

APPROVED Minutes of the Town of East Montpelier Charter Committee Public Forum  
Wednesday, October 9, 2013  
7:00 pm at the U-32 school cafeteria

**Committee members present**

Edie Miller (chair)  
Carl Etnier (compiler of these minutes)  
Rick Mastelli  
Norman Hill  
Michael Duane  
Karen Gramer  
Kim Watson (recording secretary for comments from the public)  
Jack Pauly  
Ed Deegan

**Members of the public present**

Sandal Cate  
Paul Cate  
David Coburn  
Bruce Johnson  
Seth Gardner  
Kim Swasey  
Tony Klein  
Rick Barstow  
Betsy Barstow  
Ross Hazel

Purpose: to update the public on the work of the committee and solicit suggestions for items to include in East Montpelier's first charter proposal

**Agenda**

1. Introduction of Committee Members
2. Charge from the Selectboard
3. Criteria for Decision Making
4. Hiring of Attorney
5. Summary of where committee is at this point
6. Next Steps
7. Timeline

**Comments from attendees**

1. *Should the treasurer be appointed by the Selectboard?*

Concern with what the hiring process would look like and how nominees would be ratified. Financial compensation a concern, the amount of pay. Would the salary be significantly more for a hired person.

Make things clear to voters, why an appointed position versus elected. Procedural biggest concern.

2. *Should the collector of delinquent taxes be appointed by the Selectboard?*

No comments other than discussion on position. How it can be very busy at times and then not so other times.

3. *Should the town law agent and grand juror be appointed or should the positions be abolished?*  
No comment really other than what are the positions and can be a municipal ordinance.

4. *Should the planning commission members be appointed?*  
No comments

5. *Should the listers be appointed by the Selectboard?*  
Listers: Political position. Concern that an elected listers puts in lots of hours with towns people not getting much in return. A person can with little skills can have a negative effect on the group as they are getting just as much compensation and get no work out of the lister. The lister can continue to pull together the nuts and bolts so to essentially set up the work for a hired appraiser which can be appointed by the SB.

6. *Shall the zoning administrator become an "at will" employee and should term be changed from current three-year to one-year?*  
ZA: Discussion around at will. It makes sense to have a 3-year term as it still doesn't matter if someone is laid off or fired after one yr they can still collect unemployment. General discussion stated that 3 yr qualitative term better. Personnel policy can state that position is at will. Also, at this time it is working quite well that the Town Administrator and ZA is combined since the work load is light for the ZA and someone is in the office on a regular basis.

7. *Shall the town shall have the power to adopt and enforce ordinances for the regulation of signs and billboards?*  
Not much discussion other than not our business

8. *Shall the charter include a conflict-of-interest policy that does not rely on voluntary compliance?*  
Lots of discussion. Many felt that a conflict of interest policy needed more teeth. Other opinions in the group felt that it was fine as is and that a voluntary COI was working. Others felt keeping it simple works.

9. *Shall the Selectboard members serve as Trustees of Public Funds?*  
SB shall serves as function. Difficult to explain to general public. \$ are left to a municipality for a particular purpose so funds need to be assigned correctly, Cemetery \$ must be use for cemeteries. This can be a sticky point so may be best not to change it.

10. *Shall the Funding Request Article on the Town Meeting Warning always be voted on the floor regardless of total article amount?*  
No comments

11. *Shall funding requests under \$3,000 (or whatever amount) go through Funding Request Committee process with no option for petition or appeal to the Selectboard?*  
No comments, leave as is

12. *Shall the town move to a town manager or expanded town administrator form of government?*  
Town manager does not have to go through a charter. SB noted that they are having someone speak to them about expanding government on Nov. 18th

13. *Shall the charter include a process for the recall of elected officials?*

Recall. Scary provision. How would it be used?

14. *Shall the charter include a provision that all elected and appointed positions are subject to personnel and other policies?*

No comment

Nice work by the committee

Keep it simple

The forum concluded at 8:50 pm.