

Memo to the Select Board

DATE: October 29, 2025
TO: Members of the Select Board
FR: Amy Drinker, Chair, Marblehead Town Charter Committee (TCC)
Cc: Thatcher Kezer, Marblehead Town Administrator; Kyle Wiley, Admin Aide to Town Administrator; Lisa Mead, Marblehead town counsel; Jack Attridge, Town Moderator; Jenny Armini, Marblehead State Representative
RE: Update: Revised timeline for charter submission to the select board

To the members of the Select Board:

In consideration of Sean Casey's temporary leave from the TCC, the TCC determined at its October 28 meeting that the deadline for submitting the charter to the select board should be revised. Given the components of work left to complete, it is no longer feasible to meet the January 2026 deadline for submission of the final charter to the select board. The TCC's goal remains the same: to deliver a final draft of the charter document to the select board in a timely fashion (most likely March 2026) while maintaining the quality of the established process and framework. The charter will be ready for inclusion on the warrant for May 2027 town meeting.

Sean Casey, TCC temporary leave

For the time being, Sean Casey will be on temporary leave from the TCC. Sean remains an integral part of the committee. His contributions include the development of charter language; expertise regarding town bylaws and MGL; careful tracking of edits, charter version alignment and notations; explanations and discussions with the TCC; research regarding the town's past practices and citing of source materials; engagement with entities to address their feedback; and a consistent collegial work ethic. The fidelity of the charter's language is a direct result of Sean's role in its development and ongoing revisions.

The components of remaining TCC work remain the same

- Review feedback from charter entities
- Request clarification from town counsel on specific questions
- TCC review of updated article/section language using the committee's "hold" process
- Review Draft B feedback from the Collins Center (deadline November 14)
- Create Draft C of charter language for town counsel review and address any issues (Draft C review schedule for town counsel TBD)
- Create a final draft for submission to the select board (spring 2026)

TCC meeting schedule

The TCC will hold its next meeting on Thursday, December 11, using the time between now and then to assess entities' feedback and Draft B revisions. On December 11 the TCC will determine its schedule for January, February, and March 2026.

The timeline for charter review by the Commonwealth's legislature remains the same

2026 is the second year of the Commonwealth's two-year legislative session. Whether the charter is submitted to the Commonwealth in June 2026 or June 2027, it is likely that the legislature would not begin its Marblehead charter review until February 2027 (the beginning of the new legislative session). It is reasonable to expect that the legislature will complete its review in time for Marblehead to conduct its townwide vote to approve the charter in June of 2028.

Thank you for your consideration. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Amy Drinker, chair