

Meeting Minutes  
Charter Commission Meeting  
November 16, 2016 – City Hall Room 211

Present: Josh Krintzman (Chair), Rhanna Kidwell (Vice-Chair), Bryan Barash, Jane Frantz, Howard Haywood, Ann Larner, Brooke Lipsitt, Karen Manning, Chris Steele

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of October 26, 2016; approved with minor amendment (detail regarding voter participation percentages).

**Public Comments:**

Reenie Murphy, Newtonville Resident, Fmr School Committee Member: In favor of longer terms for School Committee. Felt that she needed time to move up the learning curve and benefitted from a lot of experienced people to help her with the learning curve. Rare that person hits the ground running and she would have considered stayed a few more years if available. 12 year term is not unreasonable.

Challengers come up and this takes away focus of SC members while they worry about reelection. Her kids spanned 19 years in Newton Public Schools, of which she served 8. SC members could benefit from being there a bit longer, though even now not everyone chooses to stay the 8 years. Keeping depth of institutional knowledge is good.

Lisle Baker, 137 Suffolk Road. Serving on City Council for 32 years: urges Commission to reconsider decisions on Ward Councilors and district representation. Need local knowledge and participation. Councilors run the risk of being spread too thin across the City otherwise. None of the commissioners ran as ward only representatives and therefore the CC may be predisposed to see Citywide as preferable.

However, ward representatives, can be more independent as they are not responsible to all of the City's voters. Value in ability to evaluate from a dispassionate perspective. Not dispassionate on Ward issues. In a citywide council race, have a Mayor elected city-wide, but could see situation where Mayor and Council need to be representative of somewhat different constituencies. Balance of power for the City is basically through the Council.

While Commission has retained Area Councils, these do not exercise any authority and the City needs a body that does with local representation. Ward Councilors turn over less frequently than those at large. Perform an important function for the city and it is important to retain them.

Amy Wayne, 1616 Centre Street, Newton Highlands: agree about keeping Ward Councilors. Chosen by the district. Also would like to keep council at 24 members to get wide range of opinion and ideas. Power is not in a smaller group and distribute the work among more people. Would like to add recall process for the Mayor and the Councilors.

Diane Pruenty, 305 Winchester St: Also supports keeping Ward Councilors as it is important to keep representation from each area who is from and is responsible to the area. Also believes it is important to have a recall process for the Mayor and Councilors.

Kathleen Hobson, 128 Dorset Road: Main concern is composition of the City Council. Still prefers the model that was voted on in April. Reasons for the preference are the same ones Commission talked about in April. More effective, efficient, cooperative, more attendant to big picture. This model will retain ward representation and also incorporate key features of Model City charter. Relatively small number of representatives, one per ward elected at large and with a pool of purely at-large.

This will result in more contested elections and draw the best people, as they will not have to challenge sitting councilors who they feel are effective.

Deb Crossley: Has a particular concern which has to do with clarifying the balance of power between executive and legislative branch. Under what circumstances can the executive make a unilateral decision regarding disposition of or use of city resources. Two recent situations recently: use of former branch library in Newton Corner by a private non-private and also the solar share program, where credits have value. Council was not consulted in either case, which would otherwise be normal procedure.

Several years back, Council appropriated \$350K to renovate the house in Newton Corner (Clafflin House). Parks and Rec were to be moved into that building, which was in substandard facilities on at the Crescent Street lot (now under consideration for other use). During summer of 2015, executive ordered Parks and Rec to move into Kennard House, which is lovely, but needs renovation and is somewhat remote. The use of recently renovated building went to private non-profit Mass Challenge. Also meant that other uses needed to leave Kennard Estate in a domino effect. Law Department suggested that a charter clarification might be in order as language licensing city property is not currently in the charter. Matters for non-cash receipts (such as credits) are not discussed or addressed cleanly, and as a result real life situations haven't been handled the way the city charter intended. Councilor has suggested wording for Article 5 after consultation with Comptroller Wilkinson about use of resources about appropriations and use of city property/resources. (see submitted document) In several occurrences, such transactions have not been handled as Charter likely intended.

Nathaniel Lichtin, 53 Pinecrest Rd., Newton Highlands: Suggest city council term limits current proposal is a little short and should be increased to 14 or 16 years. Learning curve as we have heard from many councilors is very steep, so giving them more time would be appropriate.

On the topic of city council composition, if Commission stays with all at-large election, what do you tell a ward that votes 65-35 in favor of one candidate, but that candidate loses at large and they don't feel they have direct representation on the city council? Average citizen doesn't have that much impact on councilors outside their wards. There are many city councilors he has never met, despite being relatively active, so having local person is important. Hopes Commission finds some way to not have everyone at large.

Also feels that there is a danger of the proposed format allowing a slate of everybody to be elected on same platform, removing attention to any particular candidate. Feels a diversity of opinions would be better and we should be careful about giving everyone the same electorate in the city.

Lois Levin, Waban: Much easier to get to know 12 people as opposed to 24. Is quite possible to get to know all who represent us if have the energy. Reinforce what Kathleen Hobson said and would have written something similar.

Lisle Baker responding to Councilor Crossley: There are times when licenses do not need to go through the Board. Should however the remedy be in the charter rather than the ordinances?

Deb Crossley responding: Ouida Young specifically noted the charter as the right place for it.

### **Article 10 Discussion – Recall Provisions**

(22:57 on recording)

Brooke – At the last meeting had begun to speak about the topic of recall, but were recommending against it. Will of the body however was to try to develop what a recall provision would look like before decide.

With guidance of Collins Center has developed document for review and discussion. Suggest we do this and determine whether it is something we want at all before determining specific language

Jane – This is Section 10.10 and anything that applies is bolded and underlined.

Brooke - If have recall provision, who does it apply to? Different length of terms for mayor and council, so do we need to address differently for both. Also, if there is going to be recall, do we need to have one for area council members. How many people have to actually ask for a recall? Needs to be significant enough that not just a small group of people miffed about an issue. Originally felt that recall would be about a specific issue, so want a higher number so that it is broader. Suggested 500 signatures which is high end of communities that actually have such a provision. This represents 1% of the voters, so maybe we could ask for 1% for Area Councilors as well. Then assuming that the process is validated, suggest 28 days for 15% of voters (both of which are at high end of what

other communities have done). Then if signatures valid, recall election is then held within 45-75 days and then vacancy would be filled with a special election (or as required under other charter provisions).

Rhanna - This is what I was expecting to see.

Chris - Suggests starting with whether this should apply to all elected officials or just some subset? In particular term length may not make recall useful. Is 2-year term enough to justify a recall? Should it just apply to Mayor?

Brooke – In the way we’re considering it, couldn’t do 1st 6 months or last 6 months of a term, so there is half of a councilor’s term when they would be susceptible.

Anne - Research we have done showed that couldn’t be done in the first 12 months. Seems tough to do a recall as people who are still getting used to the office.

Brooke - Could be the 2rd, 3rd or 8th term.

Anne - Seems reasonable to keep to offices with more than 2 year terms. Maybe leave language based on term length and tie it to length of office rather than the office itself. Greater than 2 years perhaps?

Bryan – Don’t doubt that some people might initially get overly ambitious to use the provision, however the 15% collection requirement in 28 days would take the wind out of the sails of those likely to try right away. Would be exceedingly rare. An elected official would have to do something so odious that the community would feel the need to remove them. Don’t feel the need to remove that provision from those serving on a 2-year term.

Brooke - What if the community is upset with the result of an election (due to hanky panky in process)? It might therefore be that someone in a two-year term might still be a target as a result.

Rhanna – With Bryan in thinking that provision would be used rarely (or maybe never). Extreme case for people to attempt that, and would have to be the result of a highly public failing. Feel fine with it be on offices with 2 year terms. Suggest thinking more about back end as the process takes almost 4 months from submission of the 500 signatures. If we do limit to someone with more than 6 months remaining, then should it be done?

Brooke – If were approaching the regular election deadline, would not apply. In fact, need to think about how this could be used as a political tool in approaching a regular election.

Anne - Maybe shouldn’t do it.

Bryan – This will be the case whether they are up for re-election or not. Purpose of the recall may be in part to put some color over the candidate. However thinks more to recent examples in other parts of country where someone has shown very poor judgement, and has resigned. What if someone refused to resign?

Howard - If all elected officials are included and still have ward aldermen (only elected by the ward), who could sign the petition?

Brooke – Establish this as a percentage of those who can vote for that candidate. Example if area councils, only people within that district would be allowed to sign or vote.

Howard – This could really be used as a political instrument. A ward alderman might do something in his ward that is not good for the entire city, but only voters in his district could actually vote him out. Means official is not accountable to the entire city in this instance.

Rhanna – As of now we have only at-large in proposal and no ward. We need to revisit if we change that, but a moot point as of now.

Josh – The way it is worded, it can only have registered voters in that ward voting on a recall as it ties specifically to the other provisions of that office.

Anne – The point you’re making reinforces the idea of having councilors at large because of accountability.

Brooke – The comment earlier about at-large people being elected when minority vote in their own ward – this has happened under the current system.

Josh - Likes idea of keeping it to terms of more than 2 years and also at least 6 months into the term. Would like to see consistency with vacancy provision in charter which we have set currently at 9 months. In terms of timing of the election, believes it is normally 64-90 days in order to comply with federal law and to get ballots overseas.

Collins (Marilyn) – It's her understanding that it has to be 64 days when there is a person on the ballot, but in this case there is no person.

Brooke – There are options and situations where simultaneous elections to recall and replace. In fact there are situations where the person has been recalled and replaced on the same ballot.

Josh – Suggests that we put this option forward to reduce downtime between the elections and avoid additional election.

Brooke - Don't want to do it simultaneously. In fact, doesn't want to do it at all.

Bryan - If will apply to Mayor and do it at different times, have different political problems, such as the positioning of the Council President.

Brooke – notes that this is the case if there is a vacancy in the Mayor's office for any other reason as well.

Howard – Notes the argument against term limits is that these are determined at the ballot box. Why don't we use the same logic here and just let that happen if the recall process is so long and arduous?

Jane – States that she will be voting no on the recall provision. Feels that it is a good solid recall article, but is concerned is that recall is focused on an individual and a referendum is focused on an issue. Wants to make referendum more accessible than to include a recall.

Bryan – Reiterates that he agrees, but notes that the provision and hope is that it would only be used when there is a serious issue about someone's integrity, not because of an issue.

Jane – Concerned that we can hope that, but cannot guarantee in the charter that that is how it would be used.

Karen – Shares Bryan's worry about egregious behavior. So much can happen and there are examples in our own city's history. If do not have anything in the charter, how do we address these behaviors?

Brooke – Notes that we have spent 25 minutes on this subject. Urges the chair to at least take a straw vote on where the Commission sits on this issue. Neither of the drafters support this (although they have worked hard to put an article forth), so want to see if the discussion is worth continuing.

Rhanna - Can guarantee as one who has collected signatures of 15% of registered voters in the past that the recall provision will not be used so easily. It is an insurance policy or safety valve and could only really be viable if the matter and person at hand have been featured prominently in the news. Most people in such a situation would resign, but may have person who will not and we need a way to get them out of office.

Bryan – Notes that there is an impeachment and removal process at federal level, but no recall. There is no process here now.

Jane – If remembers correctly, we had suggested a removal clause if convicted of a felony, but it had not been received well by the Commission.

Brooke – That if someone had been convicted of a felony, they would be regarded as having vacated the office

Rhanna - But the legal process takes so long, and would be important to act more quickly.

Howard – Trying to relate this to conversations about how the great City works. The discussion on recall is much more personal and is about a person that a group isn't happy with. This is the wrong reason to have a recall. Likewise, if you say it is highly unlikely to happen and/or implement, why is it necessary?

Bryan - Too many examples nationally of where it is in fact needed. Is rare, but when it does it is egregious (but not always criminal). Under the current charter the Mayor could continue for 3 more years.

Karen - Can removal clause be expanded?

Josh – Suggests focus on recall only for the moment.

Jane – Discussion on removal would have to wait for discussion with Ouida.

Howard - If we put this in the charter and can't comply with it (within 28 days), why have it in?

Rhanna - Would only happen if something egregious took place – if for example it ended up on the front page of the Boston Globe. Voters would not need to be educated and would willingly sign. Safeguard is that people will not sign petition if the issue/person is not something that has been publicized.

Bryan - Thinking for example of case of Anthony Weiner. Thinks likely someone in this situation would resign, but what if not?

Josh – Makes the motion that the Commission approve the language proposed in recall provision (include candidate on the ballot), not in the 1st 6 months or last 9 months. Bryan seconds.

Rhanna - Opposes having alternative candidate names on the ballot as this confuses the issue. What if want to remove official, but don't like alternatives? The second election is not an issue if – as discussed – this will be so rare and egregious a case that it is a real crisis to be resolved.

Brooke – Makes amendment to remove the simultaneous election from the proposal. Seconded by Anne.

Josh – Suggests that most communities with recall also include the election for the replacement on the same ballot.

Collins (Marilyn) – Notes that most communities who have done this recently actually do bifurcate the vote to avoid the issue of confounding the two questions.

Bryan – Is another option that we add a line that if removed from office, the individual cannot run to be their own replacement?

Collins (Marilyn) - Yes, think so.

Brooke – But what if the issue resolves not on the matter of the recall, but whether the populace likes one of the replacement candidates better?

Chris – Suggests separating the issues to get an up or down on recall first

Bryan – We have that on the table now with a vote on the amended matter on the table

Amendment passes 7-2. No candidate on ballot, but rest of draft stays.

Vote on article: not passed: 3 in favor (Kidwell, Barash, Haywood). 6 opposed (Manning, Frantz, Lipsitt, Larner, Krintzman, Steele).

## **Article 2: City Council Composition:**

(1:02:21 on recording)

Rhanna – (Distributes last notes in preparation) Recap for commission and for attendees: We had originally considered 5 scenarios, and agreed on the 8 (one per ward, elected at-large) and 5 (fully at-large) split for city council. Following that vote, we received feedback from a variety of sources. The largest suggestions include support for scenario D and for continuing having ward-only councilors.

Revisited it in August and considered a 12-member council to include 8 at-large by ward, 4 by district at-large. Commissioners still want to downsize by half and for all to be elected at large. One Commissioner suggested having an even number. The Commission continues to receive feedback and has performed more research. Therefore, we now have three scenarios: April (13 member), August (12 member), and ward council scenario (new). This last includes reducing the number of wards and ensuring that we have at least one more at-large councils than ward councilors.

Before reviewing these options, wanted to review data on how frequently at-large councilors win city wide and lose within the ward under the current system. Looked back to 1993 (11 elections, 170 at large seats, 41 contested races involving 3 or 4 candidates) showing 9 occurrences when the candidate won citywide, but not within ward or lost citywide but won home ward. In SC, looked back to 2001 with 8 elections and only 2 occurrences.

Bryan - Found the new data helpful. Observes that some people have also won their home ward, and lost citywide but eventually did win in later races. Also, two people on the Commission were victims of this process and still voted for the at-large structure.

Josh – Has thought SC was a good comparison for the proposed new configuration, since one seat per ward.

Rhanna - Benchmark cities show that an at-large pool is challenged more often. Used data found online from peer cities from 12 cities showing 47 elections back different amounts of time for the different cities, but as far back as to 2005. Not a complete set, but does allow for key observations. 96% of time, at-large candidates are challenged. Ward-based councilors are only contested 45% of time, and not necessarily evenly spread across the community. A given seat may go unchallenged continually.

Bryan – Notes that not only are the at-large seats contests, but that they are contested by a larger number of candidates.

Chris – On the percent contested, what impact does the large number of seats in Newton impact the mathematics of this report?

Rhanna - Newton was run both ways and removed as we are truly a hybrid. In one analysis added as 24 ward seats, but then did performed it again with just 8 true ward seats.

One other piece of research on whether the issue of concentration of people coming from one ward becomes a problem in other communities. Called 6 city clerk offices to determine (anecdotally) whether this is an issue within their communities. Clerks found the question surprising and stated that they have a very complementary relationship between ward and at-large. If the councilors are all from one section of the community, then that is the will of the voters. The ward councilors are the leaders on ward issues. At large councilors tend to show up for events and issues across the community. In other cities, they are real ward councilors and truly at-large councilors.

Somerville Clerk noted that 8 years ago when they had their charter commission, this was not discussed at all. Revere has multiple at large councilors who all come from near the beach, but they respond to issues from across the City. Some note that the at-large pool provides a helpful, secondary point of access when the person from their ward is not appropriate for any reason. All 6 cities were a little baffled by the question – has not been an issue for them.

Jane – Wants to point out her one concern is that the wards that were affected when a candidate won citywide and lost ward, were 1, 2, 3 and 4 which are all north side. Rhanna notes this happened also in Ward 5.

Brooke – Appreciates the work Rhanna has done. And it makes her feel even more comfortable with the true at-large pool. Only wishes to make again the suggestion in the form of a motion to reduce the number from 13 to 12 for the simplicity of the internal operations of the body. Change is not significantly different to the citizens. Motion to accept originally agreed upon scenario but switch from 5 at-large to 4. (Anne seconds)

Karen – Are we voting to change to this new scenario? (Yes)

Chris – Expresses concern about the entirely at-large pool. There is a benefit in being able to hold each candidate accountable to their own record and vision. Focus in the at-large pool is diluted and concept of being individually accountable to voters in a yes/no situation is important.

Bryan – Add in something else: The flipside is that in pool can have people elected by a certain block that is less than the majority of voters. Yes, this may allow minority viewpoints to be represented, but may also mean that people from a niche may be elected without majority

Howard - Rhanna's work is so compelling. Thinks about this a lot due to the importance many have placed on it. However, thinks of his own experience - When has an issue, calls the councilor who he thinks if the most

appropriate and doesn't consider who is his ward aldermen. Thinks the ward alderman model is antiquated and we need to move forward.

Chris – Clarifies – not thinking of a ward system. Would have a residential requirement (such as in the district model), but would be elected at large.

Howard – Suggests is too complicated at this time. Another whole big issue about how combine certain wards.

Anne – Understands peoples' concern about having someone from their ward represent them. Our solution is similar to how the SC has operated for decades through a variety of issues (school openings, closings, etc). While people have been upset about some moves and decisions, haven't been very many times that people from a certain section felt there wasn't representation. The system has served the individual districts well. Also feels that the at-large pool might get more people interested in running, especially those who are afraid of running in a one-on-one race, and will increase the pool and mix of people.

Bryan - Thinking of constructing districts and how complicated it could be. Could be huge problems with voter education and information.

Karen - Supports the 12. Great to have opportunity to think about the proposal, especially where there has been pushback. Comfortable with proposal, and given area councils decision—model could evolve and be helpful with area representation. Can rework the responsibilities, especially with 311. Sees strengths of at-large candidates and not concerned about slates.

Chris – Two points: Feels that people would get used to the configuration and names of the districts. Also challenges the notion of the value – stated as a benefit of the true at-large pool - of encouraging people to run who don't want to run in a one-on-one race. We are asking people to step forward to represent our city. If a pool situation brings forth people to run who are not comfortable advocating for themselves in a competitive campaign, that might not be best for the city.

Jane - People value geographic representation. A district model is appealing and work well in Burlington, VT. Concerned that our model has part of the city that has not been represented and has lost ward representation more often in favor of votes by the rest of the city. Has worked in that part of the city throughout her career and recognizes the feeling that they do not have an equal voice. If we did the ward and district model, could do both at-large. They would feel represented. Concerned that the group of 4 might be the people with the greatest name recognition. Wants to have some structure to that group of 4.

Bryan - Feels like name recognition might matter less with at-large pool, as opposed to working hard and running a really effective campaign.

Brooke - Not mutually exclusive—both can be true.

Rhanna - Focus on diversity of Newton (geographic, economic) highlights need for ward-based representation with the need for everyone to answer to the whole city. Benefits of at-large pool outweigh the downside. Feels that Ward and District models may not be as responsive to anyone across the City.

Bryan - Councilors have often filled in gaps where city hasn't been as responsive.

Josh - District model preserves geographic diversity, but does so at the cost of confusion, and one of the overarching goals for the Commission has been to simplify. Less concerned if challenged each time—if have the right person, doesn't care if they aren't challenged. Likes at-large pool so that can get a very high quality group of candidates. Likes that a lot. Ensures a high-quality city council—more probable, not guaranteed. Simpler to explain.

Josh - Felt that it was important to revisit this issue again in light of comments. Especially feels that in adopting the at-large pool further increases opportunities to serve, supporting a higher quality of candidates able to serve. Calls the question.

VOTE: 8 plus 4 at large: 7 in favor (Barash, Frantz, Krintzman, Haywood, Larner, Lipsitt, Manning); 2 opposed (Kidwell, Steele). Motion passes.

### **Preliminary Elections:**

(1:55:34 on recording)

Josh - Motion to keep it the way it is. Issue is in language but no philosophical issue. More than 2 x number of candidates.

Bryan – Requests additional consideration and language given the nature of the at-large pool

VOTE: 8 in favor; 1 opposed (Barash). Motion passes.

### **City Council Compensation:**

(1:57:04 on recording)

Bryan - Thanks to Karen and Rhanna for taking it all on and fleshing it all out.

Karen - Bryan started this with research on salaries in other municipalities. Found that City of Newton is below market. Objective is to bring charter up to date with references to salary and benefits where warranted, and also help the Commission to understand how our proposal might impact the city financially over time. Wanted to see effects on pensions, healthcare, etc. Consulted people over time and did lots of independent research through the Collins Center, David Wilkinson, Legal, Matt Hills (member of the 2005 Blue Ribbon Commission on compensation), etc.

We need to be able to say that we have investigated this, we have explored what should and should not be in the Charter and why.

Newton's charter does not currently specify that councilors or school committee members be compensated. More current charters do, with the actual amounts set by ordinance. We are asking whether we should put forward that elected officials should be compensated in the charter. This would be similar to language for mayor. See the provided materials. There appear to be certain standards regarding when legislative changes to compensation may be enacted and implemented. Want to see if there is agreement as to whether it should be in the charter or not.

Anne - Is it a problem to not have it in? Is it good common practice? Makes it logical and complete.

Collins (Tanya) – Makes it logical and complete

Brooke – Represents a values statement that this is a valued and professional position.

Karen – Notes the opposition position that some feel that the benefits and pay should be made as unattractive as possible to reiterate the value statement that these are volunteer positions.

Anne – Argument for compensation several years ago was in part that compensation did help some to be able to step up and serve through helping with some costs like child care, etc. Helps to even the playing field for candidates.

Bryan - Important as society changes to two wage-earner householders for families to have extra money when they spend so much time on the city.

Rhanna – Asks for counter arguments? None.

Compensation provision language for City Council and School Committee will be drafted.

Karen – Next point gets a little trickier, but less so as we do investigative work. Some charters are excluding elected officials from health insurance. Current councilors currently do receive it, but because school committee doesn't serve 10 years and earn \$5k or over, don't get deferred benefits. If get 10 years in, more than \$5k, get health care benefits at retirement. This is a complicated puzzle and needs to be computed on a case by case basis.

Bryan – Is it fair to say that if you serve over 10 years and over \$5k, while there may be other circumstances, at last resort you will have coverage through the City of Newton.

Jane - Does health care continue after service had ended?

Rhanna – Only when you retire, by state law. By implication if we term limit people, might be creating huge liability for city if we create more people in this position.

Bryan – Because of where the terms limits are now, we are allowing Councilors to get benefit, but not School Committee members (except those who serve a second round.)

Josh - Opposed to putting any of this in the charter at this time since the healthcare situation is changing.

Karen – For those who are interested in putting controls in place, the mayor is able to affect this issue through contributions, etc.

AGREEMENT (no vote): Leave language as it is and do not exclude health insurance.

Karen – overviews pensions and who is eligible. Nothing for the charter, but we wanted to look into whether we are creating a huge liability with more city councilors? Cost of term limits?

Rhanna – City staff say that our proposal won't make a huge difference, only small amounts for a handful of people. Therefore not putting pension benefits in the charter.

Karen – On salaries: Blue Ribbon Committee was established in 2005 to look at salaries (had not been looked at since 1997) City Council is currently 10% of Mayor's salary, and School Committee is 5%—this was practice, not ordinance or in the charter. When Mayor's salary rose post 2006, others did not get a raise. Do we want to put some controls on this in the Charter? Salaries are currently well below those for peer communities. Do we want to require regular salary reviews for Mayor, Council, or School Committee? Or should there be a 2/3 vote required by Council to make the change?

Bryan - Real goal should be to insulate salary process from political process. Would like to see a regular salary review, council gets an up or down vote and no way to raise their salary without that process. Have to set up regular salary review by a commission.

Collins (Marilyn) - Salary amounts and reviews are not typically included in the Charter.

Jane – Likes the concept of setting the Mayor's salary and then establishing Council and School Committee as a percentage of that. Need to ensure Mayor's salary is reasonable to attract excellent candidates.

Bryan - Worries is that if salaries are tied together in the charter, could find that Council won't raise Mayor's salary for political reasons as it would raise their own.

Josh - Regular salary review is a good idea and tying salaries together a good idea. However feels that none of this belongs in the charter. Difficult to separate the political vote—can't see how to do that in a way that makes sense.

Brooke – Suggests perhaps a role for an independent panel, etc.

Josh - Makes sense not to mandate anything in charter; let mayor and council decided what works best for the city at that time.

Brooke - Some councilors might have stayed longer than should have because of the benefits and the salary; can't presume to know the economic situation of every elected official. Perhaps might work better to add language in Articles 2 and 4 that they should be compensated and salaries reviewed from time to time.

(reviewed provided compensation data)

Brooke – May make best sense to note in the accompanying documentation that it's been a long time since Council received a raise. In letter to mayor and Council, say the Commission examined salaries and finds our elected officials are underpaid.

Bryan – Voices concern about working off current data due to the variability. Notes that the Blue Ribbon commission made recommendations for the city that is still more than currently paid.

Anne – Suggests that the City needs to go back and think about whole package. Putting salary issues in the Charter may be a red flag and would not want to complicate total package by putting salary in it.

Karen – There is precedent to do a one-time compensation reset at time of a change in the structure of government. People may support increased compensation due to increased workload.

Rhanna – Strongly objects. There is no research to definitively state that we are increasing the workload.

Josh – Notes that there is no support for any dollar amounts in the charter and will write something regarding compensation in the memo

Karen - Some charters have language about reimbursement of expenses.

Anne – Wants better understanding of what people think they should be reimbursed for. Expresses that she is uncertain what would she ever have applied for reimbursement.

Brooke – Lists her expenses as postage, telephone bills, some travel expenses, etc. In effect, these were enough so that it used her entire salary over the course of the year.

Karen - Wording from Collins Center basically requires approval—set by ordinance.

Josh - Are they prohibited from doing that now? Proposal is that School Committee and City Council members can be reimbursed for expenses subject to appropriation.

Karen - Framingham has two separate clauses for School Committee and City Council.

Anne – School Department generally has more control and usually pays for expenses.

Jane – Would feel comfortable including in the Charter if it allows for making the terms better defined.

Rhanna – Will bring back language on the 30<sup>th</sup> on this issue for discussion.

Josh – Suggests this as the last issue for the night. Meeting on the 30<sup>th</sup> for the issue of term limits and of expenses. Makes sense to discuss all of the issues before the transitions. Suggestion is to see if there are any issues that require revisiting. Josh will provide the Charter language as it stands. People should note issues back to Josh and he will create an agenda to address these. Rehash them before the group at this next meeting (11/30).

Anne – Wants to follow up on the issue that Councilor Crossley brought up regarding appropriations. Will be on agenda for 11/30.

Josh – Review of transition provisions will begin on 12/7. Review of draft of report will begin on 12/14.

## **ADJOURN**

### **Documentation used:**

[Agenda](#)

[Oct. 26 Minutes](#)

### **Recall**

[Recall Provision Example w/comments](#)

[Article 10 Draft](#)

### **City Council Composition**

[City Council Revisit](#)

[Peer Groups Election Data, Part 1](#)

[Peer Groups Election Data, Part 2](#)

[Peer Groups Election Data, Part 3](#)

### **Preliminary Election (8-3(b))**

### **City Council Compensation**

[Compensation/Benefits Discussion Guide](#)  
[Blue Ribbon Commission Report](#)  
[Comparative Salaries Across MA Cities \(CC and SC\)](#)  
[Collins Center Memo: Benefits/Compensation for CC, SC, Mayor](#)

**Term Limits**

[Term Limits](#) (Recap/Outline)