

**TOWN OF ASHBURNHAM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES  
SPECIAL WORKSHOP MEETING - JULY 19, 2006 – 12:00 PM  
SELECTMEN'S OFFICE, TOWN HALL**

PRESENT: Jonathan Dennehy, Chair, Chris Gagnon, Clerk, Mark Carlisle, Member, Kevin Paicos, Town Administrator and Sylvia Turcotte, Administrative Assistant.

Jonathan called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m. and stated that this was the first of two scheduled working meetings for the Board. Chris Gagnon distributed an outline of suggestions of issues to work on in these meetings.

Kevin stated that a policy book has been started with a few policies already created. He added that the intern, Paul Boushell is working on this project by checking with other communities and what they have in effect. He noted that the Board will have to look at what he finds and decide on any that they may want to put in effect here with two votes, one on which policy they would like to have here and two, how they should be worded.

Kevin said an example of the need for a policy is the annual appointment list which is always an extensive list and has always been done this way. Dennehy noted that this was used in the past as a tool by previous Town Administrators. Kevin stated that at some point a policy would be needed.

Kevin stated that dog hearings are another example. Dennehy agreed and added that there should be a policy as well as a by-law.

Jonathan stated that he would like to see a draft of the list that the intern puts together. He added that before the next working meeting he would like to get the draft sent to them via email. He also noted that as a result of this meeting the Board will need another meeting after August 16<sup>th</sup>, maybe in September on policies.

Chris stated that the ballot policy should be done before the next meeting if at all possible.

Jonathan stated that there may be previous policies that exist but the new ones created by this Board will take precedent. Mark suggested a working meeting every quarter and Jonathan stated that it should be scheduled on an as-needed basis.

Chris stated that the Ballot Policy should have a calendar or timeline set, as well as a review by the Town Administrator, Town Counsel or Bond Counsel, and then have it sent to the Town Clerk. He noted that it should also have an approval process where the Board approves the question first and then a final reading to check for language. Jonathan added that the Town Administrator should be the responsible party on this. Jonathan also stated that the Board should review this as well and should have a first and second meeting to vote on the questions. Kevin stated that the Board needs to see the entire question and final wording. He added that he will work on setting a calendar with cut-off dates to submit questions, etc. He also noted that he suggests a deadline to get ballot questions in, in order to complete this process. Chris suggested that the question should be turned in 55 days in advance of the first reading.

Chris inquired if any other towns might have policies on this that we could review and Kevin stated that the intern may have such a policy. Kevin stated that he would ask the intern to incorporate any policies on this in his draft.

The next topic for discussion was possible changes to the General By-Laws. Kevin suggested that the Board should appoint a committee to review the by-laws. Chris stated that pages 1-23 are the only sections that would need to be reviewed. He added that there is a need to re-work the by-laws on the Advisory Board and Planning Board charge regarding Capital expenses.

Kevin stated that the Capital projection wasn't done for two years and that he did put it together this year but that it was more of a wish list. He added that the Board may want to go to the next level, buildings needed, fate of the VMS building, etc. making it a more thorough and complicated process.

Mark inquired as to whether Eric Smith was keeping track of the 61A's and Jonathan stated that he was. Mark stated that they should be looking for more details such as owners, etc. and Kevin stated that Donna in the Assessors office could put that together fairly easily. Chris stated that the Hartshorn property is a target. Jonathan asked who the appropriate party was to talk about this, stating that they could probably go to the Planning Board and ask if they would work with the Advisory Board on the capital items. Kevin added that they would need a sub-committee, with members from the Planning Board, the Advisory Board, the Board of Selectmen and the Town Planner, and call it the "Capital Planning Board".

Mark stated that they could start accumulating inventory on each building and Kevin noted that this has already been done because of the GASB34 ruling and added that Capital budgeting is a "meaty topic".

Kevin noted that the Selectmen's Goals and Objectives is the most important thing. He stated that he has sent out a memo to all Department Heads on this topic with a response due date of August 1<sup>st</sup>. He stated that he will then put all the responses in a book and hand the book to the Board. He added that it will be a "draft" and that it will take a few meetings to approve it and then it will be returned to each Department Head and this will be what would be expected of them.

Jonathan stated that Kevin should use his TA report to prioritize his goals and objectives. Chris stated that they would need a potential calendar of completion as well. Mark stated that Kevin needs to be able to say "uncle" when he is presented with too many projects. Jonathan stated that the Board needs to help Kevin to set perimeters, reiterating that Kevin needs to be able to say "no" to new projects. Mark agreed with Jonathan.

Kevin stated that his TA Report is not enough. He went on to say that he would put together all the information from the Department Heads and give the Board the list and this would show the incredible amount of what's going on right now. Mark stated that Kevin had a monumental task.

Kevin stated that the single best tool he has is the Goals and Objectives and the annual review.

Chris suggested that the Department Heads could do a report twice a year on their progress on their Goals and Objectives list. Mark stated maybe go one step further and have the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals etc. do a report as well twice a year to see what their hot spots are and discuss them in order to avoid any misunderstandings. Chris stated that he agrees with this and that joint meetings of boards should be held.

Kevin inquired as to the Town Administrator review policy and Jonathan stated that there was a form that was used when Katie was here, noting strengths and weaknesses, etc. Kevin asked if the Board liked this process and Jonathan stated that they did as it helped the review process.

Kevin stated that a standard is needed so that he knows what he would be reviewed on. He added that he knows someone who does this if the Board is interested. Chris inquired if there was a template available anywhere that the Board could look at, maybe from the MMA or ICMA.

Kevin stated that the ICMA has one but that it is a complicated process. Chris stated that he would do a cursory look into their form. Sylvia stated that she would look for copies of Katie's form for their review.

The next topic for discussion was a Flag Policy. Chris stated that the Fire Department would put the flags up and that maybe this should be an appointed official duty.

Kevin stated that the policy should list when, where, and times to put them up and take them down. He went on to say that he has assigned this to the Fire Department and that he would check with Linc Stiles on the brackets.

Chris asked how many flags would be needed and Jonathan stated they need enough to go from the bridge to the churches, at least. Kevin noted that they are \$68 per flag with a bracket. Jonathan said that Fred Sweeney should be consulted, as he could probably get them cheaper. Mark stated that maybe the Hardware Store, the Business Council, etc. could contribute or give us a discount.

Jonathan stated that the flags should be from River Styx Rd. to Chapel St. or maybe even up to Cushing St. or High St. and Mark noted that it could be the entire Historic District.

Kevin stated that the flags should be put up for Veterans Day, Memorial Day, Flag Day and the 4<sup>th</sup> of July but that they probably shouldn't be up at night unless they are illuminated. After a short discussion, Kevin stated that they should be put up 3 or 4 days before each of the holidays and taken down 3 or 4 days after. It was also decided that the flags would be put up on Veterans Day, Memorial Day and the 4<sup>th</sup> of July only. Kevin said that he could get the bucket truck from the Light Department to help make it safer to put the flags up. Jonathan stated that this should be implemented before this Veterans Day.

Kevin suggested that the Board should set a time for workshop meetings. Chris listed what was determined from this meeting.

- 1- Kevin to get a book of generic policies
- 2- Special policy for the Ballot questions
- 3- Work with Fire Department on flags and policy
- 4- Goals and Objectives from Department Heads
- 5- Generic review for the Town Administrator

Jonathan stated that they should keep the Capital planning idea on radar. Kevin suggested that for the next workshop meeting they should invite the Advisory Board and the Planning Board for further discussion. Jonathan suggested that they invite one representative from each board to the regular meeting, the second meeting in August, to discuss this to plant seeds of thought. He also noted that it would be a preliminary discussion to remind them of what's in the by-laws. Kevin stated that we have the process already, but just need to improve it.

Jonathan stated that he would like any future workshop meetings scheduled for noontime to be lunch meetings and Kevin stated that he and Sylvia would be happy to get lunch.

At 2:00 p.m. Chris motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Carlisle. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Sylvia Turcotte  
Administrative Assistant