

**GEORGETOWN CHARTER COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2020, 7:00 PM
Georgetown Elementary School
Meeting Room at North After-Hours Entrance**

Meeting Called to Order: 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Mark Anderson, Amber Becraft-Johnan, John Paul Durham, Brian Faught, Kelly Heslar, Michelle Hopkins, Greg Housh, Patrick Hornschemeier, Gary Potter, Matt Staggs, Zach Triplett, Jeremy Varner, Barb Virost

Members Absent: Andrew Dunn, Arthur Owens

Guests Present: Joe Braun, Andrew Girdler Clift, Sally Mount, Tyler Thompson

I. Swearing in of Barb Virost

Barb Virost was sworn in as a Charter Commission member by Joe Braun.

II. Approval of minutes of previous meeting

January 8, 2020 meeting minutes were approved after a change on Page 3, Section IV. Last sentence changed to: Meeting minutes and current draft version of the document will be posted after approval.

III. Discussion of Preamble and then General Provisions:

Please review Archbold Charter Article XIII and provisions of Model Charter and other municipalities. Since “General Provisions” is short, please also review Article III Council. If there is time, we will start to consider that topic as well.

DISCUSSION:

Discussion of the need for any changes made in Articles I and II during the January 8, 2020, meeting.

Section 1.01: a comma was needed, changed to: ... it shall retain the name of “The Village of Georgetown”, ...

Section 1.03: With regards to our question for Mr. Braun the need to include a clause about intergovernmental relations. It was decided there is no need for such clause.

Change: ...distributed among the citizens...changed to: distributed among its citizens...

Deleted everything starting with the word “leave”.

Section 1.02: Mr. Braun suggested the removal of “contiguous” due to changes in the laws of annexation becoming much broader and how this would limit the Village.

Changes to Article 1.02 now reflect: The Municipality of Georgetown shall have the same boundaries as now exist, but with the power and authority to change its boundaries and annex other territory in the manner authorized by the laws of Ohio.

No other changes to Article I.

Section 2.04

Changes: ...the Charter... changed to: ...this Charter...

No other changes to Section 2.04.

No other changes to Article II.

Motion made by Matt Staggs to approve the text from 1/8/2020 meeting as amended 1/22/2020; seconded by Barb Virost; all in favor. Both minutes and text from 1/8/2020 meeting have been approved for posting to the website.

PREAMBLE:

Drafts submitted:

#1

We, the people of the Village of Georgetown, in the County of Brown and State of Ohio, in order to preserve the benefits of securing home rule. We choose the advantages for ourselves and children of practical methods in administering the affairs for the Village of Georgetown. To preserve the welfare of our community we do hereby ordain and establish the following Charter.

#2

We, the people of the Village of Georgetown, in the County of Brown and State of Ohio, in order to secure home rule and preserve the present character of the Village of Georgetown, do adopt this Charter as the self-governing body of our municipality.

#3

We, the people of the Village of Georgetown, in the County of Brown and State of Ohio, in order to secure home rule and preserve the present character of our community for future generations, do adopt this Charter as the self-governing body of our municipality.

#4

We, the people of the Village of Georgetown, in the County of Brown and State of Ohio, in order to secure home rule and preserve the present character of our community for our children and future generations, do adopt this Charter as the self-governing body of our municipality.

#5

We, the people of the Village of Georgetown, in the Country of Brown and the State of Ohio, in the spirit of our great history and the promise of a vibrant future, adopt this Charter as the self-governing body of this municipality, securing our rights to home rule and preserving the values of our people for generations to come.

Of the drafts submitted, with discussion and after changes, #5 was selected as our first approved draft:

“We, the people of the Village of Georgetown, in the County of Brown and the State of Ohio, in the spirit of our rich history and the promise of a vibrant future, do adopt this Charter as the self-government of this municipality, securing our rights to home rule and preserving our values for generations to come.”

ARTICLE XIII: GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 13.01 OATH OF OFFICE

Discussion held regarding the oath and who are “officials” and which positions are required to take the oath.

Changes made to now reflect 13.01 as:

Every elected, appointed, management and public safety official of the Municipality shall take and subscribe to the following oath or affirmation:

"I (name) solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Ohio, the Charter and Ordinances of the Village of Georgetown, and will obey the laws thereof and will faithfully, honestly and impartially discharge the duties of (_____) upon which I am about to enter."

No other changes to 13.01.

SECTION 13.02 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Discussion held regarding nepotism, which is covered under ORC and the Ohio Ethics. Mr. Braun will send information on ethics and nepotism.

It was determined to adopt 13.02 as is/first draft, but subject to confirmation and/or changes after receiving information from Mr. Braun.

No other changes to Section 13.02 made at this time.

SECTION 13.03 AMENDMENT TO THE CHARTER

Discussion held regarding amendment language and the percentage of electors of the municipality. Matt Staggs made a motion to change to thirty percent; seconded by Kelly Heslar; all in favor.

Changes made: ...2/3) removed; ...ten percent... changed to: ...thirty percent.

No other changes to Section 13.03.

SECTION 13.04 REVIEW OF CHARTER

Through discussion and using Sections 11.05 and 12.09 of Loveland’s charter this section was created.

Created to reflect: At least every ten years, the Council shall advertise for and appoint seven qualified electors of the Municipality as members of a Charter Review Commission. Such Commission shall review the Charter of the Municipality, and within eighteen months after such appointment, recommend to Council any alterations, revisions, and amendments. The Council shall submit to the electors any such proposed alterations, revisions, or amendments in accordance with Ohio law. The members appointed to the Charter Review Commission shall serve without compensation. Meetings of the Charter Review Commission shall be open to the public.

No other changes to Section 13.04

SECTION 13.05 SAVING CLAUSE (previously 13.04)

No changes made.

SECTION 13.06 DISPOSAL OF PROPERTY (previously 13.05)

This is consistent with ORC.

Changes made: remove (2/3);

...vote of the Mayor and Council...changed to: vote of Council...

...as determined by Mayor and Council...changed to: as determined by Council.

...as established by the general laws of the State of Ohio...changed to: ...as established by Ohio law.

No other changes to Section 13.06

No other changes to Article XIII.

IV. PRESS RELEASE

Jeremy Varner had created a letter to the editor for submission. Discussion was held and changes made. It was suggested by Zach Triplett that it be sent in by him as a member. The release is as follows:

To The Editor,

I am writing to let you know of the exciting progress of the Georgetown Charter Commission and to invite everyone to participate in this opportunity to create a home-rule government that respects the history of Georgetown and protects our prospects moving forward. We have laid the groundwork for an effective team that really cares about the village and what is best for all citizens. More is yet to come, and we want to make sure anyone who wishes to participate has their voice heard. How can you contribute to this most basic form of democracy? It's easy! Here are some possibilities that we hope you explore:

1. Get informed. Take some time to search how other villages have tackled similar issues and help us look for good ideas. Examine your own conscience and your village around you. What do you value enough to enshrine into law?
2. Keep up with us. Our work is posted online after it is approved at every bi-weekly meeting, along with our agendas and other important information. Follow along and watch the process unfold at: <http://georgetownohio.org/village-charter-commission-information/>

3. Work with us. Stop in at our meetings--they're open to the public. There is time set aside for public comments so we can take your ideas into account. We usually meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month at 7:00 p.m. at Georgetown Elementary; however, our full schedule can be seen at the link above.

This is a unique chance to take the power back from Columbus and make things right for the village as defined by its people. That is you! Please take even a small amount of time to help the village create an effective and meaningful future. Thank you for your guidance and support.

V. PARTICIPATION BY THE PUBLIC:

A. Topics discussed at tonight's meeting

Andrew Girdler Clift wanted to further discuss Article 13.02, nepotism, and the possibility of family being on council together; brief discussion was held. Section 1.01 and the selection of the name Village of Georgetown were discussed. This was discussed at the first meeting and decided we would remain as Village of Georgetown.

B. In general

Sally Mount indicated she was impressed with the committee and our process.

VI. Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 8:45