

## TOWN GOVERNMENT STUDY COMMITTEE

Thursday, July 25, 2013 - Minutes

6:00 p.m.

BPW Meeting Room

**Present:** Chairperson: Phil Washko, Vice Chair: Bernie Roderick, Dick Douglass, Eric Dawicki, Dan Freitas, Andy Jones, Linda Meredith, and Pattie Pacella

Meeting called to order by the Chairperson at 6:07 p.m.

Chairperson, Phil Washko announced that Ron Manzone resigned because of a conflict with meeting times; Dick Douglass was appointed as a new voting member.

Dick Douglass introduced himself to the Committee. Stating he had +30 years experience in management fields, and was happy to be on the Committee.

Starting with the agenda:

- **Government access taping discussion/vote**

Andy Jones made a motion to accept government access taping and was seconded by Eric Dawicki. The motion was passed unanimously.

- **Recording Disclaimer:** Chairperson, Phil Washko read a disclaimer for recording. Taping began approximately 6:15 p.m.
- **Re-visit recording secretary position**

Pattie Pacella said she would be interested in taking over the minutes, if Linda Meredith was okay with giving them up. Linda was fine as she only wanted to do it the interim. Andy Jones agreed to take them over in the future if necessary. Andy Jones expressed that he wanted Pattie to be sure she was still comfortable 'talking' and not to get too bogged up with the writing/recording part of it. Pattie assured him that she would still talk.

Linda Meredith nominated Pattie Pacella as recording Secretary, and was seconded by Andy Jones. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Review/approve minutes from 7/11/13 meeting open session (no executive session)**

Chairperson, Phil Washko wanted to add a few amendments to the July 11<sup>th</sup> minutes:

- He would prefer to be referred to as Phil vs. Phillip
- Mark Sylvia should not be listed as Committee Member, but as 'invited guest'
- Re: Open Meeting Law – Eric Dawicki arrived a little late, should be noted.
- Minutes should read after a vote as "passed unanimously"
- "Unanimously" Linda voted as Recording Secretary (wasn't reflected in minutes)
- Andy Jones said that he also left the room for a few minutes & that should be reflected
- After discussion of Robert's Rules, we discussed Special Municipal Employees
- Minutes reflected spokesperson for media as Chair & Vice Chair, should be Chair with Vice in Chair's absence.
- A hard copy of DOR report was given to all should be noted
- Up dated copy of people's email addresses & contact information was reviewed.
- Action Items: Read 3 Town Study Committee Reports.
- Minutes should Reflect Committee's Main Objectives:

Understand the current town government landscape; its strengths and challenges.  
Understand what options there are for changes/improvements  
Understand how other towns have undertaken this process  
Understand what conclusions other towns have drawn  
Understand what challenges other towns have seen in implementing their changes  
Understand the recommendations made by DOR  
Understand the general public's impressions of how our government does and doesn't work well  
Incorporate best practices, peer experience, public sentiment and common sense into a set of recommendations for change  
Ensure that the public is kept informed on progress through timely updates to online project site  
Deliver to Town Meeting a set of recommendations with adequate information and lead time so that action can be taken.

Bernie Roderick made a motion to approve the July 11, 2013 minutes with the twelve amendments and was seconded by Linda Meredith. The motion passed unanimously.

Bernie Roderick asked if what the procedure might be with public response. There was a brief discussion.

- ***Clarify/vote on public comment response expectations***

Chairperson, Phil Washko proposed that the Committee not expected to respond. He suggested it would be at their discretion.

Eric Dawicki said if we're respectful it would be okay to respond, we certainly don't want to curtail public comment. The environment needs to be encouraging – public participation.

Dan Freitas suggested to see as we go along.

There was discussion on setting reasonable expectations; maybe a write-in opportunity with questions.

- ***Opening Public Comment***

Chairperson, Phil Washko opened up the Public Comment up to ten minutes.

There was one resident in attendance, Mr. Alan Lawyer of 27 Grove Street. Mr. Lawyer said that it seemed that everyone in Town Politics are "politically correct" for Boston or others; where he felt that it should be what Fairhaven's people want. "It's what the people of Fairhaven wants," he said.

Chairperson, Phil Washko thanked Mr. Lawyer for his comment.

Eric Dawicki said that although he arrived a little late for the first meeting, he got the sense from the Committee members that they were willing to serve on this board to get Fairhaven back to what it used to be. "Getting back to our roots," he said.

Chairperson, Phil Washko closed the public comment session.

- ***Review action items from last meeting***
  - Read DOR Report
  - Read Open Meeting Law Guide
  - Return OML guide certification form to Town Clerk
  - Take online State Ethics training/quiz and return form to Town Clerk
  - Read three town government study reports
  - Prepare committee action brainstorming list

Chairperson, Phil Washko asked if everyone got to the Town Clerk with the certificate for the Open Meeting Law & the state ethics certificate. He asked if **everyone could get that into Town Clerk by the next Meeting. (ACTION #1)**

-Read 3 town government study reports:

Bernie Roderick thinks each reading document should be dissected and reviewed by the Committee, and on future agendas.

Andy Jones suggested that the first process should be reviewing and dissecting the DOR report & the 1987 report first.

Chairperson, Phil Washko said the government study reports are to get us started on what their experience was.

As a sidebar, Chairperson, Phil Washko said that the Committee had an opportunity for a DOR representative to come out on August 1, 2013 (next week) to discuss and review the DOR report. Discussion on having the person come out next week, as well as in the future where they may be additional questions. (Quantifying the report?)

Chairperson, Phil Washko asked that **anyone who would like to prepare questions for this DOR review meeting to be sent to him by end of business day, Monday, July 29, 2013. (ACTION #2)**

Dick Douglass asked if Town Department heads should be invited to this meeting as a review for them; Phil Washko and Bernie Roderick both stated that they have been too many public forums as part of the DOR process.

- ***Discuss Special Municipal Employee designation***

Chairperson, Phil Washko spoke to 'attorney of the day' and he said that this Committee would be considered "Special Municipal Employees; and that we should request that the Selectman designate us as such.

Eric Dawicki made a motion that Phil Washko ask the Selectboard to designate us as Special Municipal Employees and was seconded by Bernie Roderick. The motion passed unanimously.

**ACTION #3: Phil Washko to get in front of Board of Selectman to make this request.**

- ***Draft Website Presentation***

Chairperson, Phil Washko went over a proposed website. Who we are? What we are doing?

Mr. Washko said the Goals of the website were to:

- Provide comprehensive view of committee progress
- Provide means of public communication with committee
- Provide means for public engagement in our process
- Provide project management tools to manage the team's workload

He went into detail what was on the proposed website:

Free on-line Google tools

- Calendar (meetings, public forums, upcoming dates, etc.)
- Document Library (information intends to use) (as an information resource)
- Suggested Category – Reviewed & Discussed (what we've already reviewed & discussed)

This would be an evolving document.

- External Resources (ex: MMA)
- Action Items – Date Assigned/Due Date (keeps track & holds people accountable)
- “Message from the Committee”
- Contact Form (short message) or Google Voice Phone # & Email address to respond

Providing as many tools as possible for Public input!

- Blog style/blurb (will be moderated with a few rules)

**ACTION #4: Phil Washko will send out RULES for everyone’s review for the Blog portion on website.**

- Poll test (discussion around could be unreliable, whereas the #'s can be manipulated.)
- Everyone agreed to take down the “Poll Test” from the website.
- Meet the Committee

**ACTION #5: Everyone needs to write a two sentence bio & email it to Phil Washko to be added to the website.**

**ACTION #6: Everyone needs to send Phil a jpeg Photo/Head Shot for the website as well.**

- Share FB, etc.
- Countdown Days to ‘something’..whatever the Committee designates

Discussion on website address. Everyone agreed with FairhavenTGSC.com.

Pattie Pacella made a motion to pay what is needed to cover the cost for the URL for the website and was seconded by Andy Jones. The motion passed unanimously.

Bernie Roderick asked about the finances for the Committee.

Phil Washko responded that the Financial account is open and a ‘bill’ would be generated and the Committee would sign it at future meetings when they spend money.

Andy Jones made a motion to go live with the website when it’s available, making the necessary changes (removing Ron Manzone’s name, adding Dick Douglass), and was seconded by Linda Meredith. The motion passed unanimously.

**ACTION #7: Phil Washko will issue a press release with the website information when it is ready.**

- ***Fairhaven Government structure review***

Chair, Phil Washko tabled this discussion when Mark Sylvia can discuss.

- ***Discuss/Schedule opening public forum***

Discussion that we should wait to schedule an open public forum until we get enough of who we are, and what we are doing under our belt. Discussion on our goal to have at the least, an interim report for next Town Meeting. We want to do it RIGHT not HURRIDELY.

- ***Other questions from the Committee, discussions or related committee business***

Andy Jones suggested where as Ron Manzone resigned, and Dick Douglass was appointed now; that we still should request that someone be appointed as a non-voting member. Phil Washko agreed.

**ACTION #8: Phil Washko to notify Mark Sylvia & ask that an appointee be appointed as a non-voting member.**

**ACTION #9: Phil Washko asked for everyone's commitment to read emails daily pertaining to this Committee and responding within 24 hours, if a response is requested.**

Andy Jones suggested that people remember to REPLY only to the person who sent it, not to ALL.

Eric Dawicki suggested that perhaps the break down of reports be done by a few Committee members together and brought back to the table.

Phil Washko talked about the Brainstorming Review/Action from our last meeting.

Bernie Roderick passed out "Brainstorming" flyer to review.

Dan Freitas suggested perhaps everyone can take the Briggs-Meyer assessment or maybe do on your own. Eric Dawicki explained it was a good tool to find out about yourself. Phil said that he has done it in the past, and maybe it's a bit too personal for people to share. Dan said it was just an idea.

- ***Closing Public Comment***

Chair, Phil Washko asked if Mr. Lawyer had any closing public comments.

Mr. Lawyer asked about the person who is computer illiterate, how would they get the information. He also suggested an advertisement on Public Access with the website and meetings, and times.

Eric Dawicki suggested that people who don't have a computer, could get a friend to print out information.

Andy Jones said that the Town Clerk may charge an individual per page for the information.

Dan Freitas suggested the person go to the library to view the website or reports.

Dick Douglass commented to Mr. Lawyer's first statement referring to "Politically correct comment." He said that he believed this Committee was to make sure the Town of Fairhaven is efficient and effective; and didn't know why we had to spend an hour and half discussing getting information to the Public (that's being 'politically correct')

Phil Washko said that because we are proposing change to the Town, we need to be as transparent to the Public as possible. Brief discussion ensued.

Andy Jones asked about Public Comment for the next DOR Meeting. Dan Freitas suggested maybe just at the end, let the DOR Representative review the report, and have a Public Comment at the end. Everyone was in agreement that the Public Comment would be at the end of the meeting only for this August 1<sup>st</sup> meeting.

Bernie Roderick made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Andy Jones. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

The next meeting is a Special Meeting with DOR on August 1, 2013 at 6 p.m.

The following meeting, our regularly scheduled meeting will be on August 8, 2013 at 6 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Patricia A Pacella

**ACTION ITEMS**  
**(need to be completed by next meeting)**

**#1:** **Everyone** should get the Open Meeting Law Certificate & State Ethics Training certificate to Town Clerk.

**#2:** **Anyone/Everyone** who would like to write questions for the DOR meeting, is encouraged to do so & submit them to Phil via email by Monday, 7/29/13.

**#3:** **Phil** to go in front of the Selectboard to ask they designate this Committee as Special Municipal Employees.

**#4:** **Phil** will email everyone a set of RULES for the blog, on the website. Please review and send back any comments or if you're happy with it.

**#5:** **Everyone** needs to send a 2-sentence Bio of themselves for the website.

**#6:** **Everyone** needs to send a jpeg headshot of themselves for the bio portion of the website.

**#7:** **Phil** will send out a press release of the website once it's released.

**#8:** **Phil** to notify Mark Sylvia & ask that someone be appointed as a non-voting member.

**#9:** **Phil** ask that everyone read & respond to emails within 24 hours.

**Thank you!**