

**Smithfield Charter Review Commission
Virtual Meeting**

Tuesday, May 12, 2020 @ 5:00 P. M.

Agenda

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/883167589>

You can also dial in using your phone.

United States (Toll Free): [1 866 899 4679](tel:18668994679)

Access Code: 883-167-589

- I. Meeting Called to Order at 5:00 P. M.
- II. Prayer
- III. Salute to the Flag
- IV. Old Business None.
- V. New Business
 - A. Discuss and Act Upon Letter by Chair of Mission Statement — The Process — Interviews, Responding to Complaints of Interview Questions
 - B. Interview the Following:
 - Town Manager. 5:15. P. M.
 - C. Consider, Discuss and Act Upon Member Item Request Form, Checklist Chart Update and Research Report.
 - D. Schedule Meetings
 - E. Public Comment
 - F. Adjournment

Agenda Posted: May 6, 2020; Amended: May 7, 2020

The public is welcome to any meeting of the Charter Review Commission. If communication assistance (readers, interpreters, captions) or any other accommodation to insure participation is needed, please contact the Smithfield Town Manager's office at 401 233 1010 at least forty hours prior to the meeting.

Charter Review Commission 2019/2020

Mission Statement. — The Process — Interviews

From the Chair

I am compelled to present a written response to recent criticism of the the interview process as it relates to our current charter, specifically “ questions not related to the charter “. From the onset I emphasized that prior to voting on proposed charter review changes, it is crucial for our charter members to understand the governance of the Town of Smithfield prior to formulating and voting on proposed changes. Interviews, questions and answers provide this understanding.

What is the Charter?

The Charter is the governing document that mandates how the Town has to function. The Charter consist of the amendments approved by the Smithfield voters on the ballot. To state that some questions are not pertinent to the charter is simply wrong. Although a few questions and answers will not result in a “ proposed charter change “ or are a state issue versus town issue, it is not my purview or function to filter what a charter member may ask during the interview process. To date, the overall content of questions and answers has resulted in the surface of important issues that the charter commission will address to improve Town of Smithfield governance. Additionally, the documented feedback from department administrators exemplify that our interview process is working.

Contents of the Charter

A review of the Charter displays that “ powers and duties “ and “ responsibilities “ of the Town Manager, Town Council, School Committee and Town Department's are identified. Additional powers, duties and responsibilities may have to be added to the Charter. It is our position that the Charter Review Commission has a fiduciary duty in addition to presenting proposed Charter changes, to forward recommendations to the Town Council. Without the transparency of questions and answers, the fiduciary duty is restricted. This process was successful by the 2008 Charter Review Commission resulting in 28 Charter ballot questions being approved by the voters. One approval was the creation of the Asset Management Commission which has been a valuable toolkit to assist the Town Council and Town Manager.

In Closing,

It is rewarding to see the spirit, enthusiasm, and passion of the Charter members with the interview process taking place, which will ultimately result in a successful Charter Review Commission for the benefit of town residents and taxpayers.

Respectfully Al Costantino, Chair