

GTF: Charter Sub-Task Force Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 18, 2023

Attendees: Ray Seigfried, Steve Benigni (call in), Barbara Macklem, Lynda Kolski and Bev Clendening (representing the Ordinance and Policy Sub-TF)

The meeting called to order by Ray at 7:43 Buzz Ware

The minutes from the Charter Sub-TF meeting on April 20 were approved with one correction. Representatives from the Registration Committee had been invited to this meeting to discuss the motion to change the definition of referendum in the Charter (Section 3). No one from the Registration Committee attended the meeting.

Ray presented a revised timetable for the work of the GTF aligned with the timetable for the progression of the motion for a change in the definition of referendum. The motion will be read for a second time at the June 2023 TA meeting and a final vote on the motion is scheduled to occur at the September 2023 TA meeting. If the motion does not pass, there will be no change to the Charter regarding the referendum process. If the motion does pass at the September 2023 TA meeting, the Registration Committee plans to hold a referendum to approve the definition change after legal review. The timetable presented by Ray suggests that this referendum be held in January 2024 along with a referendum on other proposed Charter changes. (The change in the definition of referendum would be incorporated into the other suggested Charter changes.) To have the GTF Charter changes ready for referendum in January 2024, the GTF will need to have its Final Report ready for presentation at the September 2023 TA meeting. The timetable includes education sessions for Arden residents in October, November, and December 2023. If it appears that the GTF will be unable to complete its work by September 2023, the referendum process for the motion on the change to the definition of referendum can begin immediately. The Charter sub-TF agrees that all changes to the Charter should be presented simultaneously and not piecemeal. All agreed that educational meetings will be vital and that other means of educating residents can also be employed (Announcement in the PAGE and posting on the webpage).

The process for the changes to Ordinances, Policies and Procedure is different. Each Ordinance for which changes are suggested needs to go through three readings at TA meeting before a vote is taken. The recommendations for changes can begin to be presented a few at a time, starting with the September 2023 TA meeting. Changes to Ordinances do not need to go to referendum. The Ordinance and Policy sub-TF has found that policies of the village are not adopted in a uniform fashion. Some policies have been approved in the past by TA vote. Other policies have been adopted by various committees or the Town Officers but were never approved at TA. Some of these are posted in the Arden Webpage. The sub-TF is encouraging committees and officers to make public all policies that deal with more than their routine operations.

Ray reviewed the charter change for both the Assessor and Budget Committee. The committee discussed this proposal as a two-step process. First, the fiscal year dates and the statement

would be removed from the charter and placed into an ordinance. The Town Assembly could review and consider any changes from that point.

Over the next few months, Ray recommended having both dates where the entire committee will meet to review the work completed and agree on a final recommendation. He also recommends that the committee create a booklet with all the current documents and proposals to present to the Advisory Committee.