should do it but the question is how to interpret that Statue; he noted again that the Attorney General indicated that the Statue, as did the Town Counsel, can be read and interpreted; Mr. Abbott noted that a decision has not been made. Mr. Abbott said the Attorney General is mentioned in Chapter 43B only for the purpose of reviewing our Charter in draft form to ensure it doesn’t violate any State law; in September the Charter was submitted to the Attorney General it was reviewed and deemed to not violate any State law, so go with it. Mr. Lynch said he thought it was stated that there is a Statue that says the Town has to send the hard copy to all of the voters, and asked if that is correct. Mr. Abbott replied that is what the Statue says. Mr. Lynch asked Mr. Abbott if he contacted the Attorney General to ask them to clarify, Mr. Abbott said he did, and he was told that the Town could get their own counsel to advise on what you should be doing, they do not want to be brought into this; Mr. Abbott said he also went to his consultants and they got their team together and came back with a response that they are not going to give us advice either. Mr. Lynch asked if there are letters from the Attorney General and the Charter’s counsel stating this? Mr. Abbott said the opinion is available to read. Mr. Lynch said he would like to go to the Select Board to ask if we would be in total violation of that Statue; he wants to know if the Town be in violation if we do not send a hard copy.

Mr. Webber noted that if the Charter fails this Spring, the Charter can be presented again for a vote. Mr. Abbott said if the Charter gets a certain percentage of votes in May and fails, citizens can bring it back a second time by getting additional signatures, a few thousand signatures, and it would be on the succeeding ballot. He noted this was done once in the Mayor charter in the early 2000s and it failed the second time. Mr. Webber asked if it does fail does the same Charter have to come back and Mr. Abbott said he believes it has to be the same Charter but there is no language to that effect. Mr. Webber asked if there is a mediation process that is on-going with respect to the interpretation of the Statue and how the new Charter reaches the voters? Mr. Abbott said the Statue makes it clear that this is the Select Board's decision; the Charter was delivered to the Select Board before November 15, the decision is the Select Board's as to how the Charter gets delivered to the voters. Mr. Webber noted Section 2-2-4 addresses "detailed minutes to be taken of the Town Meeting" and he asked "by whom"? He said that job is the Town Clerk's. Mr. Abbott said the question he had was what form those minutes should be, written, does the video trump the written? It is the Town Clerk's decision to deliver appropriate minutes. Mr. Webber said they have never had detailed minutes; Mr. Abbott said they can have the video. Mr. Brewster said in the past PACTV had control over that video and in the Charter the Town has control over that video and the Town makes it available to every Town Meeting member. Mr. Webber noted that the video indicates at the opening that the video is not considered to be an official set of minutes, by PACTV. Mr. Webber noted that Section 2-2-4 would involve a stenographer procured in order to do that. Mr. Webber noted that to rely on the video by PACTV, when PACTV puts out a disclaimer; Mr. Abbott noted that the Charter formulates a record of that meeting, looking at the two together, the video and the written minutes. Mr. Webber said it is his opinion that this Charter Commission did a lot of work but feels that the section that further empowers the COPC and has placed upon the COPC an incredible increase in work load to the COPC volunteers.

Mr. Hutchinson said it is a lot of work and will change the dynamics of our precincts, and give the precincts a lot of power, powers of process, appointment, agenda and that inserts a political element to the precinct dynamic that was not there before.

Mr. Golden said Section 11 of MGL 43B states: the City Council and Board of Selectmen shall cause the final report of the Charter Commission or Charter amendment proposed to be printed and a copy to be distributed to each residence of one or more registered voters; such distribution shall occur not later than two weeks before the election at which the question or adopting, providing or amending the Charter is to be submitted to the voters. Additional copies of such final report or proposed amendment shall be filed with the City or Town Clerk for distribution to registered voters requesting the same, one such copy shall be posted in his or her office.

Mr. Costello noted that what he wanted to come out of our new Charter was the power to go back and amend an article or to increase the value of an article, noting the Library article where it was voted but the Town missed the opportunity to get the bid in and it took 2 to 3 million dollars to get to the finish line. He asked where in the scope of work in the Charter would the COPC be able to fix that in between Town Meetings; he noted that if an article voted on did come up short where could this be amended prior to another town meeting? Mr. Abbott said under the State Statue Town Meeting has to appropriate that money, Town Meeting is the appropriating body. Mr. Abbott said if it is crucial you can call a special Town Meeting for that; the COPC could ask the Select Board to call a special Town Meeting for that purpose.

Mr. Hutchinson said a ruling under 43B, regarding a Charter that gets voted down and attains 35%, he said it can be considered a provisional Charter at that point and there is no real

language that says what that means. There is a distinction between a Charter of Commission and a Charter of Committee would come into play because you could call for a Charter of Committee to be formed and might be able to change to what is referred to as a provisional Charter. He asked how would you envision a Charter of Committee dealing with a provisional Charter, he noted it would have to be after three years, now it is two years. Mr. Abbott said the section being referred to is an "optional" Charter, there is no suggestion that you can take that Charter and remove the provision or amend it. Mr. Hutchinson asked that if the vote fails could the Town form a Charter committee to go back and fix the errors. Mr. Abbott said you could do anything by special act of the legislature, but the Statue doesn't allow you to do that; you would have to get special legislation to have the Town open the Charter and make changes to it. Mr. Hutchinson said that every five years a Charter Review Committee is formed to re-examine the Charter; Mr. Abbott said a Charter Review can only do certain things, what amendments can be done and certain amendments cannot be accomplished through a Charter Review Committee, i.e the method of election, terms of office, etc., a Charter Commission can amend but not a Charter Review Committee; this is outlined in 43B.

Mr. Pinto commented on the increase in workload on the COPC; the COPC will be co-equal with the Select Board; he noted to run for a precinct candidates do not have to spend a lot of money, you only have to win your precinct, sometimes in an uncontested race and to become a "chair" you only need 5 out of 4 votes. He noted that the increase in work load could draw out some potential candidates for Select Board. Ms. Holmes noted that the opposite could happen by providing more authority to the COPC you could have stronger candidates running for Town Meeting.

Mr. Webber, noting the document outlining the major changes to the Charter, said under 3-17-4 & 5-5-2 the term "council" has been used in identifying the "Committee" of Precinct Chairs; Mr. Abbott responded that the term "council" is a typo.

Mr. Brewster, noting the additional responsibilities of the precinct chairs, said multiple times he and Mr. Costello went to the Select Board as representatives from the COPC asking for information and were told that the COPC was just an advisory group. He noted that in collecting several signatures, he found that people were indicating that the Legislative and Executive Branch do not have checks and balances, the Executive Branch meets as scheduled but the Legislative Branch meets twice a year, people indicated more transparency is needed, an example given was the redistricting of precincts; what this Charter does is take what the public wants and creates checks and balances, there is a lot more responsibility placed on the COPC, but this is what the public wants.

Ms. Vautrain outlined a few of the changes: Section 3-1-1 the Select Board shall have 7 members, 4 at large and 3 from districts; this allows citizens from precincts to interact more easily and 7 Select Board members will bring more information to the table and provide the voters with more representation and could increase voter turnout. Section 3-2-1 the Commissioners felt that this defined the powers and duties of the Select Board, identifying the clarification between them and the Town departments through the Town Manager. Section 3-12-4 the Director of Planning shall be responsible for compliance with the Master Plan; in that section under A, B & C any regulations that relate to planning and development would have to be cleared by the Planning Director and Town Meeting articles would have the same regulation. Section 3-12-4 C the Planning Director would need to sign off on whether the projects align with the Master Plan goals. Section 3-17-1 Appointments Advisory Committee. Town Manager would appoint a five member committee to help the Town Manager with appointments to whatever committees that looking for more members.

Mr. Webber noted two positions under Section 3-6-1 under Department of Public Works that a Masters Degree is no longer required; in Section 3-15-1 the Director of Planning & Development no longer requires 5 years of experience; he said this gives a diminishment of job qualifications at a time when we need more, not less. He asked what the thought process was. Mr. Abbott said a Charter Review Committee 7-8 years ago where there was a question with the person at that time serving as the DPW director, a charter change was made to require this degree just for that individual; he said a Charter should not be personnel oriented.

Mr. Delafield said he is pleased that this Charter strengthens the Master Plan, but asked about setting up three districts for Select Board. Mr. Brewster said setting up three districts resulted in a lot of discussion, and the Commission felt that three was more appropriate rather than two or four. Mr. Hutchinson said the conversation was to do with representation. Mr. Brewster noted that the extra members of the Select Board are "districted".

Mr. McKay said he now understands, now he knows there is a map that exists that shows this but that was not part of the information that was given with the Charter recommendation and that information should be given out with the Charter information. Ms. Holmes asked if there is a map showing the three districts. Mr. Brewster said we are talking about the extra Select Board members and how the districts were determined for those extra Select Board members; there is a map showing this. Mr. Abbott said the districts have not been defined, that will be determined in the transition. Mr. McKay noted that the Town is being asked to vote on a Charter and there is no map showing the districts; Mr. Abbott noted the process is all spelled out; there will be six precincts per district. Mr. Delafield noted that evenly divided can mean several things: evenly geographically, evenly based on age or population, number of students in each area and asked what does "evenly" mean to the Commission? Mr. Brewster said they looked at how the precincts were redistricted, and that goes by population. Mr. Abbott noted that this mentioned in the Changes, under Section 9-6-2.

Ms. Pratt asked if the Charter Commission considered allowing the Precinct Chairs to set up subcommittees that were broader than subcommittees of themselves? She noted that a few years back they had to go to the Select Board to receive permission to include residents as part of the COPC subcommittees. She noted that the current Charter affords the COPC the privilege of creating subcommittees of themselves. Mr. Brewster said that was not discussed. The COPC is restricted from appointing people who are not part of the COPC to subcommittees and there is no provision to allow non COPC members to be appointed to COPC subcommittees included in the Charter.

Mr. Golden noted there are two additional Select Board members, there is a stipend attached to that which means a stipend of \$4000. per member per year; Town Meetings cost about \$20,000. Section 2-7-2 requires the Town Manager to provide support staff for the COPC. He noted that it is his understanding that the Town is not hiring to fill positions at this time. He noted that there should be a financial analysis for the proposed Charter. Mr. Abbott noted that the Select Board's salaries are modest, with a Town Council you would be paying substantially more, plus salary for a mayor. He further noted that Town Meeting feels strongly that a Select Board's position is a voluntary position.

Mr. Lynch noted that to implement the three districts you need to appoint a District Implementation Committee and asked who appoints that Committee?? Mr. Abbott said that five members from the COPC are appointed and five by the Select Board.

Mr. Costello regarding the transition with the Select Board, noted that Mr. Abbott said in May of 2024 all Select Board seats would be on the ballot, the three district members would be elected

and the Select Board members would have a term according to the amount of votes they received. Mr. Costello asked where in the transition do the powers get transferred to the COPC? Mr. Abbott said it would be immediately; Mr. Costello asked how would the COPC work with the present Select Board; Mr. Abbott said there is a chapter devoted to this; transition would occur July 1. Mr. Costello confirmed that July 1 all the powers given to the COPC would take effect. Mr. Costello noted that the the COPC would get the powers but the Select Board would not change until elections are held. Mr. Abbott noted the Advisory & Finance members had to be appointed by July 1.

Mr. Sirrico spoke and said that Ms. Pratt was right, Ken Buechs was chair when the Graffiti Committee was formed and there were two residents appointed to that committee.

9:05 p.m. Public Comment: Ms. McCarthy announced that Project Arts met this week, there are ten concerts scheduled for the summer. She announced that a date "Night for Mike" has been scheduled for March 31. From 6-11 at Memorial Hall, Christine Hurley will be the MC, there will be one primary band and others. Mr. Landers is progressing, and anyone who wants to message Mike, can go onto his Facebook page and anyone wishing to visit can do so by contacting the family; he is at Wingate in Kingston. Volunteers will be needed for the event.

Mr. Malaguti reported that Plymouth was awarded a Green Community designation, and received a grant of \$270,000. To be used for energy saving protocols; this was two years in the making. He thanked Patrick Farragher, the Town's Energy Officer and Holly Skates who worked to get this to Town Meeting and to the State and he thanked everyone involved in this endeavor.

Mr. Sirrico gave an update of the projects being proposed within Predicts 1, 2, 3 & 4: He said the problem was noted in the 1989 Master Plan. He said in the precincts mentioned downtown there are problems with traffic, parking, safety and more. He said the four precincts got together, one meeting was held among the four precincts which was well attended where these problems were discussed. Representatives from this group have had two meetings with the DPW director, the engineers, engineer from GPI which company studies traffic problems and the Town could hire them if this committee is successful in sponsoring an article for the Special Town Meeting. Mr. Weber and he met with Town Counsel to draft an article for that meeting, and this action is moving fast and well; the deadline for the article is February 3 and GPI will submit a figure of what the cost would be to do a study. Concerns are traffic flows, crosswalks, sidewalks, number of cars; Ms. Holmes said space will be created when the COPC holds the presentation forum. Mr. Weber noted that February 3 is the deadline for submitting the article, needs were identified in Precinct 3 but they in Precinct 3 don't want to make changes that would create a problem for other precincts; there are new protocols and procedures if one wants to sponsor an article; he noted that Precincts can now act as a sponsor; it is anticipated that the committee will present their proposed article at the next COPC meeting. Mr. Sirrico thanked Ms. Sgarzi, Town Engineer, as well as Jim Downey, and met also with a former town employee, Syd Karchi.

Mr. Hutchinson noted that the changes COPC needs to talk about Fin Com, town moderator, and powers of town management and wants to extend this conversation at the next meeting. Ms. Holmes said this needs to be on the agenda and could involve additional COPC meetings. Mr. Hutchinson emphasized that administrative costs needs to be discussed.

MINUTES: Ms. Montanari sent a copy of the minutes for the last meeting, November 17, 2022 on Tuesday and asked for corrections. Mr. Brewster made a motion to approve, seconded by Ms. Holmes. Discussion: Mr. Golden said he sent an email for additions to the minutes and asked if she received them. Ms. Montanari said she did not. He noted that the discussion on the back up for the Chair was more lengthy than indicated in the minutes and he expressed his

concern. Ms. Montanari suggested that the COPC postpone approving the minutes. Mr. Brewster rescinded his motion.

OLD BUSINESS: Ms. Holmes, addressed coverage for the COPC Chair should he or she not be able to be present and the Vice Chair also not able to assume Chair responsibilities, which was discussed at the last COPC meeting which resulted in nominations and a vote taken to appoint a temporary Chair. She has since learned that the vote the COPC took was not in compliance with Robert's Rules of Order and the vote is void. She noted that the COPC will follow Robert's Rules of Order: in the event that she will not be able to attend the meeting, the Clerk, with the absence of a Vice Chairperson, will take over the meeting, open the meeting and open nominations to elect a Chair that will run a specific meeting for that specific session.

Ms. Holmes said she received the sad news about Bill Arienti, he has resigned as the Chair of precinct 6. Ms. Renaud said they have not reorganized; Mr. Arienti, before the next election, is either going to drop out or stay in as a Town Meeting member and she is sitting in place until that time.

Ms. Holmes said the hybrid Town Meeting legislation passed and a hybrid Town Meeting will be held in the Spring. It was noted that election is Saturday, May 20. Regarding agenda topics for February: Ms. Holmes has asked Chris Campbell, Superintendent of Schools, to come before the February COPC meeting; Mr. Lynch will be talking about a proposal he wants to put forward; Mr. Hartmann has been asked to come before the COPC as well as Mr. Bolotin as they are working on getting an update to our Master Plan. The Charter will also be included in the agenda. Mr. Lynch asked for New Business:

NEW BUSINESS: Mr. Lynch noted that on January 5 he showed a number of town residents and officials a pilot program called "The Public Information Center" where you can have a bookcase filled with notebooks full of town information, this was discussed with Brad Brothers and he said in order to move forward he would need support from the COPC. Mr. Lynch made a motion that the COPC support and establish a public information center at Town Hall to inform citizens. Ms. Holmes noted that this suggestion has been submitted by Mr. Lynch every year and Mr. Landers supported a motion, Mr. Lynch said that was different, Ms. Holmes said this topic has been covered a lot and asked what he is looking for. Mr. Lynch said he is looking for a motion from the COPC to show support for the establishment of a pilot program/public information center here at Town Hall so he can go to Mr. Brothers and said he has the COPC support. He said he gathered a number of signatures, 64, for this proposal. Mr. Golden said he doesn't believe the COPC can make a motion; it has to be posted. It was noted that the COPC covered this about four years ago in support; Mr. Costello said it was discussed several years ago and supported at that time. This will be placed on the agenda next month.

Mr. Lynch asked for old business to be discussed.

Mr. Costello noted that where we are starting to make schedules for upcoming meetings that a Presentation prior to Town Meeting be scheduled. Ms. Holmes said a special COPC meeting will be held.

Mr. Brewster made a motion to adjourn, motion seconded by Mr. Golden, vote was unanimous to close. Meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Clare Montanari, Clerk
Precinct 4 Chair

