



**Town of Amherst
Town Council Meeting
Monday, December 10, 2018 7:00 p.m.
Town Room, Town Hall
4 Boltwood Avenue**

Minutes

Complete video is available online: <https://amherstmedia.org/content/amherst-town-council-december-10-2018>

1. Call to order and declaration of a quorum

President Griesemer declared the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Councilors present: Councilors Bahl-Milne, Brewer, DeAngelis, DuMont, Griesemer, Hanneke, Pam, Ross, Ryan, Schoen, Schreiber, Steinberg, Swartz.

Councilors absent: none

Councilors participating remotely: none

Others present: Town Manager Paul Bockelman, Clerk of the Council Margaret Nartowicz

President Griesemer announced audio and video recording by Amherst Media.

2. Announcements - None

3. Resolutions and Proclamations - None

4. Public Comment

Paul Bracciotti expressed concerns about parking on Main St. near Grace Church, and urged the Council to create a committee to give recommendations to deal with parking.

Andy Anderson gave comments about ranked choice voting in Amherst, and urged to Council to create a ranked-choice voting committee, as the charter stipulates, as quickly as possible.

5. Hearings – None

6. Presentations and Discussion

- a) Proposed Standing Committees of the Council [Charter Sec. 2.6(e)] (Information included in packet)
 - i. Finance Committee [Charter Sec. 5.5(b)]
 - ii. Committee on Planning and Economic Development
 - iii. Committee on Town Services and Appointments
 - iv. Committee on Communications and Outreach
 - v. Committee on Governance, Organization and Legislation
 - vi. Other

President Griesemer opened the floor for discussion about how to organize as a council, and council committees.

Councilors' comments:

- Number of councilors and non-voting residents for Finance Committee-not specified by Charter
- Finance Committee's relationship with Joint Capital Planning Committee and Budget Coordinating Group
- Previous role of Finance Committee, how that role will evolve with Town Council
- Previously, appointments to JCPC and BCG included representatives from Finance Committee, Select Board, School Committee, Library Trustees, and professional staff
- New Finance Committee will work through the year, as it will advise the Council on articles to be voted at any point during the year
- Appointments to FC & JCPC is somewhat urgent
- Odd number of Councilors on committees may be preferable, as residents would be non-voting members
- Move infrastructure and capital assets from Planning and Economic Development to Finance Committee
- Addition of Town Gown to Committee on Planning & Economic Development
- Possibility of retaining committees in their current form
- Add sustainability to Committee on Planning & Economic Development
- Concern about adding unnecessary layers of bureaucracy to town government
- Possibly combine outreach with appointments
- Process for vetting items brought to Council to check for congruence with Master Plan

Comments from Town Manager:

- Department heads would make presentations to Finance Committee, so that the Finance Committee is well informed on the budget and can make a sound recommendation to the Council, Schools, and Library
- An option would be for all councilors to attend FC budget hearings
- Change in budget timeline: Town Manager will present the budget May 1, Council has until June 30 to adopt budget. Currently, staff proposals are in process
- Budget Coordinating Group is to facilitate communication between School Committee, Library Trustees, and Town Council
- Joint Capital Planning Committee is advisory to Town Manager, to help prioritize resources.
- Appointments to Finance Committee should be a priority

b) Committee Application Process/Timing (Information included in packet)

President Griesemer opened the floor for discussion about the committee application process.

Comments from Town Manager:

- Currently, there are vacancies on many boards/committees
- Town staff is developing a community activity form to make it easier for citizens to apply for an appointment to boards and committees
- Suggestion that the Town Manager's office will draft a charge for the Resident Advisory Committee; this committee could be related to Participation Officer Group

Councilors' comments:

- Resident Advisory Committee to assist Town Manager in making appointments; required by Charter
- Community activity form changes; areas of interest or skills rather than choosing a committee, changes to demographic information, languages spoken, socioeconomic and demographic data is difficult to phrase
- Community Participation Officer Group and Committee on Communications and Outreach to work hand in hand on committee appointments

c) Memo from Select Board on Multiple-Member Bodies [Charter Sec. 10.7(b)] (Information included in 12-3-18 and 12-10-18 packet)

Councilors' comments:

- Board/committee expiration dates of 12/31/2018 are not actual term end dates; actual terms end when the member is replaced, reappointed, or resigns, with the exception of the DPW/Fire Committee, which no longer exists
- Committees with designated Select Board member—Council or Town Manager to re-designate, update charge
- As Town Manager is responsible for most appointments, Town Manager must make a proposal regarding Select Board members seats on committees
- Previously, appointees interviewed privately with Select Board member, committee chair, and staff liaison; new process to resemble old process, include Town Manager, may be open to the public
- Possible term limits for committee members
- Committees that are unable to form a quorum due to vacant seats must be given priority
- Different approval process for Council appointments, approving Town Manager appointments, and approving new Town Manager appointments of department heads.

7. Action Items (Including discussion after motion)

a) Ad Hoc Rules of Procedures Committee [Charter Sec. 2.6(d)]

i. Approval of Charge (Information included in packet)

Deferred to next meeting.

- b) Board of License Commissioners [Charter Sec. 6.3], Reaffirmation of Charge as approved by Select Board (Information included in packet)

MOTION: Councilor Schoen moved, second by Councilor Hanneke to approve the Board of License Commissioners charge as presented.

Discussion: Charter requires appointments within 60 days. No advertisements yet, but ready to advertise. No applications yet, but a few people have expressed interest. Issuance of alcohol licenses is a safety and economic development issue. Membership of Board of License Commissioners shall have no financial interest directly and indirectly—who might be qualified for an appointment to this board, as no resident in Amherst has experience with this yet.

VOTED unanimously to approve the Board of License Commissioners charge as presented.

- c) Bylaw Review Committee [Charter Sec. 10.7(v)], Approval of Charge (Information included in packet)

MOTION: Councilor Schoen moved, second by Councilor Ross to approve charge of Bylaw Review Committee with the following change: Authority section, 2nd paragraph: add the words “be to” after “in accordance with the Town Charter the purpose of the Bylaw Review Committee shall...”

Discussion: Staff support by Economic Development Officer in addition to Town Attorney; Town Manager would designate staff support provided by professional staff. Include 3 members of former Bylaw Review Committee if they are willing to continue to serve. Importance of close review of new bylaws before Town Council adopts.

MOTION: President Griesemer moved, second by Councilor Hanneke to amend membership section by striking the current section and replacing with: The Bylaw Review Committee shall consist of 5 members; 3 from the prior Bylaw Review Committee, and 2 Town Councilors. In the absence of a previous bylaw review committee member, an additional councilor would replace them to make a total of 5 committee members.

VOTED unanimously to amend the Bylaw Review Committee charge, with revised membership section.

VOTED unanimously to approve the charge of the Bylaw Review committee with typographical change and amendment.

MOTION: Councilor Brewer moved, second by Councilor Steinberg to designate the Bylaw Review Committee as special municipal employees.

Discussion of special employee status for bylaw review committee.

VOTED unanimously to designate Bylaw Review Committee members as special municipal employees.

- d) Ranked Choice Voting Commission [Charter Sec. 10.10], Approval of Charge (Information included in packet)

MOTION: Councilor Hanneke moved, second by Councilor Ross to approve the charge with the following changes: 4th paragraph, replace “shell” with “shall,” ~~strikeout~~ 2nd sentence under “Report” section, add section “Adoption by Town Council: The Town Council shall adopt the proposed measure with or without amendments within 90 days of receipt.”

VOTED unanimously to approve the charge of Ranked Choice Voting Commission with changes.

MOTION: Councilor Brewer moved, second by Councilor Hanneke to designate Ranked Choice Voting Commission members as special municipal employees.

VOTED unanimously to designate Ranked Choice Voting Commission members as special municipal employees.

- e) Participatory Budgeting Commission [Charter Sec. 10.11], Approval of Charge (Information included in packet)

MOTION: Councilor Ross moved, second by Councilor DeAngelis to approve charge, with one change: ~~strikeout 2nd sentence under “Report” section~~, add section “Action by Town Council: The Town Council shall act by voting upon the proposed measure with or without amendments within 90 days of receipt.”

VOTED unanimously to approve the charge of Participatory Budgeting Commission with amendment.

MOTION: Councilor Brewer moved, second by Councilor Steinberg to designate Participatory Budgeting Commission members as special municipal employees.

VOTED unanimously to designate Participatory Budgeting Commission members as special municipal employees.

- f) 2019 Meeting Schedule (Information included in packet)

MOTION: Councilor Schreiber moved, second by Councilor Pam to approve calendar, with alternate dates for October 7, 2019 and November 4, 2019 meetings, and to meet February 11, 2019 rather than February 4, 2019.

Discussion: Reschedule November meeting due to election. Meeting dates through the summer to evaluate Town Manager. Four Boards meeting to hear from Finance Director & Town Manager for financial projections for the coming year, with School Committee and Library Trustees during week of Veteran’s Day. Other meetings may be added to the calendar, or meetings may be rescheduled as needed; approved calendar will be a framework that can be modified as needed.

VOTED unanimously to approve the Town Council meeting calendar.

- g) Next Meeting Date and Time - December 17, 2018, 7:00 p.m.

MOTION: President Griesemer moved, second by councilor Hanneke to reconsider meeting start time.

VOTED unanimously to reconsider meeting start time.

MOTION: Councilor DuMont moved, second by Councilor Ryan to meet at 6:30 p.m., with an end time of 10:00 p.m.

Discussion: Councilors’ discussion included the need to begin earlier to tackle a heavy agenda, how the start time may influence public participation, staff attendance, and maintenance needs. Placement of public comment period on the agenda—at the beginning of the meeting versus at the end—was also discussed.

VOTED 9-4 (Councilors Bahl-Milne, Brewer, DeAngelis, DuMont, Griesemer, Ryan, Schoen, Schreiber, and Steinberg voted yes; Councilors Ross, Swartz, Hanneke, and Pam voted no) to meet at 6:30 p.m. with a meeting end time of 10:00 p.m.

8. Town Manager Report - None

9. Appointments - None

10. Approval of Minutes – None

11. Committee Reports – None

12. Future Agenda Items

Finance Committee and JCPC appointments.

Council needs a schedule of deadlines stipulated by the Charter.

Adoption of Climate Action Plan and creation of a Sustainability Committee.

As a future agenda item, Town Manager to facilitate Town Hall tours and meetings with committees in order to educate and familiarize Town Council with what those groups do.

13. Council Comments – None

14. Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the President 48 Hours in Advance – None

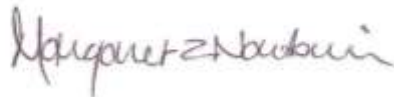
15. Executive Session – None

16. Adjourn

MOVED: Councilor Schreiber moved, second by Councilor Ryan to adjourn.

VOTED unanimously to adjourn at 10:04 p.m. on December 10, 2018.

Respectfully submitted,



Margaret Z. Nartowicz
Town Clerk & Clerk to the Council

Attachment: Record of Agenda Packet Materials and Documents Presented

Record of Agenda Packet Materials and Documents Presented

- 6.a. Proposed Standing Committees of the Council
- 6.b. Committee Application Process/Timing
- 6.c. Memo from Select Board of Multiple-Member Bodies
- 7.a. Ad Hoc Rules of Procedures Committee Draft Charge
- 7.b. Board of License Commissioners Charge adopted by Select Board
- 7.c. Bylaw Review Committee Draft Charge
- 7.d. Ranked Choice Voting Commission Draft Charge
- 7.e. Participatory Budgeting Commission Draft Charge
- 7 f. Draft 2019 Meeting Schedule