



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

Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone

**MINUTES**

April 28, 2021, 5PM

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

Members not present: Crystal Turner, Ben Echevarria

Staff attending: Anna Corning, Hope Williams

Other attending: Alex Reidy, Pat Cain, William Valletta, Stephen Mackey, Joe Lynch, Mark Gallagher, Meredith Porter

Meeting started at 5:00PM

**Decisions:**

1. Committee approved meeting minutes from 4/13.
  - a. Nine 5s, One 4
2. The committee agreed on the list of key values they want the charter to embody as Just, Empowering, Responsive, and Innovative, while noting that there may still be room for improvement and this isn't necessarily the finalized list.
  - a. Six 5s, Four 4s
3. The committee agreed the current status of the draft values document was sufficient and agreed to come back to the discussion at a later date.
  - a. Eight 5s, Two 4s
4. The committee agreed on the status of the budget brainstorm, and agreed to continue to discuss. Coordinating team will discuss further and return with a proposal for the committee to discuss.
  - a. Ten 5s
5. The committee approved the creation of a community engagement working group, and for its members to be Meagan, Zoe, and Lucas.
  - a. Ten 5s

*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 lack of consensus, while 3-5 is considered consensus.*

## Meeting Minutes:

1. Welcome, Agenda Review- 5:01
  - a. Anna welcomed the committee.
2. Approve 4/13 Meeting Minutes and Updates - 5:05
  - a. Minutes from April 13th were approved and Anna provided an update on Collins Center, reminded the committee of the precious RFP process that is now closed, and explained that the Collin's Center is exempt from an RFP process because they are an intergovernmental agency. She explained that we are waiting on the scope and price proposal from the Collins Center and hope to have them at the next meeting on May 13th. The coordinating team expressed overall positive thoughts about the Collins Center joining team.
3. Values Discussion - 5:10
  - a. Bev led the completion of values discussion, and the final values were: Just, Empowering, Responsive, Innovative. There was a discussion of how we can or can't concretely see these values in government, with the prompt "I know a government is [value] when [action]." Common themes were elevating community voices, removing barriers to participation, and focusing on communities that are underserved or underrepresented.
  - b. In concluding, Bev asked if anyone wanted to attempt to put the values summaries into coherent sentences - Jessica Lieberman volunteered, and agreed to be the rotating member of the coordinating team for the upcoming meeting.
4. Budget Discussion - 6:00
  - a. Anna presented the budget discussion sheet and led a brainstorm of budget ideas. The committee discussed the importance of community engagement and budgeting for future community engagement activities, and Emily clarified that we should get the budget proposal finished in the next 2-3 weeks.
5. Community Engagement Discussion - 6:15
  - a. Kat led the group in the community engagement discussion and community engagement working group was formed. The committee expressed agreement that community engagement is key to this process. Common themes were holding an initial listening session, meeting with diverse community members, youth engagement, and outreach like posters or fliers.
6. Charters 101 Presentation - 6:30
  - a. Anna gave a general Charter 101 presentation to the group, explaining home rule petition and approval charter processes. The committee had questions on Somerville-specific processes that will be answered by the technical consultant, including a question on the possibility of charter changes ever going to municipal vote.

7. Next Steps - 6:50

- a. Anna wrapped up the meeting and asked for all questions for the technical consultant to be sent to Anna and Hope via email.

Meeting concluded at 7:00PM

*Next meeting date – The next meeting date will be May 20th at 5PM. It will be held remotely using zoom. Instructions to join the meeting will be provided on the meeting agenda posted at City Hall and on the City's website.*

Documents distributed:

- Values document
- Budget brainstorm sheet