

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

Meeting called to order

Members present: John Donohue (JD), Laura Wagner (LW), Melinda Bernardo Cuerda (MBC),
David Sequeira (DS)

Members absent: Tasha Buzzell (TB)

4/17/2025 - Minutes

I. Pledge Of Allegiance

II. Approval Of Minutes

a. Approval of 4/3/2025 minutes

- Motion by Wagner to approve 4/3/2025 minutes. Seconded by Sequeira
- Approved (4-0)

III. Community Announcements

a. none

IV. Resident And Community Comment

a. none

V. Old Business

a. none

VI. New Business

a. John Ruppert, Park Commissioner

Interview with John Ruppert (JR), Park Commissioner

Introduction

1. **JD**: asks for background.
 1. **JR**: shares he is in his second term, with 7–8 years on the Parks and Recreation Commission and 6 prior years on RTM.
2. **JD**: asks about the role of Parks and Rec as an elected body.
 1. **JR**: explains the role has changed under the charter. Originally, the commission focused on ensuring equal access to fields for youth sports (soccer, baseball, lacrosse). Now, with Steve as a professional director, the focus is more on supporting him and future planning, rather than refereeing resource conflicts. Notes interest in expanding recreation beyond youth—mentions the rail trail and inclusive recreation.

Charter and Governance

1. **JD**: asks about JR's familiarity with the charter.
 1. **JR**: confirms general awareness of the process.
 2. **JD**: inquires about the budget process under the charter.
 1. **JR**: states the commission no longer controls the budget. While Steve seeks input, the commission has limited influence over how funds are spent.
 3. **JD**: asks about coordination with other boards.
 1. **JR**: notes occasional contact, such as with the Town Forest Committee or DPW
 4. **LW**: asks how department interactions are going.
 1. **JR**: observes that things seem to get done more easily and with less conflict.
 5. **JD**: asks about future goals.
 1. **JR**: identifies the rail trail and addressing the aging town pool as priorities.
- b. Discussion on Articles 8-10, as needed
1. **JD**: aises a question about who can initiate petitions under the charter.
 1. **MBC**: questions whether this issue falls within the CRC's scope.
 2. **JD**: responds that he is unsure.
 3. **LW**: expresses concern that councilors may be using this process, and believes it should be reserved for citizens.
 2. Action: JD to follow up w/ original charter and legal counsel to clarify legislative intent.

c. Discussion of report categories

1. **Citizen Petition Process:** JD to follow up on legislative intent and eligibility for submitting petitions.
2. **Procurement:** LW believes it's not a major issue; JD sees process concerns.
 1. **Decision:** Include as contextual information in the report, not as a proposed charter change.
3. **Voter Apathy & Candidate Recruitment:** Determined to be out of scope for CRC.
4. **Stipends:** Will be included in the report; format and framing to be determined. (LW)
5. **Board Membership Numbers:** No consensus; JD to follow up with DPW for additional input.
6. **Strong Chief Statute:** resolved
7. **Scrivener's Errors:** Include (MBC)
8. **Budget Cycle:** Keep open for further discussion. LW to follow up with School Committee President, Superintendent, and Town leadership.
9. **Election Date:** Include in report as a reference point with supporting data. (MBC)
10. **Licensing:** DS to investigate local licensing structures and presence of appeal processes.
11. **Write-In Candidates:** Include. May be more appropriate for Town Council scope.
12. **Bylaw Waiting Period:** Confirmed to be governed by state law. Don't include.

VII. Items Unforeseen By The Chair

a. none

VIII. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn meeting by LW. Seconded by DS

Unanimous approval. The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 PM