

February 14, 2009

TO THE PALMER CHARTER COMMISSION

We, the founders of Citizens for a Free Palmer, do hereby state our views and positions on the governance of the Town of Palmer, Massachusetts...

In 2005, the citizens voted in a new form of government consisting of a 9 member Town Council and a Town Manager. This body would make vital, legal decisions for the people...decisions that had been previously made by a public vote at Town Meetings. We believe that many people were not aware that they were, in effect, getting rid of Town Meetings when they voted in the Charter as there is scant mention of this action in the Charter document.

The Town Council/Town Manager faction has proven itself to be callous and unfeeling toward the citizens of Palmer and even inept in their mission of regulating people's lives. Many of their actions would be comical, were they not serious and potentially dangerous. We can cite the firing of a Town Manager for frivolous reasons. Another example is the discussion of combining the Fire and Water departments of the villages for no apparent reason in terms of costs and benefits. Draconian tag sale and signage regulations were passed without a public vote. Water runoff in driveways is deemed one of the most serious problems in Palmer (judging by the time spent discussing it) and fines are operable for violators.

For these and many other reasons, we believe that political power in Palmer should be returned to the people, as had always been the case previously. The best way to effect this would be for the people to be able to vote on matters concerning their everyday lives.

Most of the 1,200 people who signed our petition do not wish to retain the present system that has entrenched itself in the Town of Palmer. They want to return to direct democracy through the Selectmen/Town Meeting system. They deserve a vote to that effect.

Sincerely,

Daniel Cardin, Iris Cardin and David Hale  
Founders of Citizens for a Free Palmer

*Daniel Cardin*  
*Iris Cardin*  
*David Hale*