

Town Charter Committee

August 26, 2025



Committee met in HYBRID session at 6:30 p.m. at Abbot Hall, 188 Washington Street
The Chair called the meeting of August 26, 2025, to order.

Amy Drinker, Chair	Seamus Hourihan
Rossana Ferrante, Vice Chair	Sean Casey
Caleb Miller	Ron Grenier
Tom Massaro	Bill Conly
Victor Wild	
Thatcher W. Kezer III, Town Administrator, staff support	

The Chair announced that the meeting is utilizing a webinar platform and is being recorded.

Minutes. Motion made and seconded to approve the minutes of May 15, 2025, and June 12, 2025. All in favor.

Posting Minutes. Seamus Hourihan raised concerns about government transparency regarding timely posting of meeting minutes for various town boards/committees/commissions. The Chair acknowledged Mr. Hourihan's statement stating she would be happy to talk about this general topic off line but would like to focus the Charter Committee's attention on Charter discussion.

Charter Timeline/Schedule. The Chair reviewed the schedule for fall meetings and discussed the review process and establishing deadlines leading up to the January 2026 deadline for submitting the final charter draft to the Select Board. In addition, the Chair will coordinate with the Town Administrator for Town Council to review the Charter.

All entities mentioned in the Charter have received an email making them aware of Draft B, along with a short form asking them to confirm receipt of Draft B and notify the Chair if they have factual concerns with Draft B. The Chair and Sean Casey have met with a few committees to review specific language proposed and will continue to meet with others as needed.

The Chair and Vice Chair will attend the Select Board meeting on September 24, 2025, to review the Charter process with them and answer any questions and seek feedback from them. Representative Armini will be at the Charter Committee on September 11, 2025, to walk through the process on the State Level for approving the Town Charter.

Alignment Documents. Sean Casey explained the alignment documents provided to the Charter Committee. He has developed a template to track edits, notating lines where language should be aligned (or is not) in various Charter sections.

Charter Recall Provision Options

The Charter Committee discussed two options for including a recall provision in the town charter. Option 1 involves detailed, granular language specifying all aspects of the recall process, while Option 2 proposes a higher-level framework that would allow a future town meeting to determine

specific recall details through a proposed recall bylaw. After deliberation, the committee agreed to support Option 2, which would be presented as a standalone warrant article on the 2026 Annual Town Meeting Warrant, with the possibility of a detailed bylaw to be developed at a later date. The committee also noted that Town Council and the Collins Center have received Draft B for review, with Town Council planning to provide feedback on the recall language in particular.

Draft B Discussion. The Chair stated she would like to move this item down on the agenda and return to the discussion on Draft B at the end. After looking at the Draft B holds from Charter Committee members the chair feels they can be considered in two categories. Category 1: the “holds” merit committee discussion. Category 2: the “holds” are noting minor instances such as a missing word, or a word to be changed. The Chair believes that moving forward discussions will need to be disciplined, because the Committee’s schedule does not allow for the in-depth nature of previous discussions; however if Charter Committee members feel that a topic needs more in-depth discussion then it will do so. Draft B “holds” will be more focused because Draft A has already been reviewed.

Housekeeping.

- Town Counsel and the Collins Center have Draft B for review.
- The Charter Committee will submit recall Option 2 for Town Counsel review this week.

Charter Executive Summary. The Committee discussed a draft summary of the Charter to help busy stakeholders and members of the public understand the charter’s purpose. The committee agreed to rephrase some language in the executive summary to avoid misinterpretation, particularly regarding a stand-alone recall provision.

Draft B. Discussion. The Committee commenced its review of Draft B holds. The Committee decided to move the definitions section from Article 1 to an appendix to make it more accessible. The Committee will begin Draft B discussion, Article 5, at its next meeting.

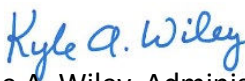
Public Comment. None

State Representative Jenny Armini will attend the Charter Committee meeting on September 11, 2025 to discuss the Charter process at the State level.

The Chair sought input from committee members as it relates to starting future meetings at 6:00 p.m. It was agreed that members could make a 6:00 p.m. meeting.

Next Meeting Date. Thursday, September 11, 2025. 6:00 p.m.

Motion made and seconded to adjourn at 8:35 p.m. All in favor.


Kyle A. Wiley, Administrative Clerk

List of documents used: Charter Draft B, Executive Summary draft