



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone

**MINUTES**

November 18, 2021, 5PM

Members present: Zoe Iacovino, Ona Ferguson, Emily Monea, Laura Pitone, Lucas Schaber, Beverly (Bev) Schwartz, William (Bill) White, Kat Rutkin, Jessica Lieberman, Meagan Benetti, Crystal Turner

Members not present: Ben Echevarria

Staff attending: Anna Corning, Hope Williams, Collins Center - Elizabeth Corbo, Collins Center - Steve McGoldrick

Other attending: Klaus Schultz, Jack Perenick, Jesse Clingan

Meeting started at 5:05PM

**Decisions:**

1. Committee approved minutes from 11/4.
  - a. Nine 5s
2. Committee approved using the language “The term shall begin on the first weekday in January, following the municipal election, except when that day is a legal holiday, in which event the term shall begin on the following day” regarding start date.
  - a. Eleven 5s
3. Committee approved drafting the Powers and Duties section of Article 4 - School Committee, using the exemplar language with the amendment of splitting bullets 4 and 5. Additionally, the writing group will simplify the language as much as possible.
  - a. Eight 5s
  - b. Three 4s
4. Committee approved drafting School Committee Chair, Vice Chair, and Clerk Section - School Committee officers and procedures shall be determined by method prescribed by School Committee policy, and the Mayor and City Council President may not serve as chair (ex officio).
  - a. Eleven 5s
5. Committee approved drafting School Committee Vacancies section, to keep the current practice to fill vacancies - “There will be a special election if more than 1 year is remaining in term. The school committee will appoint if less than a year remains in the term, and the filling of vacancies will be open and transparent. It will not be filled if the city election is within 120 days and the person elected will start immediately.”
  - a. Nine 5s
  - b. One 3

*The committee uses the Fist to Five method of voting, a technique for gauging consensus. Voting ranges from 0 to 5. The scale is: 0 - no way, 1 - major issues to be resolved now, 2 - minor issues to be resolved now, 3 - minor issues to be resolved later, 4 - comfortable with this as it is, 5 - love this and will champion it. 0-2 is considered a lack of consensus, while 3-5 is considered consensus.*

## NOTES

1. Welcome 5:03
  - a. Anna welcomed the committee and community members.
2. Approve 11/4 Minutes 5:05
  - a. **Meeting minutes from 11/4 were approved.**
3. Public Comment 5:05
  - a. Committee heard no public comments.
4. Deliberation Topic 1: Start Date for Taking Office 5:20
  - a. Anna presented the two options the project managers came up with, and the committee felt the first option solved for the issue of start dates falling on cultural or religious holidays in Somerville. The language reads: “The term shall begin on the first weekday in January, following the municipal election, except when that day is a legal holiday, in which event the term shall begin on the following day.”
  - b. **Committee approved using the language “The term shall begin on the first weekday in January, following the municipal election, except when that day is a legal holiday, in which event the term shall begin on the following day” regarding start date.**
5. Deliberation Topic 2: School Committee Powers and Duties 5:40
  - a. Committee deliberated what School Committee powers and duties should be included in the charter. Libby from the Collins Center explained how and why the presented options included specific general laws. There was discussion regarding control of the buildings and if previous policy decisions are things that can be fixed in the charter or not, specifically regarding the maintenance provision.
    - i. Committee took a sense of the room vote to keep the maintenance provision in the Powers and Duties section of Article 4 - School Committee.
  - b. Libby from the Collins Center had the idea to share language on the screen to show the committee options based on the sense of the room. The language she shared for deliberation was: “The school committee shall have all powers which are conferred on school committees by the General Laws and the additional powers and duties provided by charter, ordinance or otherwise and not inconsistent with the General Laws, including but not limited to (i) selecting and removing a superintendent of the schools who shall be charged with the administration of the school system, and all other personnel as provided by the General Laws, (ii) making all policies for the management of the public school system and for conducting the business of the school committee as deemed necessary or

