

Overview of the Recommendations for Changes to the
Weymouth Home Rule Charter

The Charter Review Committee started meeting in August of 2009. We invited citizens, department heads and town officials to attend our meetings and offer input into the process of reviewing our original charter.

We are pleased to report that, during our deliberations, it was consistently apparent that changing to our current form of government was the right thing for the Town of Weymouth. We repeatedly heard that the town is being run much more effectively. Citizens' concerns are being addressed in a more efficient manner. Town departments can run more effectively and efficiently because there is one place and/or person to go to for answers.

We are pleased to present our final recommendations. We have divided the recommended changes into two categories. Section 1 addresses substantive changes and Section 2 addresses housekeeping and/or clerical changes.

The Charter Review Committee is not recommending a need for an elected Charter Commission. We believe that the document we are submitting addresses the issues that need to be reviewed at this time. With guidance from Attorney Michael Curran and Attorney George Lane, these changes fall under the realm whereas our Charter Committee has the authority to approve.

We would like to highlight several of the substantive changes.

Page 5: Section 3-1: Mayor: Qualifications; Term of Office; Compensation

The Charter Committee believes the language concerning "a town officer or other town employees who has taken a leave of absence in order to serve as mayor from returning to the same office" should be deleted.

Through our deliberations, the committee came to a consensus that if a person from the private sector is elected Mayor, that person would not be granted a leave of absence; therefore, a town employee should not receive that benefit. We also believe that the person, who assumes the job responsibility during the leave of absence, deserves to know that there is a committee from the town in recognition of their work.

Page 13: Section 6-2 School Committee Budget

Page 14: Submission of Budget and Budget Message

The area of the charter that stimulated the most discussion was the budget process. Among our proposed changes, you will see several recommendations changing the time line that the budgets are to follow. We believe that if these changes are accepted, the entire budget process for the town will become more realistic for all departments. We believe that the new time line will help deal with the uncertainty of funding in these ever changing fiscal times.

Page 15: Periodic Review of Charter and Ordinances

The Charter Committee believes the suggested language should be added to clarify that the Charter may be reviewed at any time before the required specified ten year interval.

The Charter Review Committee also recommends that any changes that are approved as voted by the citizens of Weymouth take effect immediately.

As you begin your deliberations, the committee will be available to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Barbara Deacon, Chairperson