

## **Summary of Barrington Charter Review Commission Meeting, November 15, 2023**

The 2023-2024 Barrington Charter Review Commission (CRC) met on November 15 at the Barrington Middle School. This was the third meeting of the Commission that was formed by the Town Council to do the ten-year review of the Charter required by law. A key focus of the Council's charge for the CRC is to explore possible alternatives to the Financial Town Meeting (FTM) format for approving the Town's budget.

At this meeting, the CRC heard from representatives of the Town and the schools about possible changes to the Town Charter. Town Manager Phil Hervey shared a memorandum summarizing changes to the Charter suggested by Town department heads. (For details, please see the November 15, 2023, memo from the Town Manager, posted on the CRC website.) Fire Chief Gerald Bessette also summarized the points that he included in a memorandum recommending changes to the Town Charter related specifically to the Fire Department. (For details, please see the November 1, 2023, memo from the Fire Chief to the Town Manager, posted on the CRC website.) School Committee Chair Patrick McCrann, School Superintendent Michael Messore, and School Finance Director Douglas discussed suggested changes to the Charter related to the schools. (For details, please see the November 15, 2023, document from the Barrington School Committee, posted on the CRC website.)

Some of the suggestions offered by officials were within the scope of the CRC's purview while others would require legislative changes by the Rhode Island General Assembly (as the local Charter provision is based on state law). In discussion with CRC members, officials from both the Town and the schools spoke to the potential advantages of greater collaboration between the Town and the schools where practicable, including identifying cases where there may be shared solutions if not also shared costs.

The CRC will compile a list of suggestions for Town Charter revisions received by the Commission from Town officials, school officials, Town boards and commissions, and individual residents. At its next meeting (December 6), the CRC will review the list along with other possible Charter revisions previously identified by the CRC.

More information can be found on the CRC website <https://www.barrington.ri.gov/452/Charter-Review-Commission>. The CRC's email address – [barringtoncharterreview2023@gmail.com](mailto:barringtoncharterreview2023@gmail.com) – can be used by residents to communicate directly with the CRC to ask questions or share ideas and comments. The CRC's survey of Town residents on the Financial Town Meeting is available at <https://bit.ly/404hLlq> (there is also a link to the survey at the Town's website); the survey will close on December 8.

**The next meeting of the Barrington Charter Review Commission will be on Wednesday, December 6, beginning at 6:30 P.M. at Barrington Middle School (Global Classroom, located on the second floor, in the back of the library). The meeting will be streamed live via Zoom as well (viewing only).**