

## Minutes of the Town Government Study Committee

Date: June 22, 2016

Members Present: Gene Blanchard, Gay Shanahan, Susan Curtis, Kathleen Glynn, Ted Flynn, Anne Ward, Alex Chin, Marty Desmery

Members Absent: None

Guests: None

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm.

Gay Shanahan reported on her meeting with Rene Read and John Madden on the Community Compact. Alex Chin and Anne Ward attend the meeting as well, along with Valerie Massard, who is the new Planning Director. The purpose of the meeting was to begin the application process. During the meeting, it came to light that other departments and committees have an interest in community compact funding. The application is an online application with various drop-down menus. Valerie had ideas for two of the three menu options, and our committee had ideas for three. Rene decided to ask all town administrators whether they have a need for community compact funding. Gay has a follow up meeting with Rene on July 13. Gay noted that our committee may need to revisit what we will ask for depending on how many options, if any, will be open after the other departments weigh in. Ted Flynn noted that our final report could note the fact that we recommended taking advantage of the community compact funding, and that various departments followed our advice.

The committee also discussed the fact that our charge does not expire until June 2018, despite the fact that we are expected to give a report at the Annual Town Meeting in March 2017. We may decide to defer our final report until after we receive the results of the community compact.

Gene Blanchard gave a comprehensive review of the work that he and Kathleen Glynn did with respect to the Town's by-laws. Among other things, the by-law subcommittee recommends that the historical data on amendments should be preserved in some fashion but removed from the by-laws because the data is unnecessary and perhaps inaccurate or incomplete. Gene walked the committee through the proposed changes in each of section of the by-laws, with committee members offering various suggestions and corrections. After one more set of edits, the proposed changes will be sent to Ted for delivery to Rene and then to town counsel. Ultimately, any changes would need to be approved at Town Meeting.

The committee next took up the issue of "recall" votes, which had been the subject of a previous meeting that certain members could not attend. The consensus of the committee was that voters should understand that they need to give careful consideration to their votes, and if they are not happy with an elected official they should vote him or her out of office during the

next election cycle. The committee also discussed the possibility of permitting a recall vote in the case of criminal convictions, but noted that each situation would be unique and it would be difficult to craft a rule that applied to all situations. The committee voted unanimously for no recall, including in the case of a criminal conviction.

On the issue of “reconsideration” votes, the committee discussed various ways that reconsideration had been used at prior Town Meetings, as well as the pros and cons of various changes to the current rules on reconsideration. The committee decided to table the issue for now and take it up again in the context of our discussions about Town Meeting.

The committee also discussed and voted unanimously in favor of the proposal, which is generally supported by department heads, to change the date to close the warrant from 75 to 30 days prior to Town Meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:29 pm. The committee’s next meeting is scheduled for June 29, 2016, at the Senior Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Marty Desmery

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