

## Minutes of the 2022 SALEM NH CHARTER COMMISSION

**Knightly Room at Salem Town Hall  
33 Geremonty Drive  
Salem NH 03079**

## Meeting #9: Wednesday, July 27, 2022

11 Present: Bernard W. Campbell (Chair), Joe Sweeney (Vice-Chair), Bonnie Wright  
12 (Secretary), Kevin Breen, Joseph Feole, John Janigian, Donna Loranger, and Kelly  
13 Moss.

## 15 Absent: DJ Bettencourt

17 The meeting was called to order by Chairman Campbell, at 7:03. Pledge of Allegiance.

19 Next meeting is Thursday, August 4 at the Knightly Room.

## Minutes:

**Meeting of July 20, 2022: Motion by Mr. Janigian to accept minutes as amended.**

23 Seconded by Ms. Loranger.

24 **Vote:** 8-0-0. [Mr. Bettencourt was not present.]

## New Business

## Christopher Goodnow, Town Moderator

28 I'm always recruiting people to work the elections. If you have any interest in working  
29 elections, please email the town clerk Susan Wall at [swall@SalemNH.gov](mailto:swall@SalemNH.gov).

30 I have not had the benefit of watching any of your proceedings to date.

31 I have had the experience of redistricting twice. It is pretty complicated. We have to  
32 figure out the logistics of the available polling places: interior logistics, including the  
33 capacity of the school gyms and the Senior Center, and the logistics of the parking.  
34 We have 20,000 registered voters and so I need to then divide the town into areas  
35 that are suitable for the particular polling places. When I redistrict or analyze that I  
36 have to suit the district to the size of the facilities and the number of voters.

37 And thirdly, in an ideal world, I'd like to try to cut the districts on readily definable streets.  
38 So as an example between the Soule and the Barron, Route 28 is the dividing line. If  
39 you live west of 28 in the southern part of Salem, you're going to vote in Soule  
40 School. If you go into the East, then you vote in the Barron.

41 Going to wards is a substantive difference from what we do now.

42 My understanding is that wards generally would have to be the equivalent in population  
43 sizes to confirm to the RSA, but that's a base understanding. We don't have readily  
44 available election places where I can split this community into four or five or six  
45 different polling places of equivalent size.

1 Right now, because of the capacity -- indoors and out -- the North Salem and Senior  
2 Center each has about a quarter of the registered checklist, and the Soule, Barron  
3 and Fisk have about 16-17% of the checklist, within 1 or 2%.

4 I've heard anecdotally that you're talking about going to seven wards. We could not even  
5 readily adapt an odd number formula to the polling places that we have now.

6 Wards, unlike what we do currently, report on an individual ward basis by New  
7 Hampshire law. So right now, we get the results in individual polling places and then  
8 compile them at the Senior Center, and then report as a town. The official reporting  
9 that is done in Salem reflects the community as a whole. We provide the results for  
10 the districts on a district-by-district basis. There's some transparency to that. I like  
11 from a community standpoint, thinking our results are town-wide; it reinforces the  
12 community aspect to me.

13 We are always in need of election officials. We value everybody's service, but the key  
14 election officials are five assistant moderators and five assistant town clerks. And one  
15 of the challenges is that we have to uniformly administer the election laws in New  
16 Hampshire consistently at all five polling places. That's a big deal.

17 Right now, I can use an assistant moderator from any part of the town to be the assistant  
18 moderator. I'm not constrained to have an assistant moderator and assistant clerk  
19 from just the fifth district. And that's a big deal for me, logically. So I need to have  
20 the 10 sharpest people I have working in this system as moderator and assistant  
21 clerk jobs. With wards, those positions have to come from that ward. So that's a real  
22 problem for me.

23 I've been upfront with the Secretary of State above this previously. There was a law until  
24 a year ago that the district moderator and clerk had to be from that district. It's the  
25 only election law that I didn't comply with. And I told the Secretary of State that I don't  
26 comply with this law, because it makes it less effective, less efficient, less accurate,  
27 to have to be relegated to using a person from that district. They told me to look at it  
28 and do what makes the election process more trustworthy. That law was changed a  
29 year ago, so we are in compliance, and moderators and clerks can come from any  
30 district. But at the end of the day, my job is to get it right. And that going to wards and  
31 having to select a system moderator or clerk from that particular ward would be a  
32 substantive obstacle to our ultimate outcome, which is getting it right. So if it sounds  
33 like I have a firm opinion on it, it's because I do.

34 And lastly is entirely selfish. I was part of two distinct, redistricting processes. The first  
35 one went very poorly ... so poorly we had to do it again. I think that consistency in the  
36 districts and people knowing where they vote is an important fact. They shouldn't  
37 have to be either going to the website or go to the state website or wandering around  
38 figuring if their voting location changed.

39 **Ms. Moss:** You said that the results are reported separately. If we're only in wards for  
40 town elections, but the state was still by district, would we still have to report the state  
41 level by Wards as well? Or can it be separate?

42 **Mr. Goodnow:** Excellent question. I've read our RSAs previously. Probably that applies,  
43 but I don't know definitively.

44 **Ms. Moss:** You're saying the elementary schools don't close during the town elections,  
45 why would the high school have to close for a town election?

46 **Mr. Goodnow:** Because the teachers' contracts require that.

1      **Mr. Campbell:** The issue with the high school is one of parking. At the elementary  
2      schools, we have visitor parking that's located close to the entrances. If you were to  
3      vote at the high school, the only parking that is close is student parking. Students  
4      would have to not be there in order for that parking to open up to access the voters.  
5      Handicap parking is another concern. We have excellent handicap parking in the  
6      front of the high school building but that's not where you'd be coming in to vote.

7      **Mr. Campbell:** If you're getting 3000 people in and out of the high school building during  
8      the day, you have to have a plan in place to park them and you can't park them with  
9      the students in the parking lot. At the high school, we have several 100 cars  
10     belonging to students and they will need to be out of the way in order to  
11     accommodate an election that takes place from 7 am to 7 pm.

12     **Mr. Goodnow:** A presidential election would get 18,000 voters. Let's make the  
13     assumption that there are 15,000 cars. Over a 12-hour period, on average, that's  
14     about 1,300 people an hour tripping in and out. So that's a lot of trips for one location.  
15     So for every election at the high school, every elementary school in town has to  
16     close.

17  
18     Mr. Goodnow departed at 7:26 p.m.

## 20     **Old Business**

21     **Mr. Campbell:** I received responses from the [New Hampshire Municipal Association](#) as  
22     did [Mr. Sweeney](#) which generated more questions. Now they tell us we are at the  
23     limit of what legal advice they can give, and we need to contact our own town council.  
24     I have sent those questions on to the town council but in the meantime, I did a little bit  
25     more homework and looked at the 2009 charter again. I'm going to hand this  
26     document out to all of you which is something that's already online.

27     To refresh everyone's memory, including those of you listening at home, when Salem  
28     had a Charter Commission in 2009, they put together a charter and it was rejected on  
29     a number of grounds by the Attorney General's office. What I have provided for you  
30     here is a partial copy of that [rejection letter](#). The 2009 charter that was proposed did  
31     look to eliminate the delivery session just as we had discussed, but that was the  
32     number one item on the list of things that the state had said we can't do. And this was  
33     one of the reasons that the 2009 charter was rejected. I've highlighted the response  
34     here and I'll read a portion of it:

35         "Under RSA 49-D:3 1a, town voters are entitled to an opportunity to debate and  
36         amend articles that are placed on the ballot. Indeed, RSA 40:14 VIII, provides, in  
37         relevant part, "For any town which has adopted a charter under RSA 49-D:3, the  
38         method of adoption (of SB2 or official ballot voting) shall be the manner of  
39         amending the charter as provided RSC be additionally RSA 49-B." Additionally,  
40         RSA 40:13, provides for, and requires, a deliberative session for discussion,  
41         debate and amendment."

42     So, I think that does not leave a lot of wiggle room.

43     I did reach out to the town council to determine what shape that would have to take  
44     place, and whether or not it would be in the course of an existing public hearing for  
45     the budget or it would have to be a separately scheduled meeting, but I think you're  
46     going to see that we'll have to have some kind of meeting where public input can be

1 provided, if we're going to vote on the budget. That makes sense. And I can live with  
2 that. Very few people go to deliberative session. It just seems like it's a lot of time and  
3 effort for not a lot of return.

4 **Mr. Campbell:** I had a conversation with someone in town this week who asked "what  
5 do we want to charter look like?" And my comment was, "I want it to look, feel, taste  
6 and smell very much like what we do now, at least at the moment," and the  
7 deliberative session is retaining some form of that. It will be help to keep that  
8 continuity and that similarity of what we do now to what we will be proposing.

9 We need to consider the Citizen Recall Initiative in the 2009 draft charter. Londonderry  
10 has a recall initiative, that was in place prior to the 2005 court case, Asa Knowles and  
11 Cora Stockbridge vs Owen Latham et al. That case, which struck down the Seabrook  
12 recall, initiative or recall, would probably be struck down in Londonderry as well.

13 We are limited by that court case. It would appear that as of 2005, elected officials can  
14 only be removed for cause and with procedural safeguards, such as hearings or  
15 judicial review. Recalls provisions, which allow for the recall of elected officials  
16 without causing a lot of hearing or judicial review, is inconsistent with legislative  
17 intent. The court case makes some interesting reading. If you're of a mind to find this  
18 to [go to our website](#) and get into this document and read the court case because it  
19 talks a lot about legislative intent. Our colleagues here who have votes in the  
20 legislature might look at the ability of towns to have a recall process.

21 **Mr. Breen:** I would advise everyone to look at a document sent by then Town Manager  
22 Jon Sistare, who made some inquiries to the local government center in August of  
23 2009. We then had a follow-up response in October just prior to us receiving the letter  
24 from the State in December of 2009. One of the things that was talked about was the  
25 deliberative session:

26 "As noted in my early letter, there is support in the statutory text and a Supreme  
27 Court case for the proposition that a town meeting style deliberative session is not  
28 required in the official ballot town council form." Some of us were looking at that,  
29 clearly the state may have all felt differently. Perhaps we could revisit some of that or  
30 get some counsel. One of the things that stresses in this letter to then Town Manager  
31 Jonathan Sistare is "I trust you're working with your own municipal council on this."  
32 This is obviously legal advice, but they were indicating to us we should follow up with  
33 somebody who was working for us directly when a request for legal advice has been  
34 dispatched.

35 **Ms. Loranger:** In talking with the deliberative session about the budget we do have  
36 some opinions. Can we have a budget without it being voted on? Has anyone talked  
37 about having a quorum, where you require 2% of the voters if you want official ballot  
38 questions. What about a deliberative session? If we do something like that, with a  
39 quorum number, it might drive more people to go to these meetings. So we can't vote  
40 on the budget if there is only 25 people. As it is now, we can vote on the budget if  
41 there's seven.

42 **Mr. Campbell:** That's an interesting question. Certainly something we can direct to  
43 council. My concern is, if we don't have a quorum, what happens? Postpone the  
44 election? My initial impression would be that meeting would then have to be  
45 rescheduled and that would throw a pretty significant monkey wrench in the works.

1      **Ms. Loranger:** Is there another word besides quorum to require that there has to be a  
2      majority or there has to be at least decent number of people to go forward?

3      **Ms. Moss:** I feel like if you do that, you're then denying people the right to debate and  
4      amend the budget, which the law says we have to provide.

5      In Croydon, the fiasco they had with their school budget, they actually had a provision in  
6      the law where they could overturn that, but only if they had some crazy high  
7      percentage of their voting population. I wouldn't want to put in place any sort of  
8      process that would encourage people to tell people not to go specifically to prevent  
9      there being a call.

10     **Ms. Wright:** "I liked what Donna said. I would look at something like 10% of the people  
11     who voted in the last municipal election. And, I think we got to watch out for Croydon.  
12     I do believe that we could have some idiot come in, kill our budget and have it  
13     approved by the voters if there's a concentrated effort. I think we can end up in a  
14     situation just like Croydon."

15     **Mr. Campbell:** We've definitely talked about this, but I think the default budget provision  
16     prevents that. Croydon is an entirely different governmental system. Official Ballot.  
17     But I understand your concerns. I just don't think that you can put on a quorum  
18     without potentially throwing everything off.

19     **Mr. Janigian:** A general question: I think you said if the recall provision is deemed  
20     illegal, that will kill the charter. I mean, if we put together a charter and the state  
21     reviews it and there's one portion in there that they deem incorrect ...

22     **Mr. Campbell:** So what happened in 2009? The rejection letter was received in  
23     December of 2009. The Charter Commission reconvened following receipt of this  
24     letter and they couldn't agree on how to address the concerns of the Attorney  
25     General's office; that's what killed the charter. If the Charter Commission in 2009  
26     have been able to come to consensus on how to address these issues, they could  
27     have still put a charter on the ballot.

28     **Mr. Breen:** Ultimately, we weren't able to agree and we ran out of time. In the letter, the  
29     state tells you what problems were in what you submitted, and they provided direction  
30     in what our options could be. I think that's one of the benefits of meeting as frequently  
31     as we are because the quicker we submit this for review, the more time we have to  
32     what we missed in 2009. And we can use the 2009 charter as a cheat sheet to make  
33     sure we don't make the same mistake twice. Most of the objections were very  
34     procedural; the big things were the elimination of the deliberative session, the Citizen  
35     recall and the number of signatures required to petition official ballot question.

36     **Mr. Campbell:** That's different from what we're proposing with initiative and referendum.  
37     We're talking about petitioning the town council for redress and not putting an item on  
38     the ballot. So that's a difference. There are different thresholds for that. We're not  
39     currently running into that because we have not yet talked about citizens' petition  
40     articles. We were trying to focus it down to saying we're going to vote on a budget  
41     and bond articles; we're not going to have 700 warrant articles.

42     **Ms. Moss:** To correct you. I thought what we were doing was 100 people signing a  
43     petition to petition the Councilors, but 10% could put a petition on the ballot itself.

44     **Mr. Campbell:** In a special election. It's no different from it's a referendum or initiatives.  
45     Really what we're looking at is only voting on the budget and the articles in March. If  
46     someone wants to bring something out of season, they could bring it before the town

1       council and the town council would then have to set a special election to address that  
 2       question.

3       **Ms. Moss:** If it came in season, it could be put on the ballot. I don't know how that would  
 4       work. There's a lot of charters that say if this particular thing happens within 90 days  
 5       of the election, it can go on the ballot.

6       **Mr. Campbell:** We would want to get feedback from the Attorney General's office as to  
 7       whether or not that is okay, or if it would generally have to be separate. That would  
 8       be something that either our own counsel would review before we're done, or the  
 9       Attorney General's office would say, you need to work this differently.

10

## 11       **Organization of 1<sup>st</sup> Draft of the Charter Framework**

12       (Continued from previous weeks)

13

Style:	Town Council
# of Councilors:	7-9
Elected:	???
Voting Day	March
Fiscal Year	Jan 1-Dec 31 (no change)
Budget Committee	Yes
Elected Land Use Boards	Elected
Tax Collector	Elected
Initiative/Referendum Threshold (Citizen's petitions)	100 signatures to force the Council to review, 10% of the people who voted in the previous municipal election to put an item on the ballot.
Recall	Need recall provision
Deliberative Session	
Vote on Budget	Ballot vote
Vote on Bond Articles	Yes, 3/5
Vote on Zoning Ordinances	No (Council have a super majority?)
Master Plan Update?	Every 10 years, tied to census
Charter Update	Every 10 years, put it on the ballot to determine if voters if there is a need for a charter commission to be formed
Capital Improvement Plan?	Include in the charter
Other Boards?	Recreation — Appointed Conservation — Appointed Library Trustees — Elected Ethics Committee — Elected Economic Development — Appointed CIP (include a School Board member?) Master Plan (Part of Planning Board)

14

15       **Mr. Campbell** lead a discussion on committees we'd like to see enshrined in the charter, and  
 16       if they should be elected or appointed:

17

18

1   **Ms. Loranger:** EDAC? Economic Development Committee has been appointed in the past.

2   **Ms. Moss:** I understand that the Economic Development Committee currently doesn't exist. If

3       we know why it was disbanded, that might feed into whether to put it directly in the charter.

4   **Mr. Campbell:** I'll make an email Mr. Bryant.

5   **Mr. Feole:** I believe that was disbanded by the Board of Selectmen because the Economic

6       Development Committee was working on a zoning amendment for the depot, and they didn't

7       like the way it went. I do believe that we should try to include the Economic Development

8       Committee in the charter; I think it benefits the town.

9   **Mr. Sweeney:** I wonder when it makes sense as we're adding an Economic Development

10       Committee in the Charter to tie it with the Master Plan for a consistent presence in the

11       town. I think those two are tied in pretty well.

12   **Mr. Breen:** Reminding those watching that we did receive citizen input through an email

13       recommending that we talk about a view or discuss the economic development committee

14       along with the Master Plan Committee and the capital improvements Plan Committee. He

15       believes that some of the initial purposes of the EDC have faded. Not convinced they

16       need to be added to the charter.

17   **Mr. Campbell:** As far as the CIP committee, if we were to specify one, we might want to keep in

18       the charter that the CIP committee should include a member from the school board to

19       coordinate capital improvements.

20   **Ms. Loranger:** The capital improvement plan and the master plan in other charters are tied

21       together. There has to be one it's like codified in there. So that's where I would want it to be.

22   **Ms. Wright:** In most of the places, I believe, the master plan has a separate committee, but the

23       capital improvement is tied to the planning board, not the economic development.

24   **Mr. Campbell:** I agree with Mr. Breen that maybe some of these can we can leave to the

25       discretion of council, but I think there are some, particularly the master plan, which should be

26       every 10 years tied to the census. So I think we should have a mechanism for that.

27   **Mr. Breen:** Just so I'm clear, I'm not opposed. But here's the draft that we worked on in 2009.

28       Under Article Nine, administrative and judicial boards, it identifies the Planning Board,

29       Conservation Commission, etc. And then ended "other administrative boards and committees

30       may be established as necessary by the council." I'm not opposed to naming them, I'm just

31       saying in terms of us specifying in a charter with a planning board said whose powers and

32       duties are provided by state law with details of Board members. I'm necessarily interested

33       in getting into that level of detail, and how many seats the CIP will have and how many will be

34       on the Economic Development Committee.

35   **Ms. Wright:** The more I think about it, we're looking at an economic development that is

36       appointed, but I'm thinking the master plan should be elected.

37   **Mr. Feole:** The Planning Board handles the Master Plan under state law. I don't think any type of

38       separate elected committee for that, since we're already doing that with the Planning Board.

39   **Mr. Campbell:** I'm making a note to remind us that we're going to include some language at

40       some point about them, particularly the ones that currently exist, like library trustees and the

41       Conservation Commission, and also, the newly created Ethics Commission, I think, I think

42       most people here would think that that's not a bad idea. I'm gonna make myself another note.

43       I'll ask Mr. Devine to reach out to the Merrimack town manager. Just kind of get a sense of

44       how that operates over there and how often they do that sort of thing. Their details in their

45       charter are not specific, not vague, but not super specific either. So just kind of get a sense of

46       how their Ethics Committee functions.

1      **Mr. Janigian:** Concern about the transitions, if there are default numbers, and what  
2      happens to the members currently on those boards.  
3      **Mr. Campbell:** There'll be a whole section at the end of the charter. Usually, in the last article,  
4      you'll see a whole transition piece where it talks about people who are currently serving in  
5      office are going to continue to serve for the end of their current term. If this gets adopted in  
6      March of 2023, in March of 2024, there'll be special elections for the extra counselors and  
7      they'll be distributed according to where they're going to fall in the election cycle. So they  
8      might be three years they might be a three-year term, or they might be a two-year or even a  
9      one-year term, depending on how we lay out the transition provisions.

10     **Preparing for the August 13 Meeting:**

11     **Mr. Campbell:** I have started working on a PowerPoint presentation. I anticipate this  
12     being an informational and public input session where we lay out the process by  
13     which this body came into existence, how our government functions and works, and  
14     these are the changes we're thinking of making. Also, here are the two or three areas  
15     that we're still considering and for which we're looking for specific feedback as we  
16     move forward. I started drafting but I haven't gotten very far.

17     **Ms. Moss:** Reached out to the PTA at all of the elementary schools and the middle  
18     school. Some might let their members know about the meeting.

19     **Mr. Campbell:** Hoping for a large crowd. He has asked to be allowed to use the high  
20     school auditorium instead of the media room. Will seek out the availability of space to  
21     offer childcare, and lining up some volunteers for that.

22     Will create a flyer to distribute.

23     Miss Moss suggested handing out some flyers at the municipal transfer station on the  
24     morning of August 6.

25     Are any members here associated with any of the social organizations in town?

- 26     • Rotary: **Mr. Feole**
- 27     • Kiwanis
- 28     • Chamber of Commerce (?**Mr. Campbell** or **Ms. Loranger** or **Mr. Sweeney**?)
- 29     • The electronic message board at the high school: **Mr. Campbell**
- 30     • The Exchange Club
- 31     • The Grand Parade.
- 32     • Lions Club
- 33     • Elks
- 34     • Republican Party
- 35     • Salem Democratic Town Party
- 36     • Women's Club: **Ms. Wright**

37     **Ms. Wright:** I would like to commend Mr. Sweeney who did a nice graphic that's  
38     everywhere. He shared it. I've shared it. We got the verbiage onto the town website.  
39     It's at the very top of the commission page. I talked with Mr. Devine yesterday and  
40     he's going to be pushing it out for us as well.

41     **Ms. Moss:** Reaching out to police and fire to put it on their message boards.

42     **Mr. Campbell:** I can email principals and the superintendent about the high school side

1      **Ms. Moss:** I've been reading through almost all of the town charters. We sort of have the  
2      major strokes kind of decided out but there's a lot of more detailed nuanced things.  
3      Some observances: Council to revisit observances every 5 or 10 years? Limits on  
4      requesting political donations from town councilors? If there's a petition against an  
5      ordinance does the ordinance remain in effect while the ordinance is being reviewed?  
6      Election hours? (Start by at least by 7:00 or 8x8?) How long must a resident live in a  
7      town to be eligible to run for council? (3 months to a year?) Compensation for the  
8      councilors? (Some detail the salary in the charter).

9      My question is, when would be a good time for us to sort of go through those more  
10     nuanced things that may become an issue when we start to debate?

11     **Mr. Campbell:** We can start looking at all this starting next week. When I looked at the  
12     Merrimack charter for the Ethics Commission, I liked what they had in their ethics. I  
13     didn't look at the specifics, particularly donations to town councilors and political  
14     donations.

15     **Mr. Breen:** Many of the things that Ms. Moss is referring to are in the draft copy,  
16     including things like setting the compensation so that it wasn't decided by the actual  
17     town council.

18     **Mr. Campbell:** I would like to take a look at the 2009 draft next week and kind of run  
19     down the list.

20     **Ms. Moss:** I think that'd be helpful before the public meeting on the 13th.

21     **Ms. Wright:** One of the things that I've been thinking about and I wanted to add to that  
22     chart is compensation for the town council. Something Miss Thornock said last week  
23     sounded like she doesn't understand that our town council is paid \$3,000 each. And  
24     they have actually had someone on the Budget Committee actually ask to increase  
25     that amount. So we need to talk about that.

26     **Ms. Loranger:** I think it is \$1,500 and one of the members wanted to increase it to  
27     \$3,000.

28     **Mr. Breen:** Are you kidding me? I think we had some discussion last Charter  
29     Commission to drop them to \$1,500. We were recommending nine councilors, and  
30     were talking about the budget impact. I'm sure we'll have a spirited discussion about  
31     whether 1500 cuts it or 3000 cuts into you know whether people want to be paid or  
32     not paid.

33     **Mr. Campbell:** I know the school board gets some kind of compensation, but I've never  
34     known what it is because my father always donates it right back to the school district.  
35     This is a good place to say that at our next meeting we will run down the 2009 draft  
36     for all those little things, and we'll include compensation as a topic for conversation.

37     **Ms. Wright:** In one of the spreadsheets that I've provided, I have compared a number of  
38     NH municipalities and how much each pays their town or city council. We are actually  
39     near the top of the range.

40  
41     **Mr. Campbell:** It sounds like we've got a full agenda for next week.

42     I am still going to email Mr. Bryant about why the Economic Development Committee  
43     was disbanded. I'm going to reach out to Mr. Devine to see if he can reach out to  
44     someone at Merrimack regarding their ethics commission. And I'll work on getting  
45     promotional materials ready for August 13.

1 I don't think there's anybody left to pull in; we talked about the fiscal year and we've  
2 spoken with the Moderator. We'll plan to review the draft of the 2009 charter next  
3 week as the centerpiece of our next meeting and talk about preparation for the  
4 August 13 public hearing.

5  
6 As a reminder next week our meeting is on Thursday. Next week we will be at the  
7 Knightly Room at seven o'clock.

8  
9  
10 **Public Comments:**

11  
12 **Mr. Brian Thornock, 5 Brookdale Rd:** When will the public be able to see the final  
13 draft? Words matter. There are implications, legal implications of the words that are  
14 used. A Powerpoint presentation of the proposal does not show the things that you  
15 may or may not have intended that are going to happen.

16 The timeline is short. There is no requirement to get this done by October to get it on the  
17 ballot. It can continue for as long as necessary, through October 2023 to do this right.  
18 Why wouldn't we just extend this out? Get it to the state by the first of January; take  
19 two extra months to iron out the wrinkles, and get it on the 2024 ballot. It's better to  
20 get this right now than to try and revisit it later. Because revisiting it later is going to  
21 be even harder.

22 "Second thing is Croydon is brought up again, okay. I got they had a mess up there. But  
23 and by the way, I just Googled it. They actually fixed it. Okay to some people's  
24 satisfaction. I don't know what the right thing is. We had a resident who proposed  
25 cutting their school budget by \$800,000 and not sending it to another town's School  
26 District. He and the people who voted to cut that budget, felt and determined based  
27 off of their vote, said an \$800,000 cut in their budget of \$1.7 million was warranted.  
28 They felt that what they were going to get for that \$800,000 was the right  
29 government. Were they wrong? I don't know. I don't live in Croydon. I don't send my  
30 kids to the school's district. But that's irrelevant. The voters decided that, and I take  
31 great offense to an elected member in this community, a commission member of this  
32 commission calling our voters idiots because they may propose something that they  
33 don't agree with, what may not even be the right thing. If our registered voters in this  
34 ... we have a motion and a registered voter decides that they want to propose  
35 slashing the budget for the town. And the majority of people they're excited they want  
36 to do that's it. They're not idiots. They just have a different viewpoint. And that will be  
37 the form of government you can disagree you can agree all day long. But it's  
38 inappropriate for an elected official in this town to talk about a voter that way and it  
39 actually makes me wonder, what do you think about the voters? So that's all I got to  
40 say no. I appreciate it."

41 **Ms. Wright:** "Can I say something? Can I make an apology? I used a poor choice of  
42 words. And I apologize for that."

43 **Mr. Thornock:** "I don't necessarily believe that's your opinion. So I understand that.  
44 There are a lot of people in this town who don't believe our government cares about  
45 our feelings. And when I say feelings what we care about, and that was just an

1 indicator and I'm not saying that necessarily, but in general, that's the way people  
2 feel."

3  
4 **Claire Karibian:** We had a problem hearing Ms. Karibian; she shares that she frequently  
5 has a problem hearing Commissioners.

6 Likes Town Council: 30,000 residents; it's time to move on. Prefers 9 council, 4 at large 1  
7 from each ward. 1 person from each neighborhood. Each ward is very different from  
8 an inner city. She lives in the rural area, separate from town.

9 Doesn't want deliberative session to end, but hopes that those people not attending  
10 could call in.

11 Mr. Goodnow said we have 5 polling places, not based on population. Needs to be  
12 addressed. Maybe add one more.

13 Wants people to understand what is going on. Commission is doing an excellent job.  
14 Please vote, vote, vote.

15  
16 **MOTION BY Mr. Sweeney to adjourn.** Seconded by Ms. Moss.

17 **Vote:** 8-0-0

18 Meeting adjourned at 8:25.

21 Minutes taken by: Bonnie Wright

23 Minutes Approved: Salem 2022 Charter Commission

24 Date: August 4, 2022

27 **Video:**

28 The video of this meeting may be viewed at:

29 <https://www.facebook.com/sctv17/videos/1415640418905264>

30 <http://sctv-17.com/CablecastPublicSite/search?channel=1&query=charter%20commission>

32 **Charter Commission Meeting Schedule**

34 10<sup>th</sup> meeting: **Thursday**, August 4, 7pm,  
35 Knightly Room, Salem Town Hall

36 11<sup>th</sup> meeting: **Saturday, August 13, 10am, PUBLIC HEARING,**  
37 **Media Center, Salem High School**

38 12<sup>th</sup> meeting: Wednesday, August 17, 7pm  
39 Knightly Room, Salem Town Hall

40 13<sup>th</sup> meeting: Wednesday, August 24, 7pm  
41 Knightly Room, Salem Town Hall