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

3/6/2025 - Minutes

I. Pledge Of Allegiance

Meeting called to order 6:34 PM

Members present: John Donohue, Laura Wagner, Melinda Bernardo Cuerda
Members absent: Tasha Buzzell, David Sequeira

II. Approval Of Minutes

a. Approval of February 27, 2025 minutes

- Motion by Wagner to approve 2/27/2025 minutes. Seconded by Bernardo Cuerda
- Approved (3-0)

III. Community Announcements

a. none

IV. Resident And Community Comment

a. none

V. Old Business

a. none

VI. New Business

a. Keith Mueller - IT Director

Introduction & Challenges

- **JD**: Asks about role.

  - **KM**: IT Director for the town since 2007, working for the town since 1998. Leads a department of four people responsible for technology, voice, and website management (excluding the electric and school departments, though they collaborate closely). His team maintains technology and consults on department needs. Praises his team's work.

- **JD**: Asks about the biggest challenge.

  - **KM**: Balancing daily tech monitoring, security, and departmental needs while keeping up with trends. Small team means handling budgeting, contracts, and management while also performing hands-on work.

- **JD**: Asks about the IT department budget.

  - **KM**: $1.2 million, increasing over time to meet needs. Majority covers salaries and software contracts. Costs rise yearly due to cloud migration, multi-factor authentication, and zero-trust security measures. He needs to balance effectiveness, security, and costs.

- **JD**: Asks about IT involvement with the school.

  - **KM**: Notes that IT does not manage school technology but collaborates with school IT. Since HR is split between school and town also work with them. Currently have an human resources software (HRIS) project in progress, w/ goal of moving from paper-based to digital processes.

Software & Systems Integration

- **JD**: Asks about familiarity with OpenGov

  - **KM**: Affirms. Notes that OpenGov is used for permitting and integrates with Munis. The school has a separate financial system owned by the same company, and they are evaluating options. Notes that school does not use Munis, but uses a separate program owned by the same company so is looking at options.

- **MBC**: Asks if Tyler Tech is company

  - **KM**: Affirms. Notes other places town users Tyler Tech software

- **JD**: Asks about training opportunities for IT staff

  - **KM**: Indicates that most training is online due to time constraints. When new products arrive, IT gets backend training first and then trains staff. Rapid changes make it hard to stay fully updated.

- **JD**: Asks about hardware reliability.

  - **KM**: Notes that hardware is well-maintained and up-to-date. Downtime has

been minimal over the years.

- **LW**: Asks for observations from view of IT department interacting with many other depts

  - **KM**: Sees tech-side issues but not full scope of operations. Assists where possible, including helping residents set up Munis payments. Observes that town growth has meant increased expectations for government services. Notes that procurement and contract management take time to do, but new government structure allows for more streamlined decision-making.

System Structure & Procurement

- **LW**: Notes interconnectedness of systems. Asks if there's risk to this.

  - **KM**: Acknowledges interconnectedness can mean downtime affects more things, but 'when it works it works'. .

- **JD**: Asks about procurement responsibilities.

  - **KM**: IT procurement exceeds the town's $10K bylaw cap frequently. Notes that there's additional complexities with digital procurement related to Terms of Service (TOS) and liability issues

- **MBC**: Asks about the procurement process for digital services

  - **KM**: Uses a boilerplate contract modified as needed. Vendors redline the contract, and TOS are incorporated into a final document through multiple iterations. Believes there have been modifications been made to standard contract templates to try to account for different needs

Impact of Charter on IT

- **JD**: Asks how IT handled requests prior to charter

  - **KM**: Indicates that IT had to justify purchases under Representative Town Meeting (RTM). Explains that needs and costs weren't always well understood (e.g. computer cost at a big box store being less than what what IT dept would pay)

- **JD**: Asks about the budget process under the new charter.

  - **KM**: Notes that software contracts are predictable cost, budgeting for licenses is challenging when unexpected hires occur

- **MBC**: Asks what could improve budgeting.

  - **KM**: Notes that HR software will help, but it's already improved on the comms and process front with HR. Notes that there's some complexity when funding for staff comes via grant, which can happen w/ FD and PD.

IT's Role in Public Safety & Staffing Needs

- **JD**: Asks if there's anything else KM wants to share.

  - o **KM**: Notes that IT is a four-person department responsible for 24/7 police and fire support. One team member works closely with both chiefs. New tech like body cameras adds to overall workload.

- **MBC**: Asks if IT is appropriately staffed.

  - o **KM**: Indicates no, but that they manage with available resources. Notes that public safety operates 24/7, so it's a challenge to staff all shifts while also supporting overall technology needs of department

b. Michael S. Thompson, Chairman - Board of Public Works

- MBC to request rescheduling with KB

c. Review Charter

Charter Review – Articles I & II

1. Review for Typos & Scrivener's Errors

The committee conducted a general review for any typographical and minor drafting errors. Also reviewed general questions about content of above articles.

2. Ethical Standards (Section 1-6)

Discussion of ethical standards section, including whether section should be considered for modifications

3. Council Rules & Appointment Questions (Section 2-4)

Discussion of how Council appoints if there is vacancy.

4. Standing and Ad Hoc Committees (Section 2-9)

Discussion of difference between committee types

VII. Items Unforeseen By The Chair

a. none

VIII. Adjournment
Motion to adjourn meeting by Wagner
Unanimous approval. The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 PM