

TOWN GOVERNMENT STUDY COMMITTEE

Thursday, October 3, 2013 – Minutes

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

Meeting called to order by the Chairperson at 6:05 p.m. & read the recording disclaimer, and said it may/may not be recording.

AGENDA:

Review/approve minutes: 9/5/13, 9/19/13, 9/26/13

Bernie Roderick made a motion to approve all minutes and was seconded by Linda Meredith. The motion passed unanimously.

Opening Public Comment:

There were people present, no one wanted to speak as of yet.

Review action items from last meeting:

Dan said that he would put his points together about BPW, and email to Phil on Friday.

Phil was supposed to think about what and or how to put the email list together of people from public forums. He is still working on that.

Linda sent a Thank you note to WIIA.

Pattie received an email back from Joe M. about the differences of Executive Secretary vs. Town Manager/Administrator. The Committee reviewed the bullet points.

Andy Jones recommended visiting massmanager.org for more information & he said the website reported that the words Administrator/Manager are interchangeable.

Everyone agreed if this was the route the Committee took, it would be up to the Select Board to write up a job description. Phil said they already have.

Phil said there was two point of focus, 2 goals with Town Manager. One to better understand, and the second into developing it. He asked if the Committee was ready to dive into the Town Administrator/Manager focus. To which the committee agreed.

Dick Douglas asked about surveying the needs of the Town People; and wondered if anyone has ever said, "I don't want an executive secretary."

Audio/Visual Recording began at 6:24 p.m.

Linda suggested inviting other Town Manager's to come and speak with us. (Pam, Mark Sylvia)

Dan suggested also talking to Jeff Osuch.

Discuss/plan FBA public forum

Phil advised that the FBA public forum has been moved from October 10th to October 17th, because Phil is out of Town next week. Linda reported that she will be out of Town on October 17th, but the rest of the Committee could meet, so it will go forward. Phil will advise where the meeting will be held.

Bernie thought the first public forum held at WIIA review by Fairhaven Neighborhood News put most of the complaints out in the newspaper. He wasn't sure if it put the Committee in a good light.

Andy Jones suggested we talk to Beth David.

A brief discussion on the public forum occurred. All agreed that we could tweak or minimize negative comments not pertaining to our Committee.

ACTION #1: Phil said he would have a conversation with Beth David.

Linda felt that our Committee should meet with the BPW, as they have some legitimate concerns. And the Committee felt at the next public forum we will stick to the point at hand.

Discuss recently completed government interviews:

Dan reported that his team (Andy & Dick) were interviewing 7 people within the next two weeks.

Dick reviewed his formulating ideas on how to collect data and analyze it with the questions we are asking. He explained a category for questions/answers; a rating (critical, important, urgency, etc.). Dick said that in the 8-9 Towns he reviewed, most towns just list the information & Littleton does the SWAT analysis.

Phil asked if Dick would take on doing something up with current interviews, which he agreed.

ACTION #2: Dick to formulate current interview information on a spreadsheet for analyzation.

Pattie suggested that everyone send Dick a bulleted list of interview comments that has already been done.

Discuss formation of current/obvious recommendations:

Current/Obvious recommendations?

- IT Strategy
- Town Administrator Process
- More follow up with DOR
- Data gathering
- More interviews

Dick said, 'Town not broken.'

Discussion ensued.

All agreed at the minimum a recommendation would be that Town hire an IT Consultant to analyze IT to improve.

Dick suggested the Committee talk to some IT Consultants.

Bernie suggested talking to the IT Consultant that the school committee used last year, they would know where to start.

Pattie suggested speaking to current IT person.

Also discussed possible recommendation for Human Resources.

And also Bernie discussed Capital Planning.

Andy asked what would you go to Town Meeting with. What's the first step in recommending.

ACTION #3: Bernie to reach out to the School Committee Consultant.

Linda suggested to call other Towns for an IT Consultant.

ACTION #4: Linda to contact Melissa (Town Manager) for their IT Consultant.

ACTION #5: Phil will also look & make a phone call for another IT Consultant.

ACTION #6: Pattie & Linda will interview current IT person for Fairhaven.

There was discussion about visiting mass municipal association or have them come here, what resources do they have? What avenues to do they have that we could explore.

ACTION #7: Dick agreed to call MMA for resources.

Dan had a discussion with Committee on BPW; strengthening BPW Board, thought process of giving authority to Boards.

There was a discussion on what kind of authority Finance Committee has. Phil advised they're job is to 'recommend.'

Andy suggested talking to Chair of Finance Committee re: Capital Planning.

ACTION #8: Andy said he was on DOR site to get info on an IT Consultant, he will email Joe M. to see what resources they can provide.

ACTION #9: Dick to contact SRPEDD to see if any resources are available. (maybe a grant for hiring an IT Consultant)

The Committee agreed that 3 Goals we are currently acting on gathering information, facts & data are:

- IT
- Human Resources
- Town Manager

ACTION #10: Phil said he would put a process list on the website to organize by priority, what the Committee is working on.

Dick asked about employee Town Surveys. (as well as to residents). He explained that he spoke to Mr. Roth who informed him that the census is returned every January, and done every year. There was a survey done in 2008, not sure what it was used for.

ACTION #11: Phil will email everyone a copy of the '08 Survey.

Dick suggested speaking to Bob Unger/Editor of the S-Times to get his opinion on the Town Manger concept.

Phil told the Committee he's been invited to speak on WBSM. Bernie & Pattie expressed interest to join him.

Closing public comment:

Len Benoit, of Precinct 1 spoke briefly about the DOR Report and the recommendation of Town Manager vs. Executive Secretary. He then said years ago there was no BPW Board, then State needed BPW and there was one put in. He then said that Finance Committee should just pay the bills under the budget not decide who/what gets money.

Phil thanked him for his comments, and agreed that Finance Committee needs to be better created/better process.

Dan Sylvia, of Precinct 5 wanted to Thank the committee on taking on this task; he enjoyed being there tonight and was educated.

Pattie & Linda briefly went over what Town Moderator, Mark Sylvia had to say about how other towns put together their Town Meeting research and materials for their members.

Phil advised the public that the Committee had two vacancies.

Andy made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Linda. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting ended at 7:48 p.m.

Next Meeting is the FBA Meeting on 10/17/13.

Respectively submitted,

Patricia A. Pacella