

Minutes of the June 11, 2025, Meeting of the
Nantucket Town Council Study Committee

Committee Members attending in person: Joe Grause, Chair, Jeff Carlson, Vice-chair, Beau Barber, Curtis Barnes, Rachel Mandle, Tom Dixson, Jill Veith and Donna Martino (non-voting.)

Committee Members attending via Zoom: Caroline Balzer

Committee Members Absent – Kelly Steffen

Jeremy Bloomer, the FinCom Alternate attended as a member of the public.

Collins Center consultants attending: Anthony Wilson, Patricia Lloyd, and Melvin Kleckner

There were several members of the public in attendance.

1. Chair Joe Grause called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM.
2. The Committee unanimously VOTED to accept the meeting agenda as written in the Meeting Posting.
3. This meeting, the Committee's first since the Annual Town Meeting and Town Election, was planned as a review the outcomes of the non-binding votes and to develop some next steps for the Committee.
4. General Discussion of non-binding votes. Chair Grause asked committee members for their impressions of the two non-binding votes. Comments included:
 - a. [Barnes] Too few attendees at ATM. We needed to do more outreach/education.
 - b. [Day] More active social media outreach.
 - c. [Vieth] Too early on ATM agenda? Many voters thought it was a "real" vote?
 - d. [Carlson] Information shortfall. Voters/citizens were not sufficiently educated about the issues.
 - e. [Barber] Vote went about as expected. Agree that more outreach/education is needed.
 - f. [Martino] More understand needed of voters' concerns about Town Council form of government.
 - g. [Baltzer] Lack of Final Report a negative. "Real" article will need a better social media program.
 - h. [Collins Center] Other towns have had their committee report available to the voters. Lack of our report meant voters did not have a clear understanding of the issues.
 - i. Town Meeting attendees may have been confused by the wording of the non-binding vote.

- j. “Losing” the vote at Town meeting was somewhat expected given that Town Meeting attendees likely favor the Town Meeting structure, but the ratio of supportive votes (about 35%) was lower than expected.
 - k. Several committee members were disappointed that the election result returned a majority in favor of Town Meeting. There was an assumption that voters who generally do not attend Town Meeting might be more in favor of a change.
 - l. The election ratio of in favor to opposed (about 45% in favor to 55% opposed) was better than the Town Meeting result.
 - m. Clearly the “real” Article at a future Town Meeting will require a broader and more consistent education effort.
 - n. [Collins Center] Noted that the last two towns that converted to Town Council were Amherst and Bridgewater. Amherst’s process was managed by a Charter Commission (a more laborious form to put in place). Bridgewater used a special legislation committee (like the TCSC.) Suggested that the TCSC use Bridgewater as a source of information.
5. The discussion turned to the next tasks for the TCSC. Chair Grause suggested that the Committee’s next task should be the composition of a final report to the Select Board. The open discussion of next steps covered a wide range of ideas:
- a. Should the TCSC remain a “town” committee or become more of a citizens’ committee?
 - b. What about a PAC (political action committee?)
 - c. Fall special town meeting may or may not happen.
 - d. The TCSC should submit a Citizens’ Article to a future Town meeting (either Fall 2025 or May 2026).
 - e. The TCSC has been meeting for nearly two years. Is it time for some new members? Reorganize the committee?
 - f. Chair Grause noted that he would like to retire from the Committee by year-end 2025. Other Committee members had similar thoughts.
 - g. There was a general consensus that a new/renewed TCSC would take this process forward.
6. The Committee came to two conclusions:
- a. The TCSC needed to complete a final report for submission to the Select Board to wrap up this phase of the project. (Chair Grause volunteered to write the first draft over the next month.)
 - b. The issue of a new TCSC would be discussed at a subsequent meeting.
7. VOTE: Upon a motion duly made and seconded the TCSC unanimously approved writing a final report to the Select Board (and voters of Nantucket).
8. The Meeting was adjourned by Chair Grause at 4:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joe Grause
Secretary Pro Tem