

1. Pledge of allegiance
2. Role call – 7:03PM
  - a. Richard Fitzgerald – absent (arrived at 7:12PM)
  - b. Change in agenda - public comment period to start
3. Carl Bryant
  - a. His perspective on the boards job:
    - i. Look at what we have now for a town government
    - ii. Revise the current charter
    - iii. Rewrite the charter
  - b. Commission should look at what needs to be fixed
  - c. He feels the council is a good thing but that they have lost their focus
  - d. Believes the council needs to be tweaked
4. Change in agenda – Review letter that was left by Bob Ring
  - a. Charles Abbate read the letter aloud
  - b. Letter submitted to clerk
5. Discussion on how to address public comment
  - a. Charles Abbate feels everyone should have the write to speak if they desire
  - b. David Whitney – Motion for open comment period
    - i. Second – Eric Duda
    - ii. Yes - Unanimous
6. Open discussion
7. Iris Cardin addresses commission
  - a. She doesn't agree with holding the meetings at the fire station, believes the attendance will be low
  - b. She suggests meeting at the courthouse or at Pathfinder to centralize the location
    - i. Paul Burns mentions that the meetings are posted on the town website under "Charter Commission"
    - ii. David Hale asks if town hall can be used
    - iii. Paul Burns mentions that it is unavailable
    - iv. Eric Duda mentions that Pathfinder is available
8. John Sasur addresses commission
  - a. He supports the council form of government
  - b. Most town employees are impressed with the progress over the past few years
  - c. Believes the basic form of government is good for the town of Palmer
  - d. Mentions that there are options in the current town charter for people to be able to make change
  - e. Educational requirements need to be more lenient and more economically based
  - f. He notes that the council form of government is a replacement for town meetings. He also notes that the 9 council members seems like a good number
  - g. The rules and regulations for council meetings should be reviewed
  - h. Members should be able to debate issues in an elegant manner
  - i. Suggests a boardsmanship educational class for each member
  - j. Comparison of a town manager vs. mayor
    - i. This would give the opportunity for the town to elect the official
9. Tom Pajak addresses commission

- a. He submitted his proposal for change in letter form (received by all present)
  - b. He read the proposal aloud and explained each bullet
  - c. Hear often hears complaints around town that people have no voice
  - d. Supports the idea of town meetings and debates
10. David Hale addresses commission
- a. The commission was formed because there needs to be change
  - b. The public is ignored (by the council)
  - c. Wants to go back to democracy where people have a vote
11. Kathy Burns addresses commission
- a. The standards may be set to high on council regulations
  - b. When selectman were present they removed the requirement for the sewer department (engineering degree requirement)
  - c. We need standards for the various town positions like the ones that are in place for the town manager
  - d. Having 9 council members seems like a lot, however, she feels 5 or 7 people could easily manipulate the vote.
  - e. She attended the last town meeting held
    - i. If there were a town meeting now, people would vote in favor of things with money that we don't have
    - ii. Special interest groups are a problem
  - f. The selectman and council forms of government are very different and people haven't "caught on".
12. Mike Borowski addresses commission
- a. The older people in town don't like the recent changes (council has made)
  - b. The selectman would vote and discuss issues with the community
  - c. It seems the council always has their minds made up and the public is ignored
13. Dan Cardin addresses the commission
- a. If the current town government was studied, it would be evident that money can be saved.
  - b. Agrees that the council doesn't listen.
  - c. Paul Burns notes that the council does listen.
    - i. The PVTA vote is an example
  - d. The council has made a lot of change and it has hurt the people
  - e. Paul Burns notes that personality issues shouldn't be discussed
14. Tom Pajak addresses commission (second time)
- a. Notes that the town hasn't grown much but salaries have
15. Tim Stanton addresses commission
- a. Wants to know more about the community
  - b. Owns property in town and wants more involvement
  - c. The responses seem to be stating that there are issues
16. Review of minutes from 12/2/08
- a. Line 3 – Fix name spelling
  - b. Line 5 – Change 5/5/08 date
  - c. Line 14 – Change who seconded motion
  - d. Line 21 – Fix name spelling
  - e. Richard Fitzgerald – Motion to accept with changes

- i. Paul Wisnewski – second
  - ii. Yes - Unanimous
- 17. Review of minutes from 12/9/08
  - a. Line 1 – Fix name spelling
  - b. Line 13 – Change motion to David Whitney
  - c. Line 8 – Change name to Don Reim
  - d. David Whitney – Motion to accept with changes
    - i. Richard Fitzgerald – second
    - ii. Yes – unanimous
- 18. Paul Burns passed out a flow chart of the four possible forms of government
  - a. Paul Burns notes that these are basically the only four choices we have
  - b. Richard Fitzgerald makes comments
    - i. The town manager is basically the town CEO and authority over the town employees and the town budget
    - ii. An administrator is the executive legislative body. This person has no authority over the Police, DPW, etc.
- 19. Paul Burns asks each commission member to voice there opinion for form of government
  - a. Richard Fitzgerald thinks it's to early for decision/opinion
  - b. Eric Duda, Ray Domey, and David Whitney mention that they agree with Richard Fitzgerald
  - c. Charles Abbate comments that at this point he is here as a listener
- 20. Richard Fitzgerald explained in detail the four forms of government
- 21. David Hale address commission (second time)
  - a. Suggest there be a survey to determine the preferred form of government
  - b. He wants a telephone survey
- 22. Timetable for report is discussed
  - a. Two options
    - i. 10 months
    - ii. 18 months
  - b. David Whitney believes it's to early to decide the date
  - c. Richard Fitzgerald believes we owe the people a thorough review
  - d. Charles Abbate supports the 18 month date with a 2010 vote
  - e. Ray Domey wants to set a timetable for the revision or rewriting of charter
  - f. Richard Fitzgerald – Motion for 18 month time with 2010 vote
    - i. Ray Domey – second
    - ii. Yes – unanimous
- 23. Web page discussion
  - a. Paul Burns notes that it is up and running
  - b. Commission has no changes to recommend
  - c. Richard Fitzgerald
    - i. Consider connect CTY advertising as well
    - ii. Note meeting times on town calendar
- 24. Change meeting location to Pathfinder
  - a. Motion – Richard Fitzgerald
  - b. Second – David Whitney

- c. Yes – unanimous
- 25. Community input procedures
  - a. Paul Wisnewski states that we may be missing some opportunities for input such as the rotary club, etc.
  - b. Richard Fitzgerald agrees and thinks we should all be present at meeting a meeting such as the rotary club
  - c. David Whitney believes we should do more community outreach once the charter is complete
- 26. Surveys
  - a. Possibly use schools for surveys (i.e. high school students could do the survey)
  - b. Newspaper “card” that can be filled out
  - c. Paul Wisnewski states that there were 220 businesses in Palmer that were sent a survey for the casino committee and only 12% were returned
  - d. David Hale suggests a professional phone survey
- 27. Tim Stanton addresses commission (second time)
  - a. He says that he is a community service representative for surveys
  - b. He mentions a few possible survey questions
- 28. Paul Burns appointed a survey sub committee
  - a. Members
    - i. David Whitney
    - ii. Eric Duda
    - iii. Mike Pajak
  - b. Report due two weeks after the 1/20/09 meeting
  - c. Subject to open meeting laws
  - d. Look into possible newspaper card
- 29. Richard Fitzgerald - Motion to adjourn
  - a. Charles Abbate – second
  - b. Yes - unanimous