

Town Charter Committee

September 23, 2025



Committee met in HYBRID session at 6:00 p.m. at Abbot Hall, 188 Washington Street

The Chair called the meeting of September 23, 2025, to order. The following roll call was taken:

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

MINUTES. Motion made to approve the minutes of September 11, 2025. Moved by Massaro, seconded by Grenier. On a roll call vote the Committee voted as follows: Ferrante, present; Casey, in favor; Grenier, in favor; Massaro, in favor; Drinker, in favor.

Collins Center Feedback on Draft B Language. The Chair has not yet received feedback from the Collins Center.

Caleb Miller joined the meeting remotely. Victor Wild joined the meeting.

CHARTER COMMITTEE UPDATES. Sean Casey gave a brief review of Article 8, Appointments, Vacancies, Resignations and Removals. The committee evaluated multiple options for handling the removal process focusing on state-mandated procedures for the Housing Authority and Zoning Board of Appeals and discussed state-mandated procedures for volunteer positions.

After discussion, the Town Charter Committee agreed to adopt Option 3, which references applicable sections of Massachusetts General Law for removal procedures, while maintaining consistency with other charter entities. The Town Charter Committee decided to keep language about written charges and public hearings, as these requirements protect board members and provide transparency.

Communication on Draft Charter. The Chair stated that Town Counsel is currently reviewing Draft B as well as a memo regarding questions the committee has related to the Municipal Light Board.

Housekeeping and Communication

Based on the Town Charter Committee's meeting in September with Representative Jenny Armini, the Chair has revised the Charter Executive Summary and the legislative process to be less specific than originally drafted because the timeline for review at the state level cannot be anticipated. The committee discussed including details about the legislative process and timeline in the Executive Summary with suggestions to add bullet points about the process which could extend

into 2027 or 2028. This document will continue to be updated as more information becomes available, particularly for public forums from February to May 2026.

The revised Charter Executive Summary will provide a general timeline:

1. May 2026, Marblehead Annual Town Meeting. If the Charter is approved:
2. Commencing summer of 2026, the Charter will be submitted to the Massachusetts Legislature for review and approval. The bill is then placed on the governor's desk for enactment by his or her signature.
3. Once passed at the state level, the Charter will come back to Marblehead for a town-wide vote to accept. It is unknown if this would be for 2027 or 2028 vote.

This updated Charter Executive Summary will be posted to the town website for reference pending Town Charter Committee approval.

Charter Review Process. Updated.

The Chair noted that several boards and committees have provided feedback to the Town Charter Committee's questionnaire while ongoing dialogue continues with other entities. The Chair emphasized that the purpose of the questionnaire is to gather feedback and concerns, not to legally bind committees.

A discussion was had on plans for community outreach once the charter is submitted to the Select Board in late January 2026.

Public Comment.

Leigh Blander, Marblehead Current, noted the paper could look at options for the public to view the Charter once it is published.

Next Meeting Date. Thursday, October 9, 2025. 6:00 p.m.

Motion made to adjourn at 7:08 p.m. Moved by Grenier, seconded by Miller. On a polled vote the Committee voted as follows: Massaro, in favor; Wild, in favor; Grenier, in favor; Hourihan, in favor; Casey, in favor; Miller, in favor; Ferrante, in favor; Drinker, in favor.



Kyle A. Wiley, Administrative Clerk

List of documents used: 9.22.25 update to Charter Committee / 9.23.25 Entities Update Marblehead Charter Legislative Process / Town Charter Executive Summary v2./ , 8.4 SC Potential edit