

City of Gardner  
Gardner, MA 01440

GARDNER CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE  
Meeting Minutes  
January 6, 2014

The Gardner Charter Review Committee met in the First Floor Conference Room at City Hall on January 6, 2014 to discuss Mission Document and to deliberate composition and other issues relating to the Legislative Body.

Present: Andrew N. Boucher, Chair; Stephen McGoldrick, Consultant to the Committee; Arthur E. Young; Al Lafreniere; Patricia Jandris; David Curran; Cleo Monette; Edward Yablonski; Charles Leblanc, via telephone; and Tanya Barnett, Secretary.

Guests: Gardner News represented by Kimberly and Ernie King of New Minor Musings Blog.

MISSION:

The Committee recommended adding “new” before “...a charter for the City...”

BACKGROUNDS:

The Committee is comprised of 9 members: 4 nominated by the Mayor and 5 nominated by the City Council.

COMMITTEE GOALS:

It is the goal of this Committee to complete the process by April 2014.

MEETING DATES:

A new schedule of meeting dates has been revised due to Monday holidays as follows:

January 27, 2014	March 17, 2014
February 3, 2014	March 31, 2015
February 24, 2014	April 7, 2014
March 10, 2014	April 28, 2014

All meetings will commence at 5:00 P.M.

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH:

Section 2-1: Composition; Term of Office; Eligibility

The composition to remain at 5 Ward Councilors and 6 At-Large Councilors.  
Term of Office will be left at 2 years.

Eligibility: Suggestion made to add “registered” before “voter”.

Section 2-2: President and Vice-President, Election; Term; Powers

The Committee recommends that a position of Vice President be added to the City Council who shall serve for 2 years.

Section 2-3: Prohibitions

Holding Other City Position recommendation: City Councilor should not be an employee of the City. In order to get a job with the City, a councilor has to be off the council for one year.

Interference with Administration: This will be changed.

Section 2-4: Compensation

The Committee agreed with staying as stated in the proposed draft.

Section 2-5: General Powers

Committee agrees to stay as is written in the proposed draft.

Section 2-6: Exercise of Powers; Quorum; Rules

The committee recommends staying with “Majority Rules”.

Under Rules of Procedure – This will be a change to the old charter. Under special meetings: “Special meetings of the city council shall be held at the call of the president or at the call of any **3 members...**” Committee agrees to use 3 members.

Section 2-7: Access to Information

Add the word “whole” when referring to the city council in this section.

Section 2-8: Appointments of the City Council

After review of this section, the following was agreed upon by the Committee:  
The City Clerk is elected by the City Council. Administrative officers should be taken appointed by the Mayor. The Treasurer/Collection of Taxes should be removed from the Council appointment and by appointed by the Mayor then approved by the council.

Section 2-9: Ordinances and Other Measures:

Emergency Measures requires a 2/3 vote (definition of “emergency Measures” in definition clause). Under Charter Objection, 3 members present have to object to

postpone until next meeting. If it is an emergency measure at least 5 members must object. This is recommended by the Committee.

**Section 2-10: City Council Confirmation of Certain Appointments**

Committee agrees that the Mayor's appointments to various commissions have to be confirmed by City Council.

**Section 2-11: Filling of Vacancies**

Committee recommends that whenever a vacancy occurs on city council, the president of the city council shall, within 30 days following the date of the vacancy call a special meeting of the city council to fill the vacancy.

The following to be discussed at the next meeting of the committee:

1. Term of office for Chief Executive – propose changing from 2 years to 4 years.
2. Discuss the Executive Branch.
3. Present changes/amendments to the City Council by the end of May 2014.
4. Should be reviewed before putting on the ballot.
5. City Council has the power to amend this.
6. Schedule first public meeting in mid-February and one in mid-April. Should also bring to public between April and November.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 27, 2014 at 5:00 P.M., in the First Floor Conference Room at the City Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Tanya Barnett  
Secretary