

City of Gardner
Gardner, MA 01440

GARDNER CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
February 24, 2014

The Gardner Charter Review Committee met in the First Floor Conference Room at City Hall on February 24, 2014 to approve Redraft of Executive and School Committee Article and deliberate and approve Articles 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.

Present: Andrew N. Boucher, Chair; Stephen McGoldrick, Consultant to the Committee; Leonette Travers; Arthur E. Young; Al Lafreniere; Patricia Jandris; Cleo Monette; Edward Yablonski; and Tanya Barnett, Secretary.

Absent: Dave Curran, Charles Leblanc

Article 3 – Executive Branch

Term of Office: The term of office of the mayor shall be 4 years.

Appointment by the Mayor: The mayor shall appoint, subject to confirmation by the city council under Section 2-10... The following was taken out of this section: “Department heads may be removed at the sole discretion of the mayor.”

Vacancy in Office of Mayor: Whenever a vacancy occurs in the office of mayor by death, removal, resignation of any other reason during the first through the 41st month of the term.... Also added the following: “If a vacancy occurs during the 42nd month through the end of the term....

The Committee agreed to above changes.

Article 4 – School Committee

Term of Office: The term of office for elected school committee members shall be 4 years each so arranged that 3 members shall be elected at each regular city election. Said terms shall... also changed the word “beginning” to “begin”...

Section 4-2: School Committee Chair, (take out the word “and”) Vice Chair, (add Secretary). Vice-Chair and Secretary Election and Term...further added “and secretary” who shall serve for 2 year term.

Under Section (b) changed to Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary. Also added at the end “The Secretary shall cause the records of the school committee to be kept in accordance with the law.”

The Committee agreed to the above changes in Article 4.

Chapter XXX An Act Revising the Charter for the City of Gardner. No changes.

Article 6 – Administrative Organization

Section 6-1. Organization of City Agencies

This section allows the mayor to administer reorganization to be approved by the city council.

Article 7 – Finance and Fiscal Procedures

This section allows the mayor to appoint financial officer. Also, the city council shall annually provide for an outside audit of the books and accounts of the city.....

Article 8 – Elections

Under Section 8-2 Preliminary Election Procedures, the following signature requirements have been changed: ...for the office of the mayor, not less than 200 (instead of 300) certified signatures; for councilor at-large, no less than 100 (instead of 150) certified signatures; for the office of ward city councilor, no less than 75 (instead of 50) certified signatures.

Article 9 – Citizen Participation Mechanisms

In order to insert something on the ballot, Section (a) Commencement was reviewed. Also reviewed Section 9-2 Citizen Referendum Procedures, Section (a) was reviewed with regard to referendum required 15% and Recall Petition was reviewed. Reviewed the Section 9-5 Required Voter Participation. Committee supported these sections as written.

Article 10 – General Provisions

Under Section 10-4 Periodic Review of Ordinances, suggested a review at 5-year intervals not later than July 1, in each year ending in a 5 or in a 0...

Under Section 10-5 Periodic Review of Charter, note later than July 1, at 10-year intervals, in each year ending in a 3..."All members of the committee shall be voters of the city."

Suggestion was made that city employees not be included.

Copies of any recommendations shall be made available to the public at a cost not to exceed the actual cost of the reproduction.

Section 10-11 Limitation on Office Holding. Included: Unless otherwise allowed by law or this charter, no person shall simultaneously hold more than 1 city office or position of employment.

The Committee agreed to the additions to Article 10.

Article 11 Transitional Provisions. More work was needed Section 23 (7) Licensing Commission.

Discussion was held on public forum. A tentative date announced by Chair Boucher is March 12, 2014 at 7:00 P.M.

The Committee approved authorizing the Chair to approve the changes of February 27, 2014 meeting in order to have the whole document posted for the public. Motioned by Ms. Jandris and seconded by Mr. Yablonski. Motion carried.

The next meeting is March 10, 2014.

Respectfully submitted,

Tanya Barnett
Secretary