

John Donohue - Chair
Tasha Buzzell - Vice-Chair
Melinda Bernardo Cuerda -
Secretary



Laura Wagner
David Sequeira

Town of North Attleborough
CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE
43 South Washington Street, North Attleborough, MA 02760
Phone: (508) 699-0100 ext. 2555

1/9/2025 - Minutes

I. Pledge Of Allegiance

Meeting called to order 6:34 PM

Members present: John Donohue, Tasha Buzzell, Melinda Bernardo Cuerda, and Laura Wagner

II. Approval Of Minutes

a. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF DECEMBER 19, 2024

Motion by Buzzell to approve 12/19/2024 minutes. Seconded by Wagner

- Unanimously approved

III. Community Announcements

None

IV. Resident And Community Comment

None

V. OLD BUSINESS

a. NONE AT THIS TIME

None

VI. New Business

- a. CHANELLE SAE-EAW RESIDENT SERVICES REPRESENTATIVE
- b. TAYLOR O'NEIL COMMUNICATIONS & INFORMATION OFFICER

Interview with Taylor O'Neil (TO), Communications and Information Officer

Introduction

1. TO's purpose is here to discuss her role within the town, not opinions on charter.
2. TO: explains her role doing communications strategy and execution for town departments. In part, it includes media interactions, content creation, website navigation (e.g. town social accounts, newspapers, content for use within town buildings). She handles media interactions, while Chanelle Sae-Eaw (CSE) handles resident interactions. She works with Lorri Valois (LV) on website-related work.
3. JD: notes that in year one CRC did a survey but it had a low response rate. Indicates that current CRC is open to suggestions on how best to reach residents. Goes on to explain context and background related to Charter and CRC's role.

Communication Strategy

1. MBC: Asks if/how TO could help CRC.
 1. TO: notes the lack of communications plan for CRC. Further notes she personally was not aware of how CRC functions. Suggests two possible goals for a comms plan:
 1. Explain the form of gov't and role of CRC
 2. Explain what CRC intends to accomplish through its review.
 2. TO: Once goals are set she can help with creating engaging content. Goes on to suggest other areas to consider:
 1. **Survey**: Consider if survey is a good fit to gather feedback. If so, she could be distributed through town communication channels. She cannot do comms for anything structured as a press event.
 2. **Social Media Platforms**: Suggests that CRC members could share information on third-party community pages. This could reach residents who are more forced on peer-shared content. This is not something she handles.
2. LW: Emphasizes importance of being sure everyone is aligned on goals first
3. TB: Asks about cost/benefit of doing comms work since it's unclear whether it will be effective. Notes she'd be more comfortable developing a plan after speaking to CSE, since individual resident complaints could be useful to understand for CRC purposes.
 1. TO: Acknowledges uncertainty of engagement but stresses the duty to make information available. Highlights that comms strategy should be minimal work for CRC, beyond review and approval of content.
 2. MBC: .Asks about availability of Big Red 311 historical data
 1. TO: Says these data are available in system
 3. JD: Notes he doesn't want to go too deep on comms plan, but wants CRC to discuss. Notes he will invite CSE to future meeting, likely in Feb.

4. MBC: Notes current conversation is about two different considerations -- bringing residents into the process and getting targeted data for analysis.

4. **Decision to make:** CRC to determine level of interest in comms plan and goals. If/when ready, can work with TO on a communications plan to meet those goals.

c. STEVEN CARVALHO PARKS & RECREATION DIRECTOR

Interview with Steven Carvalho (SC) - Director, Parks and Recreation

Introduction

1. SC: Shares his background as director and his role managing town parks, cemeteries, beaches, and fields during his 23-year tenure.

Charter Impact

1. SC: Describes changes following the charter adoption, including streamlined communication and decision-making under the Town Manager (TM). Notes it was a "wavy" start, but after adjusting to process, thinks the new system works. Says that new system under charter "landed in a good place".

1. SC: Provides a few examples of things that are going well. (e.g. Mason Field, WWII Memorial Pool, pickleball courts). Gives historical context of the founding of the pool

2. JD: Asks about budget process and working with Town Manager

1. SC: Notes that he entered budget into Munis today. Goes on to explain his understanding of the process.

1. **Next step is meeting w/ TM to review.** Indicates that TM asks questions about the proposed budget and is open to debate. Then TM gives a decision on the budget. Budget then goes to TC, who then sends it to Finance. SC will then be invited to the finance meeting.

2. SC: Indicates that gov under Charter gives him direct access to budget decision maker. Notes that TM is clear that if a dept head does not like the budget, they can advocate for something different to TC.

Procurement Under Charter

1. JD: Asks generally about procurement and if there were issues with contract speed.

1. SC: Notes that some processes are streamlined, but delays often occur during legal reviews. If issues arise, contacting town personnel (e.g., Kerrin) typically resolves them quickly. Notes that under prior system he could follow up w/ legal himself.

2. JD: Asks if speed relates to type of procurement, whether it's items or services.

1. SC: Notes that something like basketball equipment is easy. Indicates that time lags could maybe relate to reviewing liability for hiring a company vs. buying something.

3. TB: Asks about ability to see where contracts are in the process.

1. SC: Notes that there's a system (sounds like: "tees") where he can see the process, both for his department and others.

4. TB: Asks about any themes he's noticed for what gets rejected or

returned.

1. SC: Notes that issues occasionally arise around who signed a contract ("corporate signatories"), Gives an example of needing to call a company to ask for a different signature.
2. LW: Asks about experience with emergency procurement
 1. SC: Refers to experiences during Covid and indicates that TM was flexible in helping the department get what was needed.
3. TB: Asks about the execution of emergency procurement.
 1. SC: Notes that his experience has been that internal process enables him to have a same day or maybe next day meeting to address the issue. Suggests that only "hiccup" could be external legal review. Hypothesizes that TM could influence speed of that review if/when that's necessary.
4. TB: Asks about prior town attorneys in relation to procurement
 1. SC: Indicates he's comfortable with how contract is done. But under prior system he knew the attorneys, which isn't the case now. Notes discussion with another department head who indicated that speed of review "depended on who was looking at it" within the law office. Suggests there's inconsistency in the review that could be remedied.
 2. SC: Notes that "when it's outside these walls, we don't know who's looking at it and I don't sit with them"

d. INVITE DEPARTMENT HEADS TO FUTURE MEETINGS

Invite the following individuals to upcoming meetings:

1. CSE for February 6
2. Pat Dolan to discuss town elections.
3. Patty McNeilly (Town Clerk) to provide historical context on the charter and bylaws.

Action: MBC will email CSE to request access to the Big Red 311 database

Action: LW will draft content for review / for possible use in comms plan

e. WORK ON MEETING SCHEDULE FOR JANUARY & FEBRUARY

as above

VII. ITEMS UNFORSEEN BY THE CHAIR

Flow chart

1. JD to follow up w/ TM on status of feedback from Atty Goldberg.

New Member or CRC

1. To be voted on Monday

VIII. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn meeting by Vice Chair Buzzell and seconded by Wagner.

Unanimous approval. The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 PM