

Received 6/22/26

3:00 PM Jodi Moore, ATC

Town of Durham

Charter Revision Commission

Wednesday, May 20, 2026 7:00pm

Community Center Meeting Room 1, and Remote via Zoom

## Meeting Minutes

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/4VEWQctjRRWQSKgurObToQgsT2BVFx\\_FiVR\\_Bp9gt6gC7F1wNtrF7uFqdUqLgJTL.QZ5lvJbTCj5Wp9Pt?startTime=1779317889000](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/4VEWQctjRRWQSKgurObToQgsT2BVFx_FiVR_Bp9gt6gC7F1wNtrF7uFqdUqLgJTL.QZ5lvJbTCj5Wp9Pt?startTime=1779317889000)

**Passcode: %0.XWLK0**

### Call to order

Co-chair Martin Anderson called the Special Charter Revision Commission meeting of Wednesday, May 20, 2026 to order at 7:00 pm

Also present: Matt LaFayette, Christian Godbout, Eileen Buckheit, Christian Godbout, Al DiVincentis, Martin Anderson, Jaclyn Lehet: Executive Assistant to First Selectman

Absent:

Members of the public present: Richard Parmelee, other members of the public

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Approval of Agenda
  - a. Co Chair changed to Martin Anderson
  - b. Bills from Halloran and Sage in the amounts of \$292.50 and \$450
  - c. **MOTION BY MATT LAFAYETTE SECONDED BY CHRISTIAN GODBOUT TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED. ALL AYE, MOTION PASSED.**
3. Approval of Minutes
  - a. May 13, 2026
    - i. **MOTION BY CHRISTIAN GODBOUT, SECONDED BY JOHN BUGAI TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 13, 2026 MEETING AS PRESENTED. ALL AYE, MOTION PASSED**
4. Public Comment
  - a. Richard Parmelee made a public comment that board and commission members do not speak loud enough for the public to hear. Also expressed that he is not in favor of changing the threshold for an appropriation to require a town meeting. Supports the library and the Fire Trustees. Fire Trustees found quotes for lighting in parking area, and the facilities manager duplicated the work by finding prices as well. Town budget meeting this year was uninformative, and the charter should require the budget be presented in more detail

5. Correspondence
  - a. none
6. Old Business
  - a. None
7. New Business
  - a. Invoices for Halloran and Sage
    - i. March and February in the amounts of \$292.50 and \$450
    - ii. **MOTION BY CHRISTIAN GODBOUT, SECONDED BY JOHN BUGAI TO APPROVE INVOICES FOR HALLORAN AND SAGE IN THE AMOUNTS OF \$292.50 and \$450. ALL AYE, MOTION PASSED**
8. Commission Work Session
  - a. New Section: Town Administrator
    - i. **Proposed Language**
      1. Qualifications: The Town Administrator shall be chosen exclusively on the basis of their executive and administrative qualifications, character, education, training and experience. The Town Administrator is not required to be a resident of town.
      2. Appointment The Town Administrator shall be appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The Town Administrator is an exempt position of indefinite term. The compensation and benefits shall be in accordance with the Town classification, personnel policies and this Charter.
      3. Removal of the Town Administrator The Town Administrator may be removed by a majority vote of the entire membership of the Board of Selectmen in accordance with the employment contract between the Town and the Town Administrator, and in the absence of an employment contract, in accordance with Town personnel policies. The action of the Board of Selectmen in removing the Town Administrator shall be final.
      4. Supervision and Responsibilities: The Town Administrator shall be the Chief Administrative Officer of the Town and is responsible to the Board of Selectmen for the supervision, direction, and administration of all departments, agencies, and offices listed in this Charter and any that might be created administratively, except those positions or agencies whose head or members are elected by popular vote and those functions reserved or delegated to such bodies by law or this Charter.

The Town Administrator may perform the duties of any officer under his or her authority, subject to the approval of the Board of Selectmen.

The Town Administrator may appoint or remove any administrative officer, or Town employee(s) in accordance with the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes, provisions of this Charter, or other rules and regulations concerning Town employees.

The Town Administrator may, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, enter into contracts or agreements with the United States government, or any agency thereof, with the State of Connecticut or any agency or political subdivision thereof, any person, or any body politic or corporation.

The Town Administrator shall be responsible to the Board of Selectmen for the functions called out in the Position Description as approved or amended by the Board of Selectmen. The Town Administrator shall work collaboratively with the First Selectman.

- ii. Laura Francis explained that she used language from Ellington on the Town Administrator and added desired language from Columbia's charter. Discussed language allowing Town Administrator to be removed by 3/5 vote from Board of Selectmen. Suggested giving town administrator hiring and removal authority. Noted personnel matters are a reason to enter into executive session. Discussed process for removal of Town Administrator by Board of Selectmen by majority vote
- iii. **MOTION BY AL DIVINCENTIS SECONDED BY CHRISTIAN GODBOUT TO ADOPT NEW CHAPTER 9 TOWN ADMINISTRATOR AS PROPOSED. ALL AYE, MOTION PASSED**

b. **New Chapter: Transition Provisions**

- i. Laura Francis recommended drafting language to give to the town attorney for review

c. **Any Section needing a second look as recommended by commissioner**

- i. Briefly discussed hybrid meeting requirements and processes.
- ii. **Section 3.7 Easements, Rights-of-Way, and Temporary Construction Access**

**1. Proposed Language**

The granting or acceptance of any easement, right-of-way, or temporary construction access by the Town of Durham shall follow the procedures below, unless otherwise required by state law or another provision of this Charter.

**a. Granting Easements or Rights-of-Way on Town Property**

The Town may grant or require any temporary or permanent easement, temporary or permanent right-of-way, or temporary construction access across Town-owned property upon approval of the Board of Selectmen, except as provided in subsection C of this Section.

Such conveyances shall be made in writing, describe the land affected, state the purpose and duration of the easement, and comply with all applicable requirements of the Connecticut General Statutes, including CGS § 7-148(c)(3).

**b. Acceptance of Easements or Rights-of-Way for Town Use**

The Town may accept easements, rights-of-way, or temporary construction access needed for:

- i. public improvements,
- ii. infrastructure installation or repair,
- iii. highway or sidewalk purposes,
- iv. public utilities,
- v. stormwater management, or
- vi. other municipal functions.

Acceptance shall require approval by the Board of Selectmen, unless state law requires additional approval.

**c. Temporary Utility Work Easements Agreements on Town Property or Rights of Way**

The Board of Selectmen may approve administrative or routine easements that:

- i. are temporary in nature,
- ii. do not materially affect the use of Town property,
- iii. do not convey exclusive or permanent rights, and
- iv. are necessary to complete construction, repair, or maintenance work by a utility provider.

Such agreements shall be reported to the Town Clerk and kept on file for public inspection.

**d. Public Notice and Transparency**

All proposed permanent easements or rights-of-way requiring Town Meeting approval shall be included in the call of the meeting, describing the affected property, purpose, and terms. The Town Clerk shall make all related documents available for public review at least five (5) days prior to the meeting.

**e. Recording**

All easements, rights-of-way, or temporary construction access agreements granted to the Town shall be recorded in the land records by the Town Clerk.

2. Discussed granting of easements or temporary/permanent right of ways regardless of Planning and Zoning Commission approval

**3. MOTION BY AL DIVINCENTIS, SECONDED BY EILEEN BUCKHEIT TO APPROVE SECTION 3.7 AS AMENDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GUIDANCE OF TOWN COUNSEL. ALL AYE, MOTION PASSED**

iii. Section 3.8 should read “road discontinuance procedures” rather than abandonment

iv. **Section 4.1 Board of Selectmen:**

**1. Current Language**

There shall be a Board of Selectmen consisting of a First Selectman and two (2) additional Selectmen, hereinafter referred to as the Selectmen, who shall be compensated in such manner and amount as set by vote of the Annual Budget Meeting, upon recommendation of the Board of Finance.

The candidate receiving the largest number of votes for First Selectman at the General Town Election shall be declared elected to

the office of First Selectman. The two (2) candidates receiving the next highest number of votes at the General Town Election shall be declared elected to the Board of Selectmen.

**2. Proposed Language**

There shall be a Board of Selectmen consisting of a First Selectman and four Selectmen. The manner of election and the seating of office shall be in accordance with the General Statutes.

**3.** Discussed adding clarifying language which would allow the loser of the First Selectman race to added to the candidates eligible to be seated as a Selectman based on whoever receives the highest number of votes. Noted statute Section 9-188 provides for this process

**4. MOTION BY AL DIVINCENTIS SECONDED BY TO EILEEN BUCKHEIT TO APPROVE SECTION 4.4.1 AS AMENDED. ALL AYE, MOTION PASSED.**

**v. Section 3.8 Acceptance of Private Roads and Road Discontinuance Procedures**

1. Easements and rights of way may be accepted by the Board of Selectmen

**vi. Section 6 Boards Commissions and Committees**

1. Reviewed FOI language, town counsel noted that language was included in some sections and not in others. Laura Franics suggested consolidating FOI language in one section

**vii. Section 6.23**

1. Added "committees and agencies"

**d. Public Hearing Preparation**

i. Reviewed Public hearing plans including legal notice and powerpoint presentation

9. Next Meeting- June 10, 2026

10. Adjourn

**MOTION BY AL DIVINCENTIS SECONDED BY SEVERAL TO ADJOURN. ALL AYE**

Meeting adjourned at 8:40pm,  
Respectfully submitted,  
Nicole Charest