MINUTES
CHARTER COMMISSION FOR TOWN of HARWICH
Harwich Town Hall, Small Meeting Room, 732 Main Street Harwich MA 02645
Thursday, August 21, 2025 6.30 pm

MEMBERS PARTICIPATING: Linda Cebula, Chair, Sandy Hall, Vice Chair, Jon Chorey, Herb Bell, Judith Underwood, Paul Doane, Richard Waystack and Lou Urbano

MEMBER NOT PARTICIPATING: Toni London

1 Call to order

Ms. Cebula called the meeting of the Charter Commission to order on Thursday, August 21, 2025 at 6:30PM. The Chair declared a quorum.

2 Approval of regular minutes for August 14, 2025

Ms. Hall moved to approve the regular meeting minutes for August 14, 2025 . Seconded by Mr. Waystack.

Vote: 8:0 in favor Motion carried.

3 Continuing Business Discussion and possible votes
Responses re search for consultant
Responses from town agencies for thoughts on Charter

Ms. Cebula noted that various Committees and Boards have the Charter discussion on their Agendas and the Commission can expect feedback soon.

Ms. Cebula noted that regarding the consultant, she had communicated to Mr. Wilson from the Edward J. Collins Jr. Center for Public Management that the Commission would like to hire them. She related the answers to the questions posed by some Committee members. She also noted what is and is not covered in the contract.

Members had questions, suggestions and requests for meetings with the consultant both in person and remotely, how frequently the consultant should attend and communications between meetings as well as the hourly rates.

Also discussed was hiring a facilitator for the community meetings (public hearings).

4 Discussion on current Harwich Charter including
Continuing discussions on C3 and C4
And other related provisions

Ms. Cebula noted for the public that Chapter 3 is the Select Board and Chapter 4 is the Town Administrator. She summarized last week's discussion.

Members discussed and made suggestions regarding definitions of specific words and phrases within C3.

Mr. Waystack specifically referenced C3 s2-3 which he read and commented on specific wording regarding defining roles and lanes, creating guardrails and the true organizational chart of the town. Discussion continued and replacement wording was suggested.

Members continued discussion on the powers of appointment for the Select Board. It was confirmed that the Select Board has not, within the last few years, conducted a review of specific appointed employees. Discussion continued and suggestions were made regarding the hiring/appointing/termination process and the chain of command process, including but not limited to the Select Board.

Mr. Handler commented on day to day operations at Town Hall and suggested that the Commission consider the path of access to and between the Select Board and employees.

There was a general agreement between members that wording in the Charter should reflect that the Select Board should be able to ask Department Heads to come in to the Select Board in public meeting and talk about specific topics. Specific recommendations were made regarding who the Town Administrator should hire and he/she overseeing day to day operations and making them available to access through the Select Board. Members discussed the pros and cons to those recommendations.

Ms. Cebula summarized that there needs to be clarification, regardless of who appoints, who does the supervisory review process. She suggested asking the Collins people for advice on the discussion of who the Town Administrator hires versus who the Select Board hires.

Members discussed getting clarification on the Charter/ Town By-laws and MGL for consistent language in the Charter.

Mr. Waystack moved that the review committee of Mr. Urbano, Ms, Hall and Ms. Cebula, review the contract and if satisfied to authorize the Chair to sign said contract. Seconded by Mr. Bell.

Vote: 8:0 in favor. Motion carried.

Ms. Hall moved to rescind the previous vote. Mr. Hall seconded the motion to rescind.

Vote: 8:0 in favor. Motion carried.

Ms. Hall moved to task Mr. Urbano and Ms. Hall and report to Ms Cebula, Chair if there are any issues and authorizing the Chair to sign the contract. Seconded by Mr. Waystack.

Vote: 8:0 in favor. Motion carried.

5 Any other topic that may come before the Commission

6 Public comments

(taken out of order)

Jeff Handler, Select Board member, was present. He thanked the Commission, commented positively on the direction they are going and expressed interest in seeing the progress.

7 Adjourn

Mr. Urbano moved to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Bell.

Vote: 8:0 in favor. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Judi Moldstad
Board Secretary approved 08 28 2025