

**MINUTES  
TOWN OF GROTON  
CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION  
AUGUST 13, 2007  
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 2**

1. Members Present: Shirley Dunbar-Rose, Stan Dziurzynski, Robert Frink, Nancy Moffat, Richard Moravsik, Frank “Mick” O’Beirne, and Ed Stebbins.  
Members Absent: Ray Munn and John Wirzbicki.  
Also Present: Office Assistant Elga Concepcion

2. The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m.

3. A motion was made by Stebbins, seconded by Moravsik to approve the meeting minutes of **July 23, 2007**. A Motion to Amend the meeting minutes of July 23, 2007 to add Dziurzynski’s vote to those “in favor” at the bottom of page 2, “Vote on the Motion to Amend the Rules of Procedure”, was made by Dziurzynski. Dziurzynski moved to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Chairman O’Beirne, and so voted unanimously.

A motion was made by Stebbins, seconded by Moravsik, to approve the Public Hearing minutes of **July 30, 2007**. The Vote on the Motion passed with six in favor, with one abstention (Dziurzynski).

4. **COMMUNICATIONS**

- a. The Chairman received a communication from a citizen requesting the Conservation Commission have more power, that Commission Chairmen write their own meeting minutes and that certain members of Town staff be elected.  
He received a letter from a resident who is concerned about the Council’s ability to override negative decisions made by the Planning Commission and inability to veto changes in zoning regulations. The Chairman added that this resident supports an annual budget threshold which would “trigger” a budget referendum and the setting of budget goals by the Town Council. Chairman O’Beirne received an email requesting that the Town Council have authority over the decisions made by the Zoning Board of Appeals and Zoning Commission.

- b. Secretary: No report.

- c. Members: Moffat stated that she has received comments regarding the pros and cons of “hiring” versus “electing” a Town Clerk over the past years.

5. **CITIZEN COMMENTS:** None.

6. **OLD BUSINESS**

The Chairman suggested that members review the Town’s “Guidebook to the Boards, Commissions and Committees” and stated that members may want to reference some portions of this publication in the Town Charter. Dziurzynski drew an organizational chart of the Town’s government as illustrated on page 10 of this booklet.

Upon the request of the Chairman, the Town Clerk will provide copies of the “Guidebook to the Boards, Commissions and Committees” and “A Guide to Town Government”.

Dunbar-Rose will provide members with a copy of an ethics statement which is being reviewed by the City at this time.

## 7. NEW BUSINESS

### a. **Charter Reorganization Outline:**

The Chairman requested that members agree on a general outline with the provision that modifications will be permitted at any time.

There was detailed discussion regarding Charter outlines/markups which have been provided by various members to date.

Dziurzynski suggested that an outside service be contracted to verify if the Charter is compliant with State statutes. Responding to Dziurzynski's comments, the Chairman stated that the Town Attorney does not have information with respect to our Charter's compliance with State statutes.

Various Commissioners conveyed their opinions on the citation of State statutes in the Charter.

Moravsik suggested that members consider discontinuing the RTM and having a budget referendum in its absence.

The Chairman stated that due to the Freedom of Information Act, members should not assemble in small groups to work on the Charter. He clarified that individual members may work on portions of the Charter.

Chairman O'Beirne expressed his desire to vote on whether or not to keep the RTM and would prefer that all nine members be present before doing so.

Upon the request of Moravsik, the Town Clerk will provide copies of the Rules of Procedures which govern the Representative Town Meeting (RTM) and Town Council.

The Chairman composed a list of Chapters and solicited volunteers to draft/compose these sections:

- Definitions, Incorporation, and Powers: Dziurzynski (Definitions)
- Town Manager and Staff: Moravsik
- Town Council: Chairman O'Beirne
- Representative Town Meeting: Dunbar-Rose
- Board of Education (BOE)
- Town Clerk (to include Registrars, Justices of the Peace, and Judge of Probate)
- Boards/Agencies/Commissions: Stebbins
- Finance
- Budget: Frink
- Miscellaneous Provisions

The Chairman stated that in theory the RTM is performing the function of a budget referendum.

Members discussed the RTM, BOE, and budget process in detail.

(A short recess was taken at 8:30 p.m.)

Moffat discussed the Charter's inclusion of a Preamble or a Mission Statement. She affirmed that she has written this text and disclosed that it is already included in "Section 1.1

Incorporation” of the existing Town Charter. Responding to Moffat’s comments, Chairman O’Beirne requested that she continue her work on this item.

The Chairman reminded members that they do not have to start from “scratch” when drafting text and that it is permissible to use existing Charter text, suggestions from prior Charter Revision Commissions or other town charters.

**b. Madison Town Charter**

Dunbar-Rose discussed and referenced page 20 of the Town of Madison’s Charter (Section 8.2 and Section 8.7).

Several members discussed the promotion of the Charter Revision Commission via television and newspaper media.

By consensus of the Commissioners, the following meeting dates in 2007 are cancelled: October 8 (Columbus Day), November 12 (Veterans’ Day), and December 24 (Christmas Eve).

Stebbins informed the Commission that he will not be attending the meeting of August 27.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn at 8:50 p.m. was made by Moffat, seconded by Moravsik, and so voted unanimously.

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Shirley Dunbar-Rose  
Secretary  
Approved: August 27, 2007.