Town Council Members Present
Zane Teeters, Jr. – Mayor
Cheryl Marinelli – Vice-Mayor
Kay MacQueen – Council Member
Susan Richert - Council Member
Kim Hanawalt – Council Member

Town Staff
Charles Jacien, Town Clerk
Wally Hoagland, Police Chief
David Langley, Attorney

Call to Order and Roll Call

Mayor Teeters called the special meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. Council Member Hanawalt gave the invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Present were Mayor Teeters and Council Members Marinelli, MacQueen, Hanawalt, and Richert. A quorum and proper notice were confirmed.

Public Comment

Ms. Crowe stated that she had reviewed the supporting records and Attorney Langley's written advice. She opposed any action that could disqualify Mr. Hopper or Mr. Mosley after the qualifying period, questioned the timing and cost of the special meeting and possible litigation, and urged Council to allow the election to proceed. No other speaker came forward during the public comment period.

Charter Article 2 Section 1 Relationship Provision

Council considered Article 2, Section 1 of the Town Charter, which states that no more than one family member may hold a seat on the same council or board and lists parents, siblings, children, and spouses as family members. Council Member Marinelli explained that she had raised the question after learning that Mr. Hopper and Mr. Mosley, who are related by marriage, might both seek office. She said the Charter's use of "includes" could make the list broader than the four relationships named. She referred to Florida case law, ethics provisions that expressly mention step relationships, and the Town's personnel policy. Her concern was that, if both candidates won, a challenge to their serving together could conflict with voters' expectations. She requested that Council consider notifying its insurer, obtaining another opinion, and clarifying the Charter for future elections.

Attorney David Langley agreed that "includes" can introduce a broader list, but advised that, in his opinion, the Charter's examples describe close family relationships and do not make a stepchild a "child" for this provision. He considered a successful challenge unlikely and recommended allowing the candidates to remain on the ballot. He cautioned that an attempt to disqualify a candidate could itself lead to litigation. He outlined the options of seeking another attorney's review, pursuing a court declaration, notifying the Town's liability insurer, or addressing a challenge if one arose after

the election. He estimated that a court action could cost approximately $10,000 to $25,000 at the low end. He also explained that the ethics statute discussed by Council addresses appointments and related conduct, rather than this Charter restriction on who may serve together.

The Mayor stated that Council could not itself remove either candidate from the ballot. He emphasized the distinction between each candidate's right to run and the unresolved question of whether both could serve if elected. Council discussed a future Charter committee and the need to make the relationship provision clearer. A candidate explained that his mother's husband had not raised him and that he was already an adult when they met. Council also discussed the possibility of a post-election challenge and the expense of seeking judicial guidance before the election. No action to disqualify either candidate or seek a court order was approved.

Motions and Votes

1. Insurance notice. Mayor Teeters moved to direct the Town Clerk to notify the Town's liability and casualty insurer of the Charter issue and the possibility of future litigation. The motion was seconded, By Susan Richert. Vote: Marinelli—Yes; MacQueen—Yes; Hanawalt—Yes; Richert —Yes; Mayor Teeters—Yes. Motion carried 5–0.

2. Charter guidance. Mayor Teeters moved to direct Attorney Langley to review the relationship provision in Article 2, Section 1 and provide guidance and possible revised wording. The motion was seconded, By Kim Hanawalt. Vote: Marinelli—Yes; MacQueen—Yes; Hanawalt—Yes; Richert —Yes; Mayor Teeters—Yes. Motion carried 5–0.

3. Second legal opinion. Cheryl Marinelli moved to have Attorney Langley consult another qualified local government attorney concerning the wording of the relationship provision, with consultation fees capped at $1,000. This was Seconded By, Susan Richert. Vote: Marinelli—Yes; MacQueen—No; Hanawalt—No; Richert —Yes; Mayor Teeters—Yes. Motion carried 3–2.

Adjournment

Mayor Teeters adjourned the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

Town Clerk
Date: 10-28-26

Mayor
Date: 11/3/26