

## **PRELIMINARY REPORT OF 2013 NEWMARKET CHARTER COMMISSION**

### **GENERAL BACKGROUND**

In the Warrant for the 2013 Annual Town Meeting, the Council inserted the following Article 11: "Shall a Carter Commission be established for the purpose of revising the municipal charter with establishing a new municipal charter?" The Article was duly voted at the Annual Town Meeting. A nine-member Charter Commission was elected in a special election on May 14, 2013. The Commission held its organizational meeting on May 28, 2013, and a public hearing on June 10, 2013, for the purpose of receiving information, views, comments and other pertinent material relative to its functions, as mandated by State law. The Commission held three additional public hearings, accepted oral and written input from members of the community, solicited input from other Town boards and committees, and hosted an informational booth at Newmarket Olde Home Days. The Commission heard testimony and input from the School Board, the Town Council, the Town Administration, the Local Government Center, and members of Charter Commissions in other New Hampshire towns. The Commission reviewed the charters of several New Hampshire cities and towns, the counsel obtained legal advice from the Town's attorney, and reviewed relevant provisions of New Hampshire law.

Detailed minutes were kept of each meeting, and were posted on the Town's website. All meetings were either televised live or recorded for later broadcast.

### **GENERAL CONCLUSIONS**

The Commission met at least bi-weekly to study and analyze the information, views, and comments received, and to determine our own views on the desirability of changes to the structure of Town government, and clarifications and improvements to the current Charter. Based upon the foregoing, our general conclusions are as follows:

The citizens of Newmarket are generally satisfied with how Town government works. Structural changes to Town government are not required at this time. Amendments to the Charter are proposed to comply, to clarify the responsibilities of the Town Council and Town Administrator, to provide the Town Council additional flexibility, and to ensure accountability.

As required by the statute, we submit herewith the proposed Charter for the Town, to accomplish the changes we recommend. As required by RSA 49-B:4(V), we shall cause this report to be printed and circulated throughout the Town, and shall provide sufficient copies of this Preliminary Report to permit its distribution to each voter requesting it.

The complete text of the proposed Charter, as amended, is attached hereto.

Respectfully submitted,

John Badger

Kevin Cyr

Leo Fillion

Bruce Hawkins

Chris Hawkins (Secretary)

Clay Mitchell (Chair)

Phil Nazarro (Vice Chair)

Toni Weinstein

Al Zink