

**Town of Ferrisburgh  
Special Meeting/Hearing  
April 10, 2017**

**In attendance:** Select Board – Loretta Lawrence, Chair; Rick Ebel, and Michael Muir

**Absent:** James Benoit and Steve Gutowski

**Visitors:** Kim Daniels, Matthew Husk, Karen Petterson, Walter Reed, Bessie Sessions, Sally Torrey, Monica Tupper, Gloria Warden, and James Warden.

Loretta Lawrence, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Loretta started the meeting by stating the purpose of this 1<sup>st</sup> warned hearing was to discuss the proposed Municipal Charter. She stated that the selectboard is required to hold two, warned hearings, and a warned town-wide vote by Australian ballot.

The process of adopting a charter starts at the town level with the voters approving the charter. If approved by the Ferrisburgh voters, the charter will then be presented to the Vermont Legislature to be approved. After being approved by the legislative body, it is then recorded at the State level.

Each town is governed by Vermont State Statues. Municipal charters allow towns to deviate from the statues so they fit the needs of each individual town. Ferrisburgh does not have a municipal charter. The State of Vermont does not have any recording of a municipal charter in the records. However, Ferrisburgh does have a land charter which gives the geographic boundaries. The municipal charter that is being proposed is very specific. It establishes a municipal charter and also addresses two positions in the town – Town Clerk and the Town Treasurer. Appointed persons in these positions would be treated as employees, subject to reviews, personnel policies, set hours of work, and subject to federal employment and other laws.

Rick Ebel read the town charter, taking questions as he went through the reading.

**Public Comments:**

Monica Tupper asked if the board would advertise for the positions or just appoint. Loretta Lawrence stated the town attorney stated “if the charter is approved as currently proposed, the selectboard can advertise a notice of vacancy to solicit candidates, or they can appoint those currently in those positions”. Rick Ebel stated that the board has a lot of things to discuss if the charter is approved and that this would be one of those questions that will need to be addressed in the future, by the selectboard.

Sally Torrey commented that she felt approving a municipal charter would be a good thing for the town and that appointing a Town Clerk and Town Treasurer is a very wise thing to do.

Monica Tupper asked if the Town Charter could be amended after it was approved. The board stated that yes, it could be. It would have to go back to the Vermont Legislature for approval.

A question was asked by Karen Petterson regarding dismissal of an appointed official. Can that person collect unemployment insurance? Red Muir answered that he understands that if a person is fired from a job there is a waiting period before that person can collect unemployment benefits.

Jim Warden commented that as a resident and former selectboard member he supports the adoption of a municipal charter for Ferrisburgh. He said it will help to do away with a perception of a “buddy system” in town business. Jim recommended that the town use the services provided by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) in establishing procedures for the appointment/hiring of the town clerk and town treasurer.

Loretta stated that the next warned public hearing will be on Monday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 pm, at the Town Hall.

**Meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Rick Ebel, Board Clerk