



Town of Amherst

**Town Council Meeting
Monday, December 17, 2018 6:30 p.m.
Town Room, Town Hall
4 Boltwood Avenue**

Minutes

Complete video is available online: <https://amherstmedia.org/content/amherst-town-council-december-17-2018>

1. Call to order and declaration of a quorum

President Griesemer declared the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 6:29 p.m.

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

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

Councilors absent: none

Councilors participating remotely: none

President Griesemer announced audio and video recording by Amherst Media.

2. Announcements

Councilor Hanneke announced the first meeting of rules of procedures committee will be tomorrow night, December 18, at the Bangs Community Center.

3. Resolutions and Proclamations - None

4. Public Comment

Carol Johnson from Amherst Cinema spoke about Amherst Cinema, and asked the Council to preserve parking spaces in the Downtown area.

5. Hearings – None Scheduled

6. Presentations and Discussion

President Griesemer opened the floor for discussion of the charges for the four proposed standing committees of the Town Council.

Finance Committee charge discussion:

Councilors discussed edits to the charge, including scrivener's errors, edits for consistency and clarity, number of councilors from Finance Committee who will serve on the Joint Capital Planning Committee,

Participatory Budgeting Committee & Budget Coordinating Group, non-voting members of Finance Committee designation as special municipal employees, designation of resident members as non-voting members. Councilors also discussed the purpose of the Finance Committee, which will report to the Town Council with recommendations rather than take action itself.

Community Development and Sustainability Committee charge discussion:

Councilors discussed the purpose and scope of the committee, if items should be referred to the committee or taken up before they reach the Town Council, and how the goals outlined in the Master Plan may be addressed by the committee. The committee could address problems brought to councilors' attention during campaign from small business owners. This committee may not be needed yet, but created when the Town Council has an item it would like to research before action by the full Town Council. Councilors discussed deferring this item for this meeting.

Communications, Outreach and Appointments Committee charge discussion:

Councilors discussed changes to the committee charge, including consistently referring to boards, working groups, and committees as multiple-member bodies and to the Town Council as the Town Council rather than "Council," diversity and participation, adding appropriate references to the Town Charter, adding a reference to the Residents Advisory Committee and how these groups will interact with each other, number of councilors appointed to the committee, and to whom the committee will report.

Governance, Organization and Legislation Committee charge discussion:

Councilors discussed the committee charge in terms of the need for the committee, the relationship between the committee and the Bylaw Review Committee and the Rules of Procedures Committee, the committee's purpose including how items are sent to the committee for review and the scope of the review, the committee's role in review of proposed bylaw changes—if the committee should be making substantive changes to proposed bylaws or modifying proposed bylaws to be consistent with Massachusetts General Law and format of Town bylaws.

Powers and Duties of Town Council Committees discussion:

Councilors discussed edits to make reference to the Town Charter where appropriate, addition of the role of clerk in addition to or in place of the vice chair and referral of the document to the Rules of Procedures Committee for additional changes.

7. Action Items (*Including discussion after motion*)

- a.** Proposed Standing Committees of the Council [Charter Sec. 2.6(e)]
 - i. Finance Committee [Charter Sec. 5.5(b)], Approval of Charge (Information included in packet)
 - ii. Community Development and Sustainability Committee, Approval of Charge (Information included in packet)
 - iii. Communications, Outreach and Appointments Committee, Approval of Charge (Information included in packet)
 - iv. Governance, Organization and Legislation Committee, Approval of Charge (Information included in packet)

MOTION: by Councilor Schreiber, second by Councilor Pam to act on approval of charges for Finance Committee, Communications, Outreach and Appointments Committee, Governance, Organization and Legislation Committee, and to refer the Powers and Duties of Town Council Committees to the Ad Hoc Rules of Procedures Committee.

MOTION: by Councilor DuMont, and seconded, to consider each item individually.

VOTED unanimously to approve the amended charge for the Finance Committee.

VOTED unanimously to approve the amended charge for the Communications, Outreach and Appointments Committee.

VOTED 12-1 (Councilors Bahl-Milne, Brewer, DeAngelis, Griesemer, Hanneke, Pam, Ross, Ryan, Schoen, Schreiber, Steinberg, Swartz voted Yes; Councilor DuMont voted No) to approve the amended charge of the Governance, Organization and Legislation Committee.

VOTED unanimously to refer the Powers and Duties of the Town Council Committees to the Ad Hoc Rules of Procedures Committee.

- b.** Joint Capital Planning Committee [Charter Sec. 5.7], Approval of Charge (Information included in packet)

MOTION: by Councilor Steinberg, second by Councilor Swartz to approve the charge of the Joint Capital Planning Committee.

Discussion: Councilors discussed the Joint Capital Planning Committee (JCPC) charge, including the committee's role, interactions with departments and other multiple-member bodies, membership, and how many councilors appointed to the committee should also serve on the Finance Committee. Councilors discussed the process of the JCPC, which makes recommendations but ultimately action is taken by the Town Council.

Town Manager's comments: The Town Manager explained that the role of the JCPC is advisory to the Town Manager; along with representatives from the Town Council, School Committee and Library Trustees, it assists the Town Manager in creating a capital improvement program. The Town Manager also advised the Town Council that, as there is not a clear directive in the Town Charter regarding the number of representatives appointed to the JCPC from the School Committee and Library Trustees, the Town Council may make that determination.

Additional comments:

- The Town Charter states that multiple-member bodies must be odd-numbered in membership, so charge must be amended to 3 councilors
- Town Council could appoint a community member to make 7 members
- The Participatory Budgeting Commission would be a better venue for members of the community to request consideration for capital items
- Historically, the JCPC sent motions to Town Meeting for action, advised the Town Manager regarding long-range capital plan and in the next capital budget, and recommended policy matters related to capital
- JCPC was also a venue for departments, School Committee and Library Trustees to coordinate capital needs and budgets; proposals are vetted in JCPC

MOTION: by Councilor Ryan, second by Councilor Swartz to amend the membership section of the charge to 3 councilors. Councilor Pam sought to amend the motion to 3 councilors, two of which would also serve on Finance Committee.

MOTION: by President Griesemer, second by Councilor Steinberg, to amend the membership section to be 7 members, 2 from School Committee, 2 from Library Trustees, and 3 councilors, 2 of whom would also serve on the Finance Committee.

Discussion about membership of School Committees and Library Trustees as written in the charge.

VOTED 8-5 (Councilors Bahl-Milne, DeAngelis, DuMont, Pam, Ryan, Schoen, Steinberg and Swartz votes Yes; Councilors Brewer, Griesemer, Hanneke, Ross and Schreiber voted No) to amend the number of voting members of the Joint Capital Planning Committee charge to 7 members, 2 from School Committee, 2 from Library Trustees, and 3 councilors, 2 of whom would also serve on Finance Committee.

Discussion of changes to the report section including addition of a purpose section with the definition of the capital improvement program, addition of section 5.7 of the Town Charter to the committee charge, and correction of a scrivener's error.

VOTED unanimously to approve the amended charge of the Joint Capital Planning Committee.

- c. Budget Coordinating Group [Charter Sec. 5.2], Approval of Charge (Information included in packet)

MOTION: by Councilor Ryan, second by Councilor Ross to approve the charge of the Budget Coordinating Group.

Discussion of the Budget Coordinating Group (BCG) charge.

Discussion included:

- Membership
- How the BCG will develop coordinated budget guidelines & the intent of the Charter Commission in assigning the BCG budget guidelines
- Historically, membership of BCG was 2 members from Finance Committee, the Town Manager, the Finance Director, the Superintendent of Schools, the Business Manager of Schools, and the Library Director
- BCG works by consensus, rather than voting; how to amend charge to reflect consensus-style of group
- Council will designate their own representatives but will not choose other members or representatives

Comments from Town Manager: BCG is a place for groups who had budgets to share information. The budget guidelines the Town is currently using were developed last October.

MOTION: by Councilor Hanneke, second by Councilor DeAngelis to table the item.

VOTED unanimously to table the approval of the Budget Coordinating Group.

- d. Ad Hoc Rules of Procedures Committee [Charter Sec. 2.6(d)], Approval of Charge (Information included in packet)

MOTION: by Councilor Hanneke, second by Councilor Swartz to approve the charge of the Ad Hoc Rules of Procedures Committee.

MOTION: by Councilor Hanneke, second by Councilor Brewer to amend the charge including the reports section, dates with references to the appropriate Charter reference, and adding one councilor to make 5 total members.

VOTED unanimously to approve the amended charge of the Ad Hoc Rules of Procedures Committee.

e. 2019 Regular Meeting Schedule

MOTION: by Councilor Ryan, second by Councilor Schoen to approve the 2019 Town Council Regular Meeting Schedule.

VOTED 12-0-1 (Councilors Bahl-Milne, Brewer, DeAngelis, DuMont, Griesemer, Hanneke, Ross, Ryan, Schoen, Schreiber, Steinberg, Swartz voted Yes; Councilor Pam abstained) to approve the 2019 Town Council Regular Meeting Schedule.

8. Town Manager Report

The Town Manager spoke briefly about upcoming items and appointments for action by the Town Council including the Residents Advisory Committee, Community Participation Officers, Board of Licensing Commissioners, approval of appointment of a new department head, Station Road Bridge presentation, proposal for renovations to the Town Common, new proposal for the school building project, ongoing budget hearings, orientation for Town Council to departments in January, and ongoing updates to Town Council from the Town Manager.

9. Appointments – None

10. Approval of Minutes – December 3, 2018 (Information included in packet)

MOTION: by Councilor Schoen, second by Councilor Swartz to approve the minutes of December 3, 2018.

Discussion: minutes need to include how each councilor votes for every vote, not just roll call votes, consistency in unanimous votes, add Councilor Brewer to list of councilors who made informal remarks.

MOTION: by Councilor Steinberg, second by Councilor Ryan to defer approval to next meeting.

VOTED unanimously to defer approval of minutes to next meeting.

11. Committee Reports – None

12. Future Agenda Items

13. Council Comments

Councilor Steinberg gave a brief update from the Four Towns Meeting, including an explanation that the regional budget will be out of sync with the Town's budget process for FY20 & creation of a smaller committee of the Four Towns to address budget issues.

President Griesemer announced the beginning of a new program on channel 17, Byline with Stan Rosenberg; the program will feature interviews with Town Councilors.

Councilor Brewer asked how appointment process will take place. President Griesemer explained that she will contact each councilor individually to determine which councilors will be appointed to committees of the Town Council.

Councilor Pam asked if a date for the Town Council retreat has been set. President Griesemer explained that she is working to coordinate the date for the retreat. January 26, February 2, and February 9 were proposed dates.

14. Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the President 48 Hours in Advance

15. Executive Session – None Scheduled

16. Adjourn

MOVED: Councilor Bahl-Milne moved, second by Councilor Schoen to adjourn.

VOTED unanimously to adjourn at 10:20 p.m. on December 17, 2018.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Z. Nartowicz
Town Clerk & Clerk of the Council

Record of Agenda Packet Materials and Documents Presented

- 1-a Agenda for 12-17-2018 - Rev.12-12
- 1-b Draft Motions for Town Council - 12-17-2018
- 2 'Byline with Stan Rosenberg' informational sheet
- 4 Handout given to Council members by Carol Johnson. Director of Amherst Cinema
- 7-a Standing Committees of the Council – President's Comments
- 7-a Revised Draft - Town Council Standing Committees 12-17-18
- 7-a Standing Committees of the Town Council -- Related Sections from the Charter
- 7-b Joint Capital Planning Committee Charge DRAFT 12-17-2018
- 7-c Budget Coordinating Group Charge DRAFT 12-17-2018
- 7-d Rules of Procedure Committee Charge DRAFT 12-10-2018
- 7-e Town Council Regular Meeting Schedule 12-17-18 FINAL
- 8 Town Manager Report 12-17-2018

Attachments: Approved/Amended Committee Charges