

Evolving List of Questions from Individuals and Groups for Consideration by Charter Review Committee, as of 2.25.2019

Note 1: The letter/number codes in parentheses, e.g (C1-3), refer to the specific Charter segment that is linked to the question. For full context, it is best to look at that language in the Charter.

Note 2: The order of the questions is determined by the order of the Charter section to which they refer, from C1 to C9. [Note: the first C stands for Charter; there are no initial A's or B's.]

Note 2: There are a few questions out of order in "Addendum Questions" at the end that have been added after deliberation began on the original 40.

1. Should CRC be asking all participants and citizens whether it is time for the Town to consider a Charter Commission to look at alternate forms of government? (C1-3)
2. Should all reference to "Board of Selectmen" (BoS) be changed to "Select Board" and "selectman" to a gender-neutral term? And are there any steps that should be taken to alter the use of "chairman"? (C1-3; much of C3, and elsewhere)
3. Should the size of representative town meeting be reduced? (C2-1A)
4. Should members of the Board of Selectmen (and other elected positions serving town management objectives?) be excluded from Town Meeting membership to honor the division of powers between legislative and executive branches? (C2-1B)
5. Does town meeting need better procedures to insure timely and understandable article language? (C2-2C)
6. How should the Charter language be reconciled with the practice of splitting consideration of operating and capital budgets across the two meetings?(C2-3A and elsewhere)
7. Does the civility of Town Meeting debate need attention? By what process?(C2-6C)
8. Does the process for closing debate at Town Meeting satisfactorily acknowledge appropriate weight of comment on both sides of the question?(C2-5)
9. Is the Watchman of the Warrant function satisfactorily fulfilled? (C2-14)
10. Should publication of government documents and proceedings be required in "a newspaper of general circulation in the town" (C2-4, C3-7G, C6-7B and elsewhere) and should distribution be limited to traditional mail? Or should it be made clear that these are not limits but minimums?(C2-13)
11. Should precinct meetings be addressed in the Charter in order to add to their purpose or usefulness, or should all detail be in by-law or other language? (C2-7)
12. Shall the CRC strive to minimize any amendment content that relates to naming committees or positions and to listing their responsibilities, in order not to bind

into lasting language details that may change on short notice? (C2-12 and elsewhere)(See also #

13. Should the Charter define broadly the power of the BoS to adopt rules and regulations, through a defined system, to manage town business? (C3-2)
14. Should the BoS power to settle suits and claims be set in the Charter (C3-2)?
15. Is there adequate language in the Charter to define the visioning and coordination for the long-range plan”, the “Master Plan,” and the “Capital Improvements plan”? Do the “horizons” (or length of time these plans look ahead) need to be adjusted by the Charter?(C3-3A and B) Can Charter or by-law changes focus more time (staff and committee/board) for better coordination of the planning processes? (see also C8-6 and elsewhere)
16. Can the Charter urge that all permit and license approvals be delegated by the BoS except those appealed to them through some process. (C3-7B)
17. Are town boards and committees having their ideas well-enough heard and incorporated into town planning and decision-making? Should the Charter establish “coordination” meetings between the B of S and its advisory committees? (C-3-7E)
18. Should there be a way to unify the terminology of the Charter; e.g for types of plans (at C3-3 and elsewhere); or for “government bodies” (at C4-7 and elsewhere)?
19. Should school committee size be reduced from 9 to 7 or 5? (C4-4)
20. Does the Housing Authority membership language need updating? (C4-7)
21. Should residency requirements be reviewed? (C5-2B and C5-2B,)
22. Should the Town manager have greater flexibility to act on his own or with the BoS to create positions, reorganize them, and set salary ranges, eliminating Charter language complications but maintaining general budgetary parameters set by Town Meeting? (C5-3A, C5-4A, C5-5B(2), and C5-6A and B)
23. How can an updated Organizational Chart of Departments and Boards be maintained to accompany the Charter but be free of the 7-year revision span? Who would be accountable for the revisions? (C5-3A)
24. Should the roles of assistant town manager and finance director, among others, be defined in the Charter? Or, alternately, should all specific position references be eliminated to enhance management organizational flexibility? If eliminated, how can the Charter state a need to define roles?(C5-4A)
25. Should the Charter define a need for a performance evaluation system beyond that with the Town Manager? (C5-9)
26. Should the Charter be seen as the source of authority for some or all committees? If so, which committees should be included? And/or should the Charter set the rules for establishing committees, while placing the specifics in by-laws? (C7)

27. Do boards, committees, and other bodies have a strong enough role in screening and recommending prospective members for consideration by the BoS?
(C7-1A)
28. Should the Charter or by-laws spell out, for volunteers serving on town committees, their free speech rights, whistleblower protections, and rights to indemnity if requires to undergo a hearing process?(C7-2)
29. Does the BoS need staff resources delegated to support the orientation and training of committee members and chairs and to oversee the operation of and accountability of committee operation?(C7-2)
30. Are the methods to define and respond to unexcused committee members' absences in need of attention?(C7-2G)
31. Should there be a periodic review of committees and their powers just as with the Charter? Is it the role of the BoS to periodically review responsibilities?
(C7-2B)
32. In several locations there is an expectation stated that chairs report the responsibilities of their committees. Is this being effectively fulfilled to maintain an accurate record of committee work available for the public? (C7-2B, and also C4-C, C5-12, C7-1A)
33. Are term limits for appointed committees improving volunteer interest and performance? Should limits be applied to officer terms only?(C7-2H) Are there other steps that might be taken to improve citizen interest in serving?
34. Should the Charter be kept current with an accurate list of appointed committees and their responsibilities? Or should all reference to specific appointed committees be removed from the Charter and placed in by-laws or regulations?
(C7-4)
35. Does the name of the Falmouth Historic District Commission need updating?
(C7-15)
36. Does Article VIII need to be updated to reflect the role of the finance director?
(C8)
37. Does the FinComm definition of authority and purpose need to be more clearly stated and located in C2 as part of the legislative structure? And should most detail of financial processes and timelines be deleted and moved into by-law language?(C8-2)
38. Should the procedure to fill vacancies on FinComm be streamlined, by changing the by-law to allow action in November, or by the moderator having authority in the Charter as needed? Should the Board of Selectmen be participants in selecting interim members, since FinComm is charged with critiquing executive decisions? (C8-2A)
39. Should the school department budget have a more specific time schedule in relationship to the town-wide process (C8-3D)?

40. How should Charter language be changed to achieve effective, periodic review of Town by-laws? (C9-9)

Addendum Questions (These are late adds that are not in the order of Charter articles as the others are.)

41. Are there steps that can be taken in the Charter or elsewhere to improve the petition article process? (C6-1B)
42. Does the language in Article 7 [Appointed Town Boards] need more frequently to apply the term "appointed" to be clear, and should there be some language in C7-2-A that differentiates the named appointed town boards from those not named in the Charter that may currently be authorized under by-law or vote of Town Meeting [e.g., CPC] and from boards not yet formed or authorized under by-law or vote of Town Meeting?
43. Should the role of the Zoning Board be defined clearly in C7-14?
44. Are there changes in compensation that can improve the likelihood of a more diverse candidate pool for the Board of Selectmen? (C3-1)