

**These minutes are for informational purposes only, as they have not been formally approved by the Charter Study Commission due to the termination of its formal meetings.**

**HOLMDEL CHARTER STUDY COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 2022  
7:00 PM  
CONDUCTED ON A VIRTUAL BASIS VIA ZOOM**

**Call to Order**

**Open Public Meetings Act Notice**

I hereby announce that pursuant to Section 5 of the Open Public Meetings Act that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in the notice, which was sent to the Asbury Park Press, the Two River Times, and posted on the bulletin board in Township Hall and filed in the Township Clerk's Office on December 28, 2021.

**Roll Call**

Chairman Kin Gee, Vice Chairman William D. Kastning, Commissioners Janet M. Berk, Gerald Buffalino, Zachary Gilstein and Special Council Kevin Starkey were present.

**Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence**

Chairman Gee: Can you please stand for the pledge of allegiance and remain standing for a moment of silence to honor our troops both here and abroad that work tirelessly to protect us each and every day.

Chairman Gee: Last week I mentioned that there's been some relaxing with Covid rules and some public bodies have been returning to conducting meetings on an in-person basis, however the Charter Study Commission is at a stage where our meetings involve guest speakers all who are from out of town. The commission actually would like to return to in-person meetings; however, we also recognize the value and the benefit of hearing from our out-of-town expert speakers. Those speakers have expressed a strong preference in the need to come before the commission on a virtual basis rather than in person, this is true for one or more speakers in our last four meetings. The commission is an independent public body and accordingly will make decisions based on the best interest to accomplish its statutory mandate. Therefore, we will evaluate the situation and will return to in-person meetings when we feel it's appropriate. Regardless of whether meetings are conducted on a virtual or in-person basis, the public can continue to hear and watch our proceedings in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Also at the last meeting, I explained that we are now in Phase Two to explore alternate forms of government. We heard from two experts on the various alternate forms of local government that could be considered and an expert on New Jersey ballot design and the line. In addition to these expert presentations, we thought it would be beneficial to hold direct discussions with elected officials in towns within Monmouth County that currently operate in those alternative forms of local government, including the different options within those forms, for example where the mayor is elected directly by voters or not and where elections are held on partisan or non-

partisan basis. We heard from elected officials from two towns, Marlboro and Tinton Falls, under the mayor-council form of government, this is also known as the strong mayor form of government. Under this form of government, the mayor is always elected directly by voters. Marlboro Township opted to hold the elections on a partisan basis, Tinton Falls on the other hand opted to hold his elections on a non-partisan basis. We also heard from the mayor of Ocean Township which operates under the council-manager form of local government with elections held on a non-partisan basis, but the mayor is not elected directly. Tonight, we are pleased to have with us elected officials from two towns that operate on the council-manager form of government in which the mayor is elected directly by voters. First is Deputy Mayor Amy Quinn from Asbury Park, in which the mayor is elected directly in non-partisan elections. Then we will have Fred Tagliarini from Aberdeen, in which the mayor is elected directly in partisan election. So, in both we have mayors elected directly, but one is partisan, and the other is nonpartisan. When Phase Two is concluded, we will then move to Phase Three where we will discuss, deliberate, and make decisions on possible recommendations. Ultimately, any recommendations by this commission are subject to approval or disapproval by all Holmdel residents in a public referendum.

### **Invited Guest: Fred Tagliarini, Mayor of Aberdeen**

Vice Chairman Kastning: Welcome Fred. Fred and his family have lived in Aberdeen since 1987. As a volunteer, Fred served as a booster club officer for the St. John Vianney School, director of the Matawan-Aberdeen Babe Ruth League and district commissioner for the Babe Ruth International Baseball. He was initially appointed to town council in 1995 and was first elected mayor in 2009. Currently he's also a member of the Aberdeen Township Planning Board. Fred represents Monmouth County on the Board of Directors of the New Jersey Conference of Mayors. This is a partial list by the way, he has lots of things going on, he's a long-standing member of the Aberdeen Economic Business Council, and in conjunction with Monmouth County the mayor was instrumental in creating the first and only county park in Aberdeen, now known as Freneau Woods Park. Fred was an instrumental force for the construction of the Aberdeen transit village at the Aberdeen-Matawan train station, which by the way is the busiest station on the New Jersey/North Jersey Coastline. Mayor Tagliarini was responsible for bringing solar power to Aberdeen. He's a graduate of St. John University, formerly employed by Advanced Publication, a mass media company for 38 years. Fred is now retired, concentrating his energies as a full-time mayor. He's happily married to Donna, parent of three children, Jennifer, Anthony and Joseph and proud granddad to six grandchildren.

Mayor Tagliarini: Thank you for that introduction and thank you for inviting me, it's a pleasure serving with all of you here tonight.

Commissioner Kastning: As you know we're going to ask you some questions and feel free to expand on any comments. First of all, please describe your municipality's form of government.

Mayor Tagliarini: We're a council-manager form of government and I could expand on that at the moment, but I know I think there's an answer somewhere deeper in what I've answered to you already. We're responsible as policy makers for the township, whereas the manager who's appointed and answers to the mayor and council, is directly responsible for hirings and day-to-day business and what we feel good about on that form of government, which we've all inherited, which I believe is the second question. Basically, I'm the odd one in the fact that I'm retired and I go to town hall every day, but councils are usually made up of a variety of adults of different age groups, still working very diligently in their jobs. In this form of government, which I

found to work is the fact that you put your trust into an individual and they do the day in and day out business of the town, always connected to the members of council and the mayor. I feel that it works well. What I did when I came into office, I immediately went into what we would call committees, very simple committees and even though not one council member may be in charge of a department directly, like our friends in Matawan, when an issue comes up I immediately ask for three members of the council to form on a committee, whether it's parks, roads, budget, development, anything that may come up, I immediately ask for council volunteers to sit on these committees, to study the questions, to get back to us either in executive session or open workshop, it doesn't really matter because they're just reporting back. I do like our form of government because it's really up to the individual council member to do as much as he or she can do based upon what they're doing in life, taking care of their families. With the little wrinkle that I put into the system, which is a committee to handle different topics, I did that because I really wanted this council to get involved with issues and make them feel like they're more than just a legislative body that meets twice a month and this way they're doing some work, doing homework and they greatly appreciate that and it really gets the job done. I don't want to jump too far ahead, is there a system of questions in which you want answered, I think I might have hit on two or three of them already.

Commissioner Buffalino: Do you recall why Aberdeen changed their form of government to a Faulkner Act form of government and what was it before you changed to a Faulkner Act?

Mayor Tagliarini: A lot went on prior to me even living in Aberdeen, and I make light of this I think it was influence from the United States Government Post Office. It was at one time, Matawan Borough/Matawan Township and what transpired was an election of whether or not the Aberdeen residents wanted to have a change in name and, of course obviously they did and changed it to Aberdeen Township, and at that particular point that's the government that they selected. So, it's really because, as we say with a smile on our face, it was because they were going to give us our own post office and zip codes and I'm looking at a lot of faces who are probably saying, "oh yeah we've heard that too" and I mean my zip code is Matawan's part of Old Bridge, I've got Keyport zip codes in Aberdeen and we just tell people who are confused who do you pay your taxes to, because we know who they are, but a lot of folks are very confused by it, so it happened way before me and basically I've inherited this form of government and for me it does work pretty well.

Commissioner Gilstein: You mentioned that you form these committees, and you get three council members to sit on the committees. Do you also have citizens from the township participate on these committees or is it just that these are committees of council members?

Mayor Tagliarini: These are committees made up of council people only. We do have support crews, we have our environmental committee, we have our shade tree committee, we have our business council, which I'm really, really proud of because we started that when I got in because I realized the one element that seemed to have been forgotten, but not on purpose, was the fact that the business communities had no link to town government. So, I sit on that, and I meet with the business community once a month and that I think has paid dividends in so many ways, including our town-wide Aberdeen Day. All the committees that are dealing with subject matters of township council, our committee people, our council people and then we have our volunteer groups, all made up of private citizens.

Vice Chairman Kastning: You pretty well described what you think works best of your current form of government, do you have any ideas of how you could improve it?

Mayor Tagliarini: Quite honestly, I think it's working well and the answer that I gave you about how we've injected committees, I think satisfies myself first because there's two or three of us who are retired that can give so much more and we do, but it gives those folks who are still working full-time, and as I said they're taking care of their families and doing their responsibilities, but it gives them the opportunity to get more involved with topics; like my road committee, they're all full-time people working, but they get together in the evenings, they get together with the engineers, they decide what roads we're going to do in any given year, and that's just one example and they're all full-time, still working in their lives. I think if you were to go with this form of government and you feel you're not being utilized enough, and that was the case with me in the beginning. I think the committees are a great way to implement putting your council members to work and they pay dividends because they greatly appreciate being on those committees and actively steering the rest of the council to what they want to do. I think that's the little wrinkle that I've added to our form of government.

Vice Chairman Kastning: I saw that you have a deputy mayor, is she appointed or elected?

Mayor Tagliarini: He is elected every two years, not directly elected from the council. At a reorg meeting this past January, and listen we make no secret about it, we rotated the deputy mayor position that would coincide with an election, so our current deputy mayor Connie Kelly is up for election in two years. So, these two years leading up to her election she'll serve as deputy mayor, two years from now after that election and we reorg again, there'll be a change of deputy mayor and this is another way of getting the other council people more involved with a title and everything else, and as you know we all marry people and the deputy mayor can marry folks also and that's just another little help to me that if I can't make something the deputy mayor can step in and that works pretty well. So, deputy mayor comes from a motion from within the council, always predetermined of course and then the vote is taken and we usually have the deputy mayor leaving that seat make the motion to show the continuance of our government and then the new person will take over for two years.

Vice Chairman Kastning: The next set of questions you may have answered, but I'll go through them anyway. Do you have any thoughts on electing a mayor directly by the residents versus by the town council?

Mayor Tagliarini: I think it works out great for Aberdeen because that's the only government we do know, and as I said we inherited this government, but I really feel that the residents want to know who their mayor is, they want to know who they're going to call at 9:00 in the morning or 9:00 at night, they want to know who their leader is, who their mayor is and believe me Aberdeen residents are not shy of calling me anytime, day night, weekends and I'm prepared for that. We're all connected, the cell number went up on Facebook years ago and they know how to get a hold of me and the comments from the residents, sometimes they'll say very lovingly, "he's crazy, he put his number on Facebook and we're going to call him" and of course they say, "good afternoon mayor, good morning mayor, I hate to bother you" and I feel like saying, "no you don't hate bothering me, I want you to call me and you did want to talk to me and you did want to call me." So, I think they like that, but then personally I've gotten to meet so many people who have served in the position of mayor, and I use Holmdel for an example because you're hosting. I must have met four or five individuals who have served as the mayor position in their particular term because what we do from Matawan down to Atlantic Highlands, we also have an organization called the Bayshore Mayors where we get together four times a year to discuss policies and we bring in guest speakers from the state, from the county and we have an

opportunity to meet, so I must have met so many great people from Holmdel alone who have served as mayor, but I always say to my colleagues at these meetings, "why don't you go direct elect, unless there maybe be an ego problem at this point," and I say that with all due respect because someone may say, "well I'm next in line and that may satisfy them what they want." I thought about that, I really do think a resident wants to know who their mayor is and that it's not changing and they're saying to themselves, "well now who's mayor," and so I like what it is and I think my colleagues in Aberdeen like the fact that I get the calls, but it really does work very, very well.

Vice Chairman Kastning: How many council members do you have?

Mayor Tagliarini: We have seven, I'm one of the seven and I should make this very clear that I have no special extra powers, I have a vote on every issue, I do vote even though 99% of our votes just might be 7-0, so I don't abstain, I vote. That's my job to vote and my name is called out and I cast a vote, so I don't have extra votes, I don't have any extra powers. If you looked it up in Faulkner, I preside over the meetings, is one of the number one things that is said according to the Faulkner Law, however of course it's always more than that, the town manager and I are always together daily to discuss everything and that's the good thing about this form though he is given and charged with the day in and day business of the town, he'll always start the conversation, "I'm thinking I would like to do this or do that," and we have great conversations and usually there's a great mind melt and we work together very, very well. I do have to say that the fact that we're removed from hiring or dismissals keeps us a little bit cleaner from the day in and day out, but of course the manager will call me up and say, "I have to discipline this person that person," he makes a great case of it and usually two or three people will get a hold of Mr. Russell and say, "yeah we understand that's the case and please proceed," so it kind of buffers us a little bit, but at least town hall knows that the gentleman sitting in the office at this point in time is in charge.

Commissioner Buffalino: Does he also serve as the senior finance officer for the town, or do you have a separate person?

Mayor Tagliarini: We have a separate CFO. I know the fact that years ago, that was a move that so many of us thought could take place, maybe even should take place, but after you do this for a while and especially at the time of the year that we're in and looking at all the faces here you know that this is budget time. I think we're introducing the first Thursday in April; we know how busy our CFO is because my budget committee will ask the darndest of questions and that's why it's so good having them as the committee and they work with the CFO. It would almost be too much even though the thought was that one day we thought we would be able to find a manager who would be able to handle the CFO business, but in reality, I have to admit I don't know how good of a move that would be to be honest.

Vice Chairman Kastning: So, you've been stuck at seven, and how big is your town, what's the population?

Mayor Tagliarini: We're just shy of 20,000 now in the last census, 1980.

Vice Chairman Kastning: Do you think seven is a fair representation?

Mayor Tagliarini: I think yes and having come out of the volunteer part of the world, I just find that that's just a great, great number. Any more than that, you know what it's like when you're just having discussions about any topic in your life, more than seven people in a room you could

go on for hours, because don't forget two more people are adding maybe two more ideas, not that it's not great, but we just find that seven is a very good working number for us and we've proven it.

Commissioner Berk: So, seven works, how do you think it would be if it were five, would it be spread too thin?

Mayor Tagliarini: No, I don't think so, if you were to go to our form of government, then I'm just saying it's nice having the seven because I can certainly give out enough work or suggest enough work for my colleagues that they're serving on a board, like my road committee just doesn't work one month a year prior to budget times, they're working constantly and I know for a fact they're always looking at the roads, they're always changing their proposals, they're always saying, "well here's our next four roads," and my goodness by the time the year goes by those four roads have changed. So, I think seven is good because when you think of all the areas that I mentioned and even when we were discussing marijuana cannabis, we had a committee that knew the feelings of the seven of us and we're very fortunate that we were in total agreement on that. Things come up all the time and that's when I just go right into committee and they're so quick to volunteer now because they want to get involved, so if I had five, I would even think it might not be enough to form the committees that I formed.

Vice Chairman Kastning: Are your elections partisan or non-partisan?

Mayor Tagliarini: We're partisan, I sent the last ballot to your chairman. There was a full Republican line from governor down to our council seats and the same thing in the Democrat side, and of course when it came down to voting for mayor you selected one and the council at large, they could crisscross the lines, so they could have very easily picked one Republican, one Dem, two of each, whatever, so that's how the ballot is somewhat. There were three seats up in our past election, mayor and two council and we just happened to be successful in the democratic line. That brings up a very good point, I thought about this after the last election which was just an incredible election result and I know a win is a win and I don't make light of anyone winning an election, but we lost a lot of great friends on the Democrat line this year and I wondered afterwards if it wasn't broken down by party and maybe just name recognition and anything else, I don't know how many people who lost might have won just for the fact that someone would say, "oh I remember that person, that person's been around," you following my point. The fact that it was an R and D, and a tremendous Republican wave this time around, that did a lot of friends in, right or wrong, but the people have spoken, and it is what it is.

Vice Chairman Kastning: If you could change it would you change it?

Mayor Tagliarini: No, I don't think so. I think what we say in Aberdeen when we walk around, and we still do it the old-fashioned way we knock on doors, with Covid we were very, very, very careful keeping distances, but we knocked on a lot of doors and it worked well. We got the sense of how the election was going to turn out in Monmouth County and how it was going to turn out in Aberdeen by knocking on those doors and we're certainly glad we did all the work we did personally the three of us.

Commissioner Berk: What do you think is a benefit of having partisan election?

Mayor Tagliarini: Well, I think maybe it might be a corny answer, but it's life as we know it, right, wrong or indifferent, but the point I want to make is the follow-up to that is what we told our residents when we knocked and met them and we've known these people for 30-35 years now,

we tell people all the time there's no republican or democratic way to build a park, fill in a pothole or anything like that. The point is, I think we were successful because we've been so involved with our volunteerism. The two people I ran with, one's a lifetime resident, the other gentleman was a teacher and football coach for years, and they had their name recognition out there, and so I tell people all the time it's not that it's an R or a D because Aberdeen voted for every republican right down the line except for us and they crossed over from me and then continued to go down. I don't think for us it was closer than the other two that I've been involved in, I'm just entering my fourth term now, and so it was a little closer, but I'm out there and I think it's up to the individual to get elected or re-elected. I don't shy away from it, I'm a registered democrat, but at the same time I've been so involved with the community that I think the community realized that and that's the little trick. I just don't wake up one morning and say, "boy I'm going to run for office this has got to be a kick," and you run and you have no background, no volunteerism, that's the answer really is your involvement in your community and I never thought I'd run for office, I was just asked and the people who asked me were of a particular party and I was not a member of that party originally, and I said this is a great honor and I changed parties and I ran and have been very, very fortunate.

Vice Chairman Kastning: Your town is kind of bifurcated by Matawan, would wards make sense? Your town kind of splits almost in two, as I recall looking at the geography and whether those two groups might be better represented by a ward system instead of a non-ward system.

Mayor Tagliarini: We've been hearing things like consolidation, and we've been hearing shared services since the Christie era and you all have to realize I think we had one consolidation last year, maybe the Princeton area comes to mind as a consolidation, people are still not ready to give up any home rule and we would absorb Matawan. There's no doubt we're larger, we're almost twice the size of Matawan, but at this point in time we have some shared services together, but I don't think you'd see a consolidation unless someone really came down from Trenton and said it's time and it's not going to happen.

Vice Chairman Kastning: I asked my question poorly, but I know it wasn't about consolidation, it was about whether within Aberdeen you should have wards.

Mayor Tagliarini: I don't like saying this, but we do have at least three distinctive parts of town that make up Aberdeen, we have the Strathmore area, we have the Cliffwood section, and we have the Cliffwood Beach section, and they all have identities to themselves, but we do come together as one and I don't think a ward would work with us.

Vice Chairman Kastning: How about holding elections on a concurrent versus staggered, how does it work for you now?

Mayor Tagliarini: We have elections every two years; we just finished an election in November, and we'll be constant now for two years. Two years from now we'll have four people up for re-election and that's really serious business, every election is serious, but in that election two years from now that's where a party could lose control of their council when four individuals are up for election. That has not been the case in our town in over 25 years, we have maintained a certain political hold, but I think it's for the facts I have mentioned. We have people with a long history of service to our town, we have two former retired teachers with us, a former Board of Ed member with us, people who come out of youth organizations, so I think it's up to us to create the balance that will make it an appealing ticket, but I think it works well, it's just a lot of stress sometimes in that election.

Vice Chairman Kastning: That's better than almost every year.

Mayor Tagliarini: Matawan is every year, someone's always running in, and I just don't think they get a breath to stay focused the way that we do.

Commissioner Gilstein: Question about elections, so when you run for mayor can you also run for council.

Mayor Tagliarini: I am a council member, when you read the law, the Faulkner Act gives the mayor in this form of government no extra powers, so no I couldn't run for mayor and council in the same year because number one we may not get the seven that we need, because I'm going to be one of the seven. I ran and two council members ran in November, so the three of us waltzed in and met the four already in office, whoever gets elected two years from now in Aberdeen will walk into the reorg and meet the three of us.

Commissioner Gilstein: So, you could have lost for mayor and the other candidate won as mayor and the other two council people who were running with you could have won?

Mayor Tagliarini: Correct.

Commissioner Gilstein: So, you have to make a decision whether you're running for mayor or not?

Mayor Tagliarini: You do, it's a separate line and just like I said before, my election is separate and then the council member seats you choose two out of the four that are in the two blocks. The residents of Aberdeen had the opportunity to go for any two of the four for the two council seats and next time they will choose four of the eight names they see on the ballot to sit on the council.

Commissioner Buffalino: Your term is no different from the council member terms, you're all for four years?

Mayor Tagliarini: Yes, we're four-year terms.

Vice Chairman Kastning: Changing direction a little bit, have the residents ever petitioned for a referendum in your town?

Mayor Tagliarini: No, we've not had any of those during my tenure and I doubt before me or else I would have known it.

Commissioner Buffalino: Are they aware that they have the right though?

Mayor Tagliarini: I don't think I could go that far and say that, no I don't think anybody might be aware of that, some might be, I'm sure our opposition are aware of it, but I don't think it's something that comes up that much really. We follow the budget guidelines where there's no need to do anything in that sense of it, so no I think for the most part things are pretty good, but then again, we never know what tomorrow brings when the sun comes up.

Vice Chairman Kastning: This question is a moot question because you've answered it, if you could change the current form of government what would it be and why?

Mayor Tagliarini: I don't think I would because if I was to say yes it would almost be from a selfish point of view because it would then be the thinking that I was looking for additional powers and I'm not because I can't just think of the position I'm in, I have to think of the next



person and the next people coming aboard who are working full-time and yes do have the time to take on more, but this seemed to work out really, really well when I was still working full-time and you have to keep that in mind. Most of our council people are full-time employees working and this works out very well, but choose your manager well, that's your homework. You had a great manager in Holmdel, in fact I believe Eric Hines was the mayor when you hired her and we interviewed her also, and obviously you had won out, but she's also I've heard moved on, too, but like I said we did well, too. That's the biggest part I think, I'm on my fourth police commissioner, my third manager, my third public works director, so those are the kind of things that really will test you is to find the right individuals for those key positions and that's where we work with the manager pretty well.

Vice Chairman Kastning: The last question is, anything else you'd like to add?

Mayor Tagliarini: No, but I do thank you for the invite. I hope I shed some light. I do have a question, who will you present your ideas to, the sitting council? Is that how it would work?

Chairman Gee: Once we go through the Phase Two process, we will then discuss and deliberate and then make any recommendations, if any, and if we decide to make recommendations it will be the final report that will be filed with the clerk and then those recommendations will become a public question for the public to decide.

Mayor Tagliarini: You certainly have your work cut out for you, but that's good. I thank you for the time, I thank you for the invite, it was a pleasure being with you.

**Invited Guest: Amy Quinn, Deputy Mayor of Asbury Park**

Commissioner Berk: Amy is the senior staff director for the Community Health Law Project in Neptune, which is an agency that represents low-income individuals with disabilities. Through negotiation, litigation, and advocacy she combats discrimination, protects rights and preserves independence and quality of life. She's been the Asbury Park Deputy Mayor since 2014. She always seeks to involve the residents in community decisions, creates transparency in government by improving communication, supports small businesses and recently has kept the residents safe during the pandemic. Is there anything else you'd like to add to that now?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: No, brevity is my favorite.

Commissioner Berk: Let me begin with the questions, could you please describe your municipality's form of government?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: Council-manager, weak mayor form. While I was in office we changed our form of government, so we went from municipal manager to a charter study commission that studied the issue and went through twelve different forms of government and narrowed it down to two, the weak mayor and the strong mayor, and then ultimately picked the weak mayor. So, while I've been in office, it changed its' form of government because Asbury is Asbury.

Commissioner Berk: Do you want to explain any more about why you started moving in that direction?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: In the municipal-manager form of government, some good things about it, some not great things about it, one was that you had elections every four years and all five seats were up and that meant all-out brawl elections every four years and not something I think I would recommend again, I would always recommend staggered terms. So, what would happen

is the five seats would be up and you'd have thirty people in an election, which we did in 2013, two different tickets won that, myself, John Moore, and another person on our ticket won, and then two of the incumbents won. Historically in Asbury, the highest number of votes respectfully went to the mayor, second highest number respectfully went to the deputy mayor, I think John was ahead of me by maybe two or three votes. So, we move forward with this idea that John would be mayor, I would be Deputy Mayor and we'd have council members, and I have to tell you it wasn't even a thought for us. Anyway, that didn't happen and I think people in town felt displeasure at not kind of following the historic nature of how those elections had gone, somebody else became mayor, somebody else became Deputy Mayor and people didn't love that, and so the charter study eventually was formed and they went through these forms of government and probably one of the first things they did was have a directly elected mayor. I don't know that I would say this if that didn't happen in 2013, because historically they really did always have the kind of highest vote getters take on those positions that don't have any more say than any other council member, it's quite frankly ceremonial in nature, but because people felt that what had historically always happened didn't happen this charter study was formed and one of the first things they did was direct elect mayor. That was kind of the background for that, so just in terms of our old form of government because there's not huge changes, there's a couple of changes to it, but the elections every four years with everybody up is difficult and that can be stressful. I think similar to what the mayor previously said, when a majority is up you get a much bigger base of people coming out to challenge you. Good, bad, or indifferent, I'm not saying I have an opinion on that one way or the other, but a larger group of people come out when majorities are up and every four years majorities were up in Asbury, so you had just really rough elections every four years. Asbury elections were not for the faint of heart that's for sure.

Commissioner Berk: Anybody else have any questions regarding this subject. There were no questions.

Commissioner Berk: The Faulkner Act provides the different forms of government and options within those forms. I think maybe you've already answered this.

Deputy Mayor Quinn: Yes, the Charter Study Commission got down to two, weak mayor and strong mayor, ultimately picking weak mayor. I think it's tough sometimes for the strong mayor form of government to find somebody with that specific skill set that not everybody who wants to run for office may have, and so I think they thought the weak mayor was a better idea and then hire a city manager that would have all of these credentials. In Asbury Park we are a small city with big city problems, so we have the same problems that New York City has just on a smaller kind of microcosm of them, so we need somebody who has some redevelopment experience, some small business experience, some financial experience. I think it's a hard position to get somebody elected with the skill set that a city manager has, and Donna Vieiro is Asbury's city manager, and she has the skill set to cover all of the wide range of issues that occur in Asbury.

Chairman Gee: I know technically Asbury Park is known as the City of Asbury, but what is your population?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: About 15,000, it went down in our last census.

Chairman Gee: So, it's a city, but not really from what is normal.

Commissioner Berk: Any other questions? There were no other questions.

Commissioner Berk: What do you think works best for your current council-manager form of government?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: Again, I think having the council-manager with the skill set that you need to run a place like Asbury Park is key. I would make a couple of tweaks here and there, but overall, the idea that the council talks to the public, talks to the residents, and then comes up with policy and the city manager implements that policy as best he or she can, I don't think that's a bad way to kind of run a city and I think we run it well. The small council member committees that Fred spoke about was interesting to me, we have council members on almost all of our public committees, but I guess we hadn't thought about creating internal committees with council members on it so that's kind of interesting to me and I'm going to bring that back to everybody and see their thoughts and maybe reach out to the mayor and see how that works out there.

Commissioner Berk: The next question, what could be improved in the way your current form of government works?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: His committee idea was one of them, so I'm going to take that and then jump a little bit down. When I think about ways to improve the city, I think part of it will have to do with elections and part of it will have to do with general government, but the one part of these elections that we currently have that I don't love is the runoff. We didn't have a runoff before, so in 2013 when we had the municipal manager form of government everybody's seat was up, it was an all-out election and then the top five people got the seat. The charter study implemented this runoff, and for me I don't love it, I don't love this idea. I'm a little bit more comfortable with the highest number of votes getting into the seats, then creating another election after what is arguably already a stressful election.

Commissioner Berk: Could you just explain a little more about how the runoff works?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: So, we have not had a runoff, I was up in 2020 with a majority of the council and we had all won by nearly double, so let's say the first person had 10 and I had 20, but calculating whether or not you had 51% of the votes took us a minute to figure that out and then we didn't have a lot of people running in that election, but when you have 5, 10 or 15 people running for two seats, I guess I'm not clear how you don't have a runoff. To me you're just going to have a runoff and I think I don't love that idea. I should probably talk to you after we have a run-off, so I have a better idea of it, I just don't like the idea of having people run and then having people run again and I get the logic of you want people to have 50% or 50 plus one percent of the votes. It's a little inundating when you're the person running and you get 20 other people that there's just no way you can get to that 50%, but I should probably reserve my judgment on that until we have them. That was the was the part of the charter study in 2013 I didn't love. When they were passing it, and I ultimately voted yes on the question to change our form of government, the other question in 2013 that I didn't support with the charter study was a ward system and I would say in 2022 I think I would change my position on that. In 2013, I didn't think we needed a ward system, I didn't think we were a town that needed to be broken up by wards and have representation from wards, and I would say having been in office now seven or eight years, that that would be something I would reconsider, especially with the pandemic. The revitalization and gentrification that's happened in Asbury Park, we really want to make sure people living on the east, north, south, west, every side of town's issues get represented on the council, so that might be a change in the years that I've been on government, but I think I jumped ahead of you. Our form of government I feel is similar to the mayor, I don't have any

major changes, but it might be internal council committees, that might be good or sometimes I don't know when somebody retires because our city manager handles the day-to-day, and it's just things like that that I would like to be a little bit more involved with, so it's probably just a matter of us creating a policy saying anytime somebody retires to let us know so we can reach out. I think any concerns, any negatives that I have with this form of government, we could probably create a policy to fix it.

Chairman Gee: I think you cited quadrants like east, north, south, is there notable differences among the four, is there one or two that are clearly different than the rest, I guess the implication is you're not homogeneous, right?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: I think we're a very diverse city and on a lot of fronts, so there's nine voting districts in Asbury, even though we're only about a little over a square mile. I think the police break it down into four quadrants. You have the waterfront which I would consider one specific quadrant, the downtown which has its own set of diverse concerns, wants and needs, the residential northwest side with single-family houses. Property taxes that would be something the residential northwest side would want to address with the council, downtown would want to address commercial space. Asbury's got a number of bars that inevitably create drunk people, that inevitably cause problems for our small businesses downtown, so those are the kinds of concerns we get there. When I was talking about the waterfront, sustainability, building, lead, accredited, those are things that people who live in the waterfront are concerned about, and then when you go to southwest, which is generally our part of town that people are living near the poverty level, more issues related to affordability, our school district you know, things like that. So, I think that's why I have thought differently now about the ward system in terms of ensuring that all of these different quadrants of the city's representation's heard on all, not only the council, but all of our boards, our planning board, our zoning board, our environmental board, our recreation board. I don't know that I thought that in 2013, but having governed that for some time, I don't think I would oppose it this time.

Vice Chairman Kastning: Don't you have representatives, like Yvonne Clayton, representing the southwest?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: She does, and for a long time I was on Deal Lake Drive in the waterfront, so you had me in the waterfront, you had John and Eileen in northwest, you had Yvonne in southwest, and I think quite frankly that's part of the reason I didn't think we automatically had it covered. We had all of the quadrants covered in the city just by way of who we were and where we lived and I think that might be something that down the road you want to ensure that you have that and maybe it's just picking a ticket that has that, so everybody feels like they see a quadrant of where they live represented and maybe it's creating wards. When I was looking at your question, I was asking myself how I would vote on that now, would it be different than when I voted before, and wards are something I would pause on now.

Commissioner Berk: You elect the mayor directly, you like doing that?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: I do.

Commissioner Berk: Any anything to add to that?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: Electing them, again I'm not sure that we would have done that if this thing hadn't happened in 2013. For decades this tradition had kind of been followed about the highest number of votes per person, but I don't see any downfall in directly electing a mayor and

I thought the previous mayor made a good point, maybe people really do want to know who's going to be their mayor and who's going to be the kind of ceremonial mayor, and so yes, no qualms about that one.

Commissioner Berk: How many people do you have, five right?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: Right, we have five and also that, I think, is manageable. I saw you're nine and I found that rather staggering to me, that would be a little much for us. We could maybe do seven, I think we had a discussion on seven or it might have been part of the discussion with the charter study, but we cover most of the city with five people I think pretty representationally, we're able to get the job done with five, and I think if you have a bigger population than us and you go to seven, I don't think that's a problem, but going to nine I think that's a lot of people in a room.

Commissioner Berk: You are nonpartisan, do you have any feelings about that?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: Yes, I have strong feelings on that, I really don't agree with the previous mayor on it. I think partisan elections don't provide a pathway for everyone to have a fair shot in getting in, so I'm a democrat, Yvonne's a democrat, John Moore was a republican and he's now a democrat, Eileen's an independent and I think those different backgrounds and to some extent ideologies, are helpful on this council, it's not all the same, we're not all Dems down the line. In terms of ideological views, I think it's good to have different views on a council, respectful, but different. I also think, we're little bit seeing this play out in Red Bank, if you're the best person for the job, whether you're independent, Republican or Democrat, you should have the job, so I'm not sure you should have it because you're a Democrat or you should have it for you're Republican or you shouldn't have it because you're an independent, I think if you can do the job well that part should be somewhat irrelevant. Similar to what the previous mayor said, we're not creating health care, we're filling potholes or certainly trying to create progressive policies, particularly in places like Asbury Park, but I'm all for non-partisan elections.

Commissioner Berk: Any other questions from any of the commissioners? There were no questions.

Commissioner Berk: Elections concurrent or staggered basis?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: I would definitely do staggered elections, that's for sure. When we had everybody up every four years that was difficult in a lot of ways, one you raised a lot of money because you were competing against tons of people, it was far more stressful than staggered and there was a lack of consistency. So, even if I, Yvonne, and Eileen loose and somebody else wins, you still have two people who have some sort of historical knowledge of what's worked and what hasn't worked previously, and I really think that's important. John Moore's the mayor in Asbury, he was the deputy director of the Department of Public Works for years and has a historical knowledge that I didn't have, and I moved here in 2000. Yvonne Clayton has a knowledge in Asbury Park she grew up here, literally lives in her childhood home, so the consistency in terms of the staggered terms, even if you have an election and maybe that election is unpleasant, if everybody's not up there's some sort of historical knowledge going on there about how things have worked in the past and what hasn't worked in the past.

Vice Chairman Kastning: How did you change when you went to the new form of government? Were some of the elected officials just for two years and others one year?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: Yes, I was two so, I have run two years in an election in Asbury for quite some time, so you had to pick straws. I mean, it was that you pick straws and whoever got whichever straw you had four years or two years, and the other thing I'll say to you about nonpartisan, in terms of our ballot, your name is picked out of a hat by our clerk publicly, there's a big drawing and if she picks my name first it's Amy Quinn, Yvonne Clayton, Eileen Chapman, John Moore, your name is quite literally picked out of a hat for the lineup on the ballot which reads to me a bit more fair.

Vice Chairman Kastning: Are you talking about the County Clerk or the local clerk?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: Our local clerk picks the names out of a hat for our local election ballot.

Commissioner Berk: Any other questions? There were no questions.

Commissioner Berk: As we know, under the Faulkner form of government residents can petition for a referendum for an ordinance. Are you aware whether any residents in your town have done this?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: Yes, so one of the big reasons Asbury Park changed their form of government was there was a real desire to have initiative and referendum and we've had a few that were to increase the number of liquor licenses, which we already have enough of, and the voters of Asbury Park were like "we're good, we don't need any more liquor licenses," but we had one recently that was certainly a very lively and passionate one, which was about rent control. They got the required number of signatures to implement a rent control initiative, and while it didn't pass it certainly got all of us on the council to pass a different version of a rent control balance. My understanding from the charter study from years ago was a real desire to have referendums, and I agree with them, the thought was to have more people involved in city government in that way, so I would say that that was successful, and I don't have any complaints. Sometimes we get crazy things on the ballot, but generally speaking I don't have any issue with it.

Commissioner Berk: Since there's been a change, do you feel that residents are more involved?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: In that process, absolutely, because they're required to sign something saying they want to see this on the ballot and then they need to go vote yes or no on it, so I felt very comfortable saying that brought more residents feeling like they were in the fold in terms of decision making or getting policies in front of us in ways that if they felt they couldn't get a policy in front of us a different way. One of the things that a group of people are certainly talking about in Asbury is an art tax and for me while I personally have no problem supporting an art tax and would happily pay an art tax, it's important to me to see what the rest of the City of Asbury Park wants to do, if that was passed overwhelmingly or not passed overwhelmingly that would be interesting information for me to have. I don't know how people feel about an art tax and at the end of the day people didn't support the rent control referendum but did support our eventual rent control policy.

Commissioner Buffalino: What's an art tax?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: So, you would create a tax, Jersey City has one, and it would go into a trust for art related projects that can relate anything from art education for after school, recreation department. I don't know if you know us very well, but we have a bunch of murals everywhere, it would create money and get more murals in Asbury Park, and it's not just for art,

it's also for historic preservation, so again, if you know anything about Asbury you know we've lost beautiful, beautiful buildings which has been heartbreaking for many of us. I do think this group of people thinking about an art tax are thinking a penny per \$100,000 or something like that, let's say that \$75,000 of money towards very specifically historic preservation, so I think that that may make it to initiative and referendum and that's good for residents, because at the end of the day if an overwhelming number are willing to pay a little bit more for an art tax or if an overwhelming number say absolutely "I'm not paying anything more for an art tax," that part of the initiative and referendum I think is helpful to me as a council member.

Commissioner Berk: The next to last question is if you would make any changes, and I think you've gone through this. Are there things you've been mulling over in your mind, wards and things of that sort, anything else?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: No, two things or at least the one thing I feel the most passionate about of all of it, maybe I may get beat up by the Dems, is nonpartisan, I think when you're partisan you potentially exclude a demographic of people that would serve well on a board.

Commissioner Berk: So, that's something you don't want to change?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: Yes, if I were looking at this, I would look at not having partisan elections, I don't think they feed well in towns, and I don't know that they get the best person elected.

Commissioner Berk: Anything else that we didn't ask you that you'd like to share with us?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: I don't think so, I think the mayor before me did a really great job covering most of it.

Commissioner Berk: Any further questions from anybody?

Commissioner Gilstein: I presume that elections were on a partisan basis in your previous form of government, was that one of the changes?

Deputy Mayor Quinn: No, they were never, I watch it in the towns surrounding us and it just looks awful to me. We've never been partisan, the one thing we did do is change from May to November and that was actually really helpful as well, in terms of making sure we had more people out, but I think in Asbury having nonpartisan it's not even an issue, so when we go door-to-door and somebody says, "are you a Dem or Republican," it doesn't really matter. I can address the concerns, the pothole, the speeding, the increase in taxes and commercial space, the drunks downtown, there's no conversation on did I support Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump.

Chairman Gee: We want to thank you very much Deputy Mayor Quinn, we really appreciate it.

## **New Business**

Chairman Gee: Does anyone have anything for new business.

Commissioner Gilstein: Are we going to talk about a public hearing for Phase Two?

Chairman Gee: I think we still need to check to see if we got any more invited guests, so there's still some question on that right now. We're definitely going to have a public hearing for Phase Two, but let's make sure we have all our guest speakers in for now, so I'm not sure we're there yet. I do know that we have some conflicts for the next meeting, and what I'd like to do is maybe get a motion to cancel the next scheduled meeting and our next meeting would be April 7th.

Commissioner Gilstein offered a motion to cancel the March 31st meeting, seconded by Commissioner Kastning. A roll call vote confirmed all in favor.

Chairman Gee: Before we go to public comment, our counselor would like to read a statement.

Mr. Starkey: I made a version of this statement at the last meeting, but I think it's important enough to just go through it briefly again, and that is, I wanted to review the purpose of the charter study commission because it's important to understand the role of the commissioners who have been elected by the people and the conduct of these proceedings. The purpose of the Charter Study Commission is to review the current form of government in Holmdel to understand the potential alternative forms of government and to make a recommendation as to whether or not the current form should be changed, and, if it should, to what form is preferred. The keyword in that is recommendation, this commission does not have the power to change the form of government, only the residents of Holmdel have that right. This committee can only make a recommendation, the residents have the ultimate right by casting a vote at a public election on any recommendation. The hearings that are conducted by the commission, like this one tonight, are always held in public and they are subject to the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act, meaning that all discussions are held in public, notice is given of the date and time of the meeting, there's a published agenda and the public has a right to observe. The public has also been provided the opportunity to comment at every, and as we just discussed, there has been one separate meeting for the public and there will be another one scheduled just for public input and comment. As residents who attended the prior commission meetings have seen, a number of invited guests attend the meeting, they give information to the commissioners and to the public about the topics before the commission. Those guests are not just residents of Holmdel, but they include elected and appointed officials from other towns, as well as experts from Rutgers and other organizations with knowledge about the forms of government. As far as members of the public are concerned, they are able to make comments during the designated public comment period, which we'll get to shortly, but because this is not a trial or even a deposition in litigation, the public participants do not have a right to cross-examine or question the invited guests or commissioners. The purpose of these hearings is to get other information, but the public is free to comment, they are free to express their viewpoint on the change of government issues and the discussions that are being had. I would suggest that constructive input in this process is always welcome, but personal attacks, and there have been some on these meetings already, are not productive and are really not warranted. We should all remember the process is designed by law to allow for the commissioners and ultimately the residents to determine the best form of government for Holmdel, and I would suggest that if everyone can keep that in mind, we could have a productive meeting.

### **Public Comment**

Chairman Gee stated that the public comment would be opened and explained how participants can make comments and that there is a three-minute time limit.

Wes Fagan, 50 Chestnut Ridge Road: When we last met, I asked about the expenses of this commission, I was told that our taxes were appropriated to pay our attorney, the secretary and the expenses of our commissioners and guests. We agreed that within the Holmdel Charter Study website, there is a link to PO Box 761 for donations. I asked our attorney if this was legal and Mr. Gee if this was moral and commissioners if it just did not matter. I asked, "is the donor list available to the public," following these questions I was kicked out of the meeting, so I heard no reply and have not been in since, I had to go back over the weekend to listen to the answers.



By Sunday, the PO Box link was gone, scrubbed from the site. Our attorney offered no comment, Mr. Gee said, "I was confused about a lot of things." Timekeepers said it did not matter because no one was taking a salary at this time. Another commissioner was troubled by the public's comments, but assured us that they have not done anything bad, sinister nor deceitful and have yet to do "a damn thing wrong," he further advised that Holmdel needs to "align with more modern standards," does that sound like an open mind? When reference was made to how and when this commission was formed, we were informed that during those 2021 mid-summer Zoom meetings, we the residents were asleep at the switch, that is apparently so since it took a nine-member commission to pave over a blue line, but five here to divide the people and dismantle the norms of party affiliation. Later Mr. Gee announced that he is not required to allow public comment and we in essence should be thankful we are committed to speak at all, if we are nice, he may continue to permit it in Phase Three, by the way I'm thankful for my three minutes. Next it was revealed that the party boss is Shaun Golden, and I said where have I heard that name before, so I went back to holmdelcharter.com and on the first page is a letter dated February 1st from Sheriff Golden, which states in part "you can count on me for support." Then on Valentine's Day you replied, "thank you for your support," how sweet, so here we discover Shaun is the root of our problems and you are publicly trading niceties. Why isn't he invited here over the next dozen, or now 11, meetings left? Why isn't he brought in here so you can expose our shortcomings? You can question him about his manipulation, or don't you have the, and here's where you fill in your own adjectives, to see him face-to-face. Lastly, Mr. Gee said we would have in-person meetings when he felt it appropriate, initially we were told we were Zooming because of the uncertainties of Covid, when that passed, we are now Zooming for the sake of our guest speakers, is this process for the benefit of the speakers, of the commissioners or for we the public.

John Giampolo, 43 Blue Hills Drive: I just hope that this commission was paying attention to the reasoning, and I'm sorry to say, it just sounds like absurd reasoning that the mayor of Asbury Park gave for why she supports the nonpartisan elections, because it's the same absurd reasoning that's been given by other unsuccessful candidates at Holmdel who support changing to nonpartisan election. The reasoning is that nonpartisan elections would be fairer to some candidates who have a hard time running or have a hard time getting elected and feel that it's not fair enough for them or maybe it's just not easy enough for them to get elected with the partisan system we currently have, that is a completely backwards priority. What is obviously most important, is fairness to the voters, transparency to the voters not to the candidates. If many voters in Holmdel choose to vote down their chosen party line, whether it's republican or democrat, and whether or not that's the smartest thing to do sometimes, that's still their choice, that's still their right and most voters want to know the affiliation or at least association of the candidates that are running. What is most important is giving transparency and fairness to voters so that they know what they're voting, they know everything that they want to know about what they're voting for not to give more fairness or an easier time to get elected to candidates. That's a completely backwards priority, it's up to candidates to convince voters that they should be elected, it's not up to candidates to change our government just to make it easier for them to get elected. I would also say that I also hope the commission was paying attention to when the mayor of Aberdeen said that the reason he would not want to change his current form of government was because if he did it would be for selfish reasons, because it would be just to make the powers given to the mayor greater or stronger, when, unfortunately, that's exactly what we know our current mayor did. At the last town meeting he said that he put forth the Charter Study Commission, and we know that at least one of your previous meetings he said

that he favors, and one obviously wants you to recommend, less frequent elections for the mayor so he would stay in office longer and that he doesn't like having the oversight from the committee because it gets in the way of day-to-day business, I believe that is what he said, and as you heard the mayor of Aberdeen say, that's not a reason to change your government, that change is just for the benefit of the mayor, not for the benefit of voters or the residents.

Chris DiMari, 7 Oaks Drive: I'm getting tired of the people behind this charter study misleading my friends and family in Holmdel with these marketing pitches: elect the mayor directly, power to the people, coming from the same group of people who haven't even included us people in this process. None of your guests have ever operated out of the township form of government, they define their government you promote as strong mayor not as power to the people, it is electing a mayor who gains strong power in long tenures and the proof is in the four municipalities you brought onto your show who used the Faulkner Act to change their local government. Ocean mayor, democrat, serving a 6th year, Marlboro mayor, democrat, serving his 15th year, Aberdeen mayor, democrat, serving his 12th year, Asbury Park mayor, democrat, serving his 8th year. Holmdel is a conservative leaning town, so it's interesting to note that you brought on four towns with strong democratic control. We already know that the Faulkner Act is primarily used in the largest New Jersey cities, which are now overruled by the democratic party. Now you're showing us the smaller towns that are using the same playbook. Holmdel already has, power to the people, which dictates what the residents in this town want by directly electing five committee members where the power is balanced. I'm following up so the Holmdel residents clearly understand this absurd party boss saga we've continued to hear about throughout the process. Mayor Buontempo won non-endorsed, and Prakash and Cathy are independents, on an earlier show Kin Gee couldn't gloat any more over a Republican Sheriff Golden form letter and then telling us in another meeting that one of the primary reasons this charge study was put forth is because of the influence of the same party boss. The reality is, Holmdel residents are becoming concerned about the democratic party boss, State Senator Vin Gopal, who we read was influential in local elections in two towns you brought on, Ocean and Asbury Park. The Holmdel democratic party, including Commissioner Berk, had Vin Gopal as a guest right here in Holmdel that last September to support Holmdel Township committee candidate Rahul Diddi. The Diddi family, being another recent politician who lost elections, which signed all of your petitions. Vin Gopal, since 2018, has publicly stated to his colleagues the strategy is to focus on municipal elections, we're much more concerned about this party boss and the influence he has on Holmdel. Mayor Buontempo mentioned that he was not the one who originated the charter study, but he put it forth and we understand his motive. The majority of residents were definitely not thinking of changing our local government or cared about directly electing a mayor during a pandemic. The Holmdel residents have the right to transparency, Holmdel residents want to know who is this group that the mayor claims are the ones who originated the charter study in Holmdel that marketed it to him and is Vin Gopal the person who educated someone in Holmdel on this charter study. Did anyone on this commission ever hold a meeting at Holmdel with Vin, or any county or state democratic leaders, to discuss the charter study in home to change our government so there's a chance to win elections? We have the right to know as residents who you all are.

Ralph Purcell, 18 Red Coach Lane: When is this study going to be over and put to a vote? Where will the voting be held? Last time I voted in Hazlet, when are we going to vote and why are we voting in Hazlet? Why don't we vote in Holmdel, we live in Holmdel? I don't understand the last race where we couldn't have vote in our own town, we had a vote in Hazlet. When is the

charter study going to be in person? Why is it never in person so far and who's making this decision that we can't have it in face-to-face?

Chairman Gee: I think there was some confusion, the gentleman asked why did we vote in Hazlet, I can understand why that could be confusing. For the first time in 2021 in the general election, New Jersey allow what they call early voting in person. Most of you may or may not know we always have mail in ballots so you can vote early and return it back, then after that you vote in person on election day. So, it's the first Tuesday after the first Monday and basically, if you had to be somewhere on that Tuesday or if something happened, you could jeopardize your chance of voting and then it makes the counting by the Board of Election a little bit more difficult, so New Jersey, for the first time in its history, allowed for early voting, however, early voting meant a lot more resources would be needed with voting machine, poll workers and so on, and I believe, both at the state and the county level, they limit the number of voting polling stations and they try to combine them. You can, if you choose to vote in Holmdel, you can still do that on election day, however if you choose to vote early, which there was a 10-day period, then you have to go to any of the locations, not necessarily in Hazlet for a Holmdel resident, you actually go to any location within Monmouth County and vote, but if you really want to go to a Holmdel location, you can certainly do that on election day.

Ron Emma, 32 Ladwood Drive: I believe I'm the unsuccessful candidate that Mr. Giampolo referred to earlier in his remarks, so let me just clear up a couple of things that were mentioned that I think were directed in my direction. What I was mentioning about the ballot, as far as openness and transparency, I was not in any way saying it's unfair to the candidates. I am absolutely open for fairness to the voters, that's what this is all about. As far as the virtual and hostility that has been expressed towards this committee, I just can't understand where that's coming from. By statute, as you've explained over and over again, what you're going to be tasked with is a recommendation, whether you change the form of government or you don't change the form of government, it will be a question for the voters. It's not about the candidate, it's for the voters to vote. As far as the party boss comment that was made and the letter that was referenced by Shaun Golden, I actually think that's a fantastic idea, invite Mr. Golden to this committee and let's really see where he falls on partisan versus nonpartisan elections, because clearly the letter was just a political propaganda to just cover his backside. So, please Mr. Chairman, invite the Monmouth County party boss to one of these meetings, I would love to hear his comments and his stance on partisan versus nonpartisan elections. My last comment is, please just come out and vote, if you like it vote, if you don't like it vote, open and transparency, and again I applaud all of you for your time and effort that you put into this commission and let's just move on respectfully without the hostility on virtual.

Chairman Gee stated that there were no more hands raised and asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Berk offered a motion, seconded by Commissioner Gilstein. A voice vote confirmed all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bonnie K. Thomas, Commissioner Secretary