

GTF Meeting Minutes Thursday, June 15, 2023

Attendees: Ray Seigfried, John Scheflen, Lynda Kolski, Barbara Macklem, Steve Benigni, Kate Threefoot, Bev Clendening

The meeting called to order by Ray at 7:34

Minutes for meeting on May 18 and 25 approved.

By-laws (John, Lynda and Bev reporting)

The sub-committee recommends that the by-laws be repealed. This will require a referendum. Items in the by-laws that are not in the Charter should be added to the Charter, added to a new Ordinance or made into a policy.

One thing that is missing from the Charter is a statement about what types of decisions should require a referendum. The 1957 By-laws, Article 1, Section 3 lists six items that require a referendum vote. The first four are covered in the current Charter. The fifth item states that the land assessment is approved by referendum. The present Charter provides details for how an assessment is approved; it does not include a referendum unless there is an approved alternate assessment. The Charter supersedes the by-laws on this issue. The final item in the list of measures that require referendum is a statement that allows for a referendum on any matter that the Town Assembly authorizes by a majority vote. There was general agreement that this item should be included in the Charter. However, it was unclear where this should be placed in the Charter. It was suggested that a clause be added to the definition of referendum in the Charter that states the changes to the Charter as well as any other matters approved by a majority vote a town assembly should be decided by referendum. Other suggestions were to put this statement in Section 11: Powers and Ordinances or in Section 5: Meeting of the Town Assembly. The Committee agreed that the statement should be in Section 5 after (e) which deals with Ordinances. This would appear as (f) (other items in the list would re-lettered).

Article V contains the statement "Business of special meeting shall be confined to the subjects mentioned in the call." This relates back to a change in the charter that we discussed earlier concerning reading of Ordinances. Charter 5 (e) should clarify that if a special meeting is used for the second reading of an ordinance, the special meeting should be only for that purpose. Change Charter 5 (e) to read ...whether regular meeting or a special meeting called for that purpose. 5 (b) add "Business of special meeting shall be confined to the subjects mentioned in the call."

At the meeting of May 25, the TF recommended that an "Authority clause" be added to the Charter which states that a referendum vote will be needed to recommend a change to the Charter. This should be added as a new section immediately before the Section 16 - Savings Clause. There was a discussion about whether the power to change the Charter should be codified in the Charter itself or as Ordinance. The final consensus was to add the following statement to the Charter as Section 16.

“Any change to of the Charter shall be approved by the Village in a referendum vote before being submitted to the State Assembly.”

The GTF will recommend a referendum to repeal the By-laws and to amend the Charter as written above. Section 5 and 6 from the 1957 By-laws will be incorporated into a new policy. The By-laws sub-committee was charged with writing this policy.

Charter

Preamble accepted as written.

No changes to Section 1. Section 2 Part B adds new property purchases. It was recommended that “Avery property” be changed to “Sherwood Forest addition” and that “ Schroeder property” be called the “Mill Race property”. Section 2 mentions the Municipal Corporate Seal which is stored somewhere by the secretary.

Section 3 remove male or female from (a). (d) 58 Del. Laws, c 91 must be checked.

Communication with Residents

The full GTF has already considered all of the Ordinances and all except Ordinance 15 are posted on the web page. Most of the posting for Ordinances consist of summary of our review and then recommendations. Some of these recommendations are for repeal. Many ordinances which recommend changes merely state the recommendation but new wording for the ordinance is not presented. It was suggested that these be presented to TA as is so we can discuss the recommendations before going to the trouble of re-writing the ordinance. At September TA meeting we could present a list with summary. Ray suggested that we present all changes with specific wording.

The July Page article will contain a status report. Our goal will be to have a presentation of the completed work at the September TA meeting. It was suggested the an asrticle in the September PAGE contain a schedule for “roll-out.”

Barbara presented a layout for an information booklet. A simple stapled set of information sheets will cost about \$1000.

Agenda for next meeting

Review the work that has been done on the Ordinances.

Ray will present a proposal for a change in budget and assessment timetable to sync better with the state fiscal year and payment of taxes. The proposal will also recommended that the timetables be moved out of the Charter and placed it in an ordinances so it is easier to change.

Meeting adjourned at 9:26.