



VILLAGE OF HYDE PARK

Thursday October 3, 2026

FIRST PUBLIC HEARING ON AN AMENDMENT TO THE VILLAGE OF HYDE PARK CHARTER Minutes

Trustee Members: Susan Trainor, Board Chair; Frederika French; Amy O'Toole; David Whitesell

Staff Present: Karen Wescom

Public: Scott Johnstone of Morrisville Water & Light, Interim GM; Ken Gibbons; David Couch; Andrea Scalisi; Kevin Hudnell; Elisabeth Fenn; Mary Walz; Susan Bartlett

1. Susan Trainor called the Public Hearing to order at 10:00 AM.

Scott Johnstone gave a brief overview of the proposed amendment of Section 131 of the Village of Hyde Park Charter Consideration on November 3, 2026. The changes being Section 131 relate to the Electric Department, by providing for the creation of an Electric Commission that would be separate from the Board of Trustees and be comprised of 3 Village Residents and 2 ratepayers. A second Public Hearing will be held on October 29, 2026 with voting held by Australian Ballot on November 3, 2026. If the Village voters pass the Article on November 3, 2026 it will be forwarded to the State of Vermont, the Legislature will decide to move it forward for consideration and approval/denial. Upon final approval and required signatures it would be effective.

A member of the public sought clarification for how the water and wastewater departments would be affected if the Electric department had its own manager? Scott Johnstone indicated the current manager is responsible for the water and wastewater as well and there were no plans to change that structure, it would be part of the job requirement. Public concern with it not explicitly stated in the proposed change to Section 131 that the Electric manager would be required to manage the water and wastewater.

A member of the public asked why the Electric Commissioners would be appointed not elected. It was expressed that appointed Commissioners would be interested and have expertise in specific areas that current Trustees may not have.

A member of the public wondered if there was process for appointments to the Electric Commission. It was stated there would be an area wide notice of opportunities to serve as an Electric Commissioner. Candidates would be appointed by the Board of Trustees with guidance and input from VPPSA and the current Interim General Manager.

A member of the public asked if the Charter change would hinder the ability to sell the utility in the future. The response clarified that a sale of the utility would require a Village vote for

approval. A member of the public thought it should be clarified that the Electric Commission would not have the authority to sell the utility.

A member of the public requested the Village website be modified to make certain the information was more noticeable for everyone; it was recommended there be explicit notice by creating a separate tab.

A member of the public sought information on mailing absentee ballots to Voters, to reach all voters, or a bill notice. Absentee ballots can be made by request for local elections.

A member of the public asked why the Charter change was being proposed. It was expressed that the change would provide for another layer of oversight and a larger reach to educate ratepayers on public power. If adopted the change would enable the Board of Trustees to have more time to focus on other Village functions. From water, wastewater and development as well as other general functions.

A member of the public asked if the format of the proposal could be changed and published to show each section that was changed. It was stated that there may be a legal reason and the Village would have to check before changing the format of the Charter proposal.

A member of the public wondered what would happen if you couldn't find people to fill the open seats, how the Electric Commission could function. It was stated that business can proceed with a quorum, which is three(3). Possibly it could fall back to the Trustees having to appoint themselves until seats are filled.

A member of the public wondered why not all commissioners would be ratepayers to fill board. It was explained that it is typical of these types of Charters to have the ultimate end be Trustee's as they are the governing body.

A member of the public thought there should be better clarification that a Trustee could be an Electric Commissioner.

A member of the public expressed hesitation due to possible empty seats and have open seats with not enough people to fill them.

Frederika French made a motion to adjourn. Motion seconded by David Whitesell. The motion passed. The hearing adjourned at 10:40 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Wescom, Village Clerk