

**Burlington City Council
Charter Change Committee 2013-14 Report
March 16, 2014**

The Charter Change Committee focused a majority of our time this past year in on firearm-related items and on redistricting. These items were brought to the voters as ballot questions on Town Meeting day and all of them passed. Our work on these topics is concluded and we await the State legislature's ratification.

The other item that we attended to was the evaluation of the pilot process undertaken last spring for the appointment of board and commission members. We evaluated that process through two surveys – one for people currently serving on boards/commissions and one for anyone who applied last spring whether they were appointed or not – and through anecdotal conversations with other City Councilors. The number of surveys returned was not what one would hope for however they did present a tremendous amount of information that the committee believes will merit action. It may be necessary to have individual conversations with board/commission members to further tease out the details.

At this time we have two resolutions coming forward. These resolutions in no way reflect the entirety of the actions that the surveys indicate would improve the functionality of the boards/commissions. These resolutions are 1) related to advertising the openings before the applications are due and notifying the applicants of the result after the council decision, and 2) creating another pilot process for the appointment of board and commission members.

Items that remain to be addressed (for some but not all boards/commissions) include but are not limited to:

- Size of boards
- Length of terms
- Editing the application for clarity, especially regarding the “must be nominated” line
- Relevance of political affiliation

I would be honored to continue serving as the Charter Change Chair. Should I not be appointed as such, I suggest that the future committee members take up the results of these surveys to make their own determination of how better to improve the functionality of the boards/commissions. The surveys are available in their entirety and also in the form of a memorandum which will be presented to the council later this month (along with the upcoming resolutions). If the resolution regarding the pilot process passes, the future committee shall also be charged with evaluating this spring's pilot appointment process next November.

I was pleased to work with Lisa Jones in the City Attorney's office on creating, administering and evaluation the surveys.

Submitted by Rachel Siegel, Committee Chair