

# Town of Johnston Charter Review Commission

*Richard DelFino, Jr. Chairman*  
*Fred Iafrate, Vice- Chairman*  
*Charles I Ainabe*  
*Joseph Andriole*  
*Ronald Bianchi*  
*Karen Clark, Esq*



*Nicole Corbin, Esq*  
*Stephen Mandarelli*  
*Susan Mansolillo*  
*Robert Piscione*  
*Taylor Russo*  
*Randy Urena*  
*Arnold Vecchione*

## Johnston Charter Review Commission

### Minutes

**January 4, 2024**

**Johnston Senior Center, 1291 Hartford Avenue, Johnston, RI 02919**

#### **I. Meeting Called to Order & Roll Call**

Chairman DelFino called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Town Clerk, Vincent Baccari, Jr took a roll call

All members were present except for Charles Ainabe and Taylor Russo

Also present were: Allan Fung, Esq, Paige Macnie, Esq & Vincent P. Baccari, Jr, Town Clerk

#### **II. New Business**

- **Approval of the minutes from the December 7, 2023 meeting (Vote may be taken)**

Joseph Andriole made a motion to accept the minutes of the December 7, 2023 meeting

The motion was seconded by Fred Iafrate

Motion carried by unanimous vote

- **Discussion of Article III entitled "Town Council" (Votes may be taken)**

Chairman DelFino took each sub-section of Article III individually and asked if there were any recommendations:

Section 3.1 Composition; term of office of members: A proposal was made to increase the Town Council terms from 2 years to 4 years

Term limits and the staggering of council district terms were also proposed and discussed

Section 3.2 Vacancies: A recommendation was made to add language to set a provision to address a vacancy that occurs before 90 days

It was discussed to have the possible vacancy filled by appointment by a Town Council majority vote to place a qualified elector of the same party and district

Section 3.3 Qualifications: A recommendation was made to add language to bring the section in compliance with the Rhode Island General Laws

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Section 3.4 Presiding Officer: A recommendation was made to change the title of “Assistant Council President” to Council Vice- President

Section 3.5 Compensation: A discussion ensued regarding increasing the stipend of the Town Council members. It was discussed that this will be revisited after receiving a comparison of other cities and towns

Section 3.6 Quorum: A recommendation was made to correct the spelling of “adjourn” referenced by the editor’s note

Section 3.7 Meetings: A recommendation was made to correct the current language regarding shorter meeting notice to bring it in compliance with the Open Meetings Law

Section 3.8 Qualifications: A discussion ensued regarding cleaning up the language in sub-sections 7 & 9 so that they do not conflict with collective bargaining agreements

Section 3.9 Methods by which action is taken; procedure for enacting ordinances: There were no recommendations for this section

Section 3.10 Annual Audit: A recommendation was made to change the 4-month provision to 6-months to comply with State law and to change the language from “generally accepted auditing standards” to “government auditing standards”

- **Public Comment on Article III**

Chairman DelFino asked if there were any comments from the public:

Councilwoman Linda Folcarelli: Spoke in favor of 4-year terms and to an increase in the stipend

Councilwoman Lauren Garzone: Spoke in favor of 4-year terms, term limits and to an increase in the stipend

Councilman Robert Civetti: Spoke in favor of 4-year terms and is opposed to term limits  
Councilman Civetti also discussed that the current compensation is adequate

Tammy Moretti: Spoke in favor of term limits and opposed an increase to the stipend  
Ms. Moretti also requested clarification of why an appointment to a vacancy needs to be from the same party and also to have a comparison of other cities and towns for two year and 4 year council terms

- **Discussion of Article IV, entitled “Mayor” (Votes may be taken)**

Chairman DelFino took each sub-section of Article IV individually and asked if there were any recommendations:

Section 4.1 Composition; term of office of members: A recommendation was made to edit the section as the new term for mayor is 4 years with a maximum of two 4-year terms

Section 4.2 Qualifications: A discussion took place regarding the ability to place restrictions for requirements for how long a candidate for mayor needs to live in the Town

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Section 4.3 Compensation: Recommendations were made to increase the salary of the mayor's position to \$125,000 and also between \$130,000 to \$150,000  
Discussion ensued

Mr. Andriole made a motion to have Mr. Fung create a comparison of Cities and Towns similar to Johnston with filtering for budget, median income and population  
The motion was seconded by Mr. Iafrate  
The motion passed by unanimous vote

Section 4.4 Absence or disability: No changes were recommended for this section

Section 4.5 Vacancy: A recommendation was made to remove the language "director of the health department of the town"

Section 4.6 Powers and duties: A recommendation was made to ensure that the section complies with collective bargaining agreements and State Law  
A recommendation was also made to change the 2-month audit requirement

- **Public Comment on Article IV**

Chairman DelFino asked if there were any comments from the public:

Tammy Moretti: questioned if there is a set number of hours for the position of mayor

Councilwoman Linda Folcarelli: Spoke in favor of an increase for the mayor's salary and questioned why it hasn't been done for so long

Councilman Robert Civetti: discussed that Town Managers usually earn more and that the higher salary may attract unqualified candidates

- **Discussion regarding scheduling of future meetings and sections to be discussed (Votes may be taken)**

Future dates and potential sections for review for the next meeting were discussed  
The next meeting will take place on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024 for the review of Articles V & VI & VII

### III. Adjournment

Ms. Mansolillo made a motion to adjourn  
The motion was seconded by Mr. Andriole  
The motion passed by unanimous vote

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Submitted by:

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Vincent P. Baccari, Jr., Town Clerk