



TOWN OF **NEWMARKET** NEW HAMPSHIRE

CHARTER COMMISSION
Tuesday, June 10, 2025 at 7:00 PM
Town Hall, Council Chambers
PUBLIC HEARING MEETING MINUTES

Approved June 24, 2025

Members Present: Jon Bentley, Chris Hawkins, Phil Nazarro (Vice Chair), Patrick Reynolds, Russ Simon, Toni Weinstein (Chair), Al Zink. Scott Blackstone and Dan Smith were excused.

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Meeting Rules Review and Adoption

The Chair introduced proposed meeting rules. There were no comments. Mr. Reynolds moved that the proposed meeting rules be adopted. Mr. Zink seconded the motion. The rules were adopted unanimously.

3. Consider Acceptance of Minutes

The draft minutes of the May 27, 2025 organizational meeting were introduced for comment. There were no comments or changes. Vice Chair Nazarro moved that the draft minutes be approved as presented. Mr. Simon seconded the motion. The May 27, 2025 meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

4. Town Manager Presentation on Forms of Municipal Government

The Town Manager presented a slide show on four forms of government available under New Hampshire law: (1) strong Mayor and Board of Aldermen; (2) Town Council – Manager; (3) Selectboard – SB2; and (4) Selectboard – Traditional Town Meeting. The Town Manager summarized various features of each of these forms. The Town Manager described that under New Hampshire law, local government can only exercise the authority permitted under State law. The Town Manager described



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the 21 New Hampshire municipalities that currently employ some form of charter government. The Town Manager presented information as to which charter Towns

approve the budget, choose or elect the Planning Board, utilize a municipal budget committee, and have combined town clerk and tax collector positions. Several Commission members offered comments and asked questions of the Town Manager. There was discussion of the historic role and evolution of the Budget Committee, and the impact of the Capital Improvement Plan on the budget process. Mr. Hawkins asked the Town Manager to provide the Commission a document outlining the capital budget development process and its relationship to the overall budget process.

5. Public Hearing

Public hearing was opened at 7:40 PM.

Alex Capron, 7 Moody Point Dr., asked the Commission whether the Budget Committee, Town Manager, and Council, anticipate voter reactions when formulating the budget. There was extensive discussion of this question. The consensus opinion was that the various municipal bodies anticipate as much as possible voter reaction to proposed budgets and try to keep the budgets as conservative as possible relative to the ongoing demand for municipal services.

John Carmichael, 44 Elm St., asked about the Commission's anticipated timeline.

George Willant, Schanda Dr., asked if the Commission intended to make significant changes to the Town Charter, including changing the form of government. There was discussion that the Commission is very early in its process and no decisions have been made. There was comment that the Commission wishes to hear from the public what changes if any they would like to see in town governance and that the Commission is developing a community survey to try and obtain feedback on those issues.

Chris Carmichael, 44 Elm St., asked how frequently the Charter Commission is convened. The Town Manager pointed out that there is no legal requirement, but that the Newmarket Charter was adopted in 1991, and Charter Commissions were



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convened in 2003 and 2013. It was pointed out that the Charter Commission can be convened as frequently as the voters decide to do so.

There was no further public comment. Public hearing was closed at 8:00 PM.

6. Charter Commission Timeline

The Chair reviewed that the Commission's preliminary report must be submitted by **October 30, 2025**, and be submitted to the Secretary of State, Department of Revenue Administration, and Attorney General's Office by **November 6, 2025**. The report must also be reviewed by Town Counsel.

There was discussion of inviting the School Board, Planning Board, Budget Committee, and other Town boards to provide input to the Commission process.

Steve Buckley, an attorney from the NHMA, will attend the Commission's July 8, 2025 meeting. The Commission discussed that his presentation should include various options for the budget committee and charter language utilized by other communities to address the Capital Improvement Plan process: whether by the Planning Board or a separate Capital Improvement Committee. There was discussion that the Capital Improvement Plan should be aligned with the Town Master Plan. The Town Manager offered to invite other communities, including Bow and Salem, to provide information on their recent charter review processes. There was discussion whether the Charter can include provisions to encourage public participation. The Secretary will include in the minutes a link to a video and materials on the Town of Bow website regarding their recent charter process.

[Bow Charter Review Process.](#)

7. Subcommittee Reports

Survey Subcommittee

Draft surveys directed to the community at large and to former elected and appointed officials were circulated for review and comment. Some of the questions were amended and one or two questions were added to each survey. There was



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discussion of how the survey is made available to the public: online, in paper, by mail, via QR codes, and/or other means. The Chair will make the changes and direct the Town Manager to circulate the surveys as quickly as possible. The Town Manager can provide reports that summarize the data or provide the data in raw form as requested by the Commission.

Communications Subcommittee

The communications subcommittee is meeting on Thursday, June 12, 2025 at 4:30 in the Town Manager's office to discuss ways and means of publicizing the work of the Commission and eliciting public input.

8. New Business

There was no new business.

9. Adjournment

Mr. Bentley made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Nazarro. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.