

TOWN GOVERNMENT STUDY COMMITTEE

Thursday, August 22, 2013 - Minutes

6:00 p.m.

BPW Meeting Room

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

Absent: Eric Dawicki

Meeting called to order by the Chairperson at 6:05 p.m.

AGENDA:

- **Recording Disclaimer:** Chairperson, Phil Washko read a disclaimer for recording
- **Review/approve minutes from 8/8/13 Meeting:**

Bernie Roderick made a motion to approve the 8/8/13 minutes and was seconded by Linda Meredith. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Opening Public Comment**

No public was present for comment.

- **Review Previous Meetings Action Items**

Pattie Pacella handed out the Flow Chart created by Anne Kakley of Town Employees, as well as the Town Employee Listings (which is not everyone). Dick Douglass did a review, and reported there were 924 employees. Linda Meredith had a copy of the 2012 Town Meeting booklet with all names, and we would be utilizing that in the future.

Phil Washko sent out the letters for the first round of interviews. The Fire Chief was on vacation, but he will discuss some information with his group and then reach back out to Phil to set up an interview time. Pattie & Linda met with BPW Superintendent, Vinnie Furtado.

Linda Meredith spoke to the NFIA & FIA, and WIA re: hosting our presentation. NFIA & FIA will combine their meeting & send us a date; the WIFA scheduled us for September 19th.

- **Discuss initial Town Employee Interviews**

Linda Meredith & Pattie Pacella reviewed their reports, how the interview process went, the receptive feel of the meeting. Was it enough questions? Too many? Discussion on sticking to the questions and how we should handle writing down the answers.

ACTION #1: Pattie & Linda to send out copies of the BPW/Interview to all Board members for their review.

Dick Douglass recommended "coding" report/interview perhaps for future. Andy Jones suggested sending out a f/u form with specific YES/NO questions to help in the process that we are asking the right questions.

ACTION #2: Dick Douglass to contact the Town of Littleton to ask about what they did with the information they received after interviews.

Discussion around quantitative survey on agenda for follow up for the future. Phil Washko suggested sending a letter/Thank You to the interviewee with a "follow up of do you think we hit the points". Pattie volunteered to send the letter.

ACTION #3: Pattie to send out a letter to Vinnie Furtado, as a Thank You & do you think we asked fair, to the point questions? Can you make any other recommendations?

Phase 2 of Follow-up questions – maybe finance committee & "DOR" specific

- ***Discuss/plan next round of town employee interviews***

Fire Chief – Dick, Phil, & Bernie
Town Planner – Linda, Pattie & Dan

ACTION #4: Phil to send letter to Selectman as an overall that we are conducting interviews with department heads/employees.

ACTION #5: Phil to send letter to Town Planner, Bill Roth for next interview.

ACTION #6: Linda to call Bill & arrange interview date/time.

- ***Discuss/plan potential WIA public forum***

Discussion "open" meeting law-when it becomes open vs. not. Andy Jones thinks we should just sometimes be able to go out & fact find. Bernie Roderick says once we answer a question, it's an open meeting. Discussion ensued.

Discussion of how we were going to present at these public forums. A "road map" of what we've done thus far on the Committee, what are future objectives are/goals..and how we are getting there.

-Dan suggested list of ?'s to ask public

-Dick suggested overview of DOR Report. Discussion on how much that should be discussed.

We are not the "reporters" of the DOR Report.

-Linda suggested giving a background on why TGSC was created. Who are we?

-Phil suggested general introduction (not to review each & every DOR recommendation)

-Andy agreed.. the DOR report is just a tool in our tool box.

Public Forum Agenda: (will review again at 9/5/13 meeting):

- Introduction (1-2 min)
- DOR Overview (30 sec.)
- Disclaimer. (encourage open discussion pertaining to Town Government.. not a 'free for all')
- Introduce the Board's Roadmap
- Questionnaire

ACTION #7: Linda will get in touch with Meghan from Cable Access to find out if WIFA meeting can be taped/televised.

Proposed Questions for Public Forum Agenda:

1. Do you agree this process is something the Town should undertake?
2. What improvements or changes do you think can be made to make our town government more effective and efficient?
3. Where would you like to see Fairhaven in 5-10 years re: Government? (vision ?)
4. Do you think the "Town Manager" position is a good direction to take Fairhaven?
5. In what ways can departments work together or do business to be more efficient, to better serve you?

6. How many of you read the DOR Report? (show of hands)
7. Any other feedback information, you would like to share with us to evaluate our Town Government?

Potential Take Home Questions:

1. Yes/No ?'s to how people feel our Town Government is run.
2. If areas of dissatisfaction, what are they?

Andy Jones suggested a take home flyer with information to be handed out.

ACTION #8: Andy Jones to create take home flyer ideas & bring to next meeting for review.

ACTION #9: Everyone to write down all potential avenues the Committee has taken or will take to create a roadmap, of where we've been & where we are going. How are we getting there?

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

Phil Washko suggested that people promote the WIFA on their personal facebook pages. Will forward the information for press release.

Dick Douglass asked how he could fact find in different avenues, and if it was 'ok' to say he was a member of this Committee.

Phil Washko agreed that it would be an open ended assignment to each of us to gather information. Data gathering information is okay, and then bring back to the committee for discussion/review.

Dick Douglass had some information from the Sippican News – there is a couple of different Survey's happening in neighboring Towns, and he is going to follow up with the Towns to inquire about the 'technique' they are going to use to do the actual survey.

Linda Meredith suggested we talk to different towns that have incorporated a Town Manager. (Phil stated yes, that was on the roadmap)

Bernie Roderick asked about Charters? Exploring them and the benefit to having one. Phil will put that on as a future agenda item.

- ***Closing Public Comment***

None

- ***Review Action Items for Next Meeting***

ACTION #1: Linda & Pattie to send out interview report of BPW Superintendent to all members.

ACTION #2: Dick to contact Town of Littleton to ask how they handled & what they did with the information received from the interviewees.

ACTION #3: Pattie to send out thank you letter to Vinnie & a f/u of any info he can help us with..suggestions, etc.

ACTION #4: Phil to send letter to Selectman to let them know that we are interviewing Department Heads/employees.

ACTION #5: Phil to send letter to Town Planner as next interviewee.

ACTION #6: Linda to call Town Planner to schedule time/date for interview.

ACTION #7: Linda will get in touch with Meghan from Cable Access to ask about taping 9/19 meeting at WIFIA.

ACTION #8: Andy to create a 'take home' flyer idea for public forum meeting. Bring to next meeting for review.

ACTION #9: Everyone to write down potential avenues that our Committee has taken and is going to be taken to create a Roadmap for forum. (where we've been & where we are heading!)

- ***Schedule Next Meeting***

Next Meeting will be September 5, 2013 at 6pm. Town Hall

Future Meeting: September 19, 2013 at West Island. WIFIA. Linda will let everyone know what time. This will be for our first public forum.

Bernie Roderick made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Linda Meredith. The motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Patricia A. Pacella
Recording Secretary