**TOWN OF HARWICH**

**By-Laws/Charter Review Committee**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Tuesday, August 30, 2016 @ 6:30 pm**

**Small Meeting Room**

In attendance: Anita Doucette, Don Howell, Katie O’Sullivan, Joe Powers, Deborah Sementa

Others present: Sandra Hall

**Call to Order**

Chairman Howell called the meeting to order @ 6:31pm.

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the August 30, 2016 meeting were tabled for approval at next meeting.

**Old Business**

There was discussion regarding the Committee’s meeting with the Board of Selectmen (BOS). The Bylaw/Charter Review Committee would like to know the BOS’s expectations on priorities they wish the Charter Review Committee to address. No date has been set. But Mr. Howell noted that we would necessarily be having such a meeting, since the Charter requires an annual meeting with all committees and our last one was 11 months ago.

There was also discussion around the codification of the role of liaisons at committee meetings. Joe Powers looked up that last bylaw change relating to elected BOS members in his Charter copy and pointed out that the newest Charter change seemed to inadvertently expand the role of liaisons beyond previous language. The Committee agreed this should be immediately addressed.

**New Business**

The Committee discussed the coherence between bylaws and the Charter. The Charter is the overarching document and serves as the framework. Every time there is a change in a bylaw where it contradicts or expands existing Charter language, the Charter must be updated (e.g. changing the number of members of the Planning Board by bylaw change where the Charter continues to show a larger Board structure). This disconnect, when added to the lack of current documents obtainable from the Town’s official internet site, causes immense confusion. In fact, Mr. Howell’s copy of the Code of the Town of Harwich (which contains the Charter and which was downloaded that afternoon) did not match up with Mr. Power’s hard copy of the Charter.

Mr. Howell asked each Committee member to read through the Charter and be ready to suggest sections where clarifications or changes need to be made and bring such suggestions to the next meeting.

The Committee agreed to meet again on September 20, 2016.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah A. Sementa

Recording Secretary