

Town Government Study Committee

Minutes

Meeting of May 25, 2016

Attended: Kathy Fagan, Peter Mullin, Mary McNamara, Rick Neely, and John Cronin in the Cronin conference room, Town Office Building

The minutes of the May 10 meeting were unanimously accepted as amended.

The Committee met with the Personnel Board consisting of C. Sargent Forbes III, Chair, Michael B. Reardon, William J. Curran Jr., Kay E. Bradesky.

The purpose of the conference was to explore how Chapter 13 of the bylaws would operate now that the "strong" Town Administrator law was in place. The Personnel Bylaw had been adopted over fifty years ago. It was intended to relieve the Warrant Committee of some research time and decision work. Also, over time, classification, benefits, wage determination and grievance issues have moved, to some extent, to the executive branch. Nevertheless, funding still requires legislative action from the Town Meeting, after review by the Personnel Board.

The Personnel Board's role is to advise the Warrant Committee on the number and classification of employees. They review and must approve all new employments and promotions, with respect to qualification, nepotism, and classification.

The Town Administrator has suggested that the role of the Personnel Board has been eclipsed by collective bargaining. The Town Administrator advised that sometimes delays approving new hires have been a problem. The suggestion was made that the Assistant Town Administrator-Human Resources would vet new hires and promotions and classification changes and coordinate with the Warrant Committee, if the Personnel Bylaw was rescinded and the Personnel Board eliminated.

The role of the Personnel Board in departmental consolidation was discussed. Related to this was how the Board reviews replacement hires and attempts to monitor classification changes. A mechanics position at the Cemetery was cited as an example which was coordinated with the Town Administrator, Warrant Committee and Public Works Department.

Diversity in the workforce was discussed. Milton's population is now 26% minority but the employee profile has not approached that goal. It was asked whether the Personnel board has a role on diversity.

It was suggested that there is value having the Personnel Board vet and approve hires as a branch of the Legislature. A checks and balances approach. Some thought the idea of having the state legislature playing that role in state personnel matters would be undesirable.

The Personnel Board did not wish to eliminate their role.

This topic generated an interesting and spirited discussion.

It was agreed that the Personnel Board would hold a telephone meeting to approve new hire requests, when the Town Administrator had reason to request it.

The new Assistant Town Administrator would be invited to a future meeting.

An interview with Asst. School Superintendent Pavlicek re: a Chief Procurement Officer position and a related survey of towns by Michael Blanchard (former Assistant Town Administrator) were distributed and briefly discussed.

The concept of an “in house Town Counsel” will be discussed at a future meeting.

Adjourned at 8:45 PM