

Government Study Committee
Meeting Minutes
August 18, 2010, 7:00pm

In attendance: William Coffey – Town Moderator, Betsy Gordon, Donald E. Shute,
Daniel Collins, Eric Russo, Paula White

1) Introductions

The members of the committee and the town moderator each took turns to introduce themselves and give a small description of their individual background. Mr. Coffey described to the committee the cause for the formation of this committee. The town moderator appointed members to this committee, at least one from each precinct, in response to a citizen's petition during the May 2010 town meeting.

2) Committee Charter

Mr. Coffey reviewed the town charter and specifically the "Government Study Commission" section of the charter which describes the composition, the term of office for each member, and the powers and duties of the committee.

3) Appointed Committee Handbook

Mr. Coffey reviewed with the committee members the appointed committee handbook which describes the rules and regulations under which this committee must function within the bylaws of the town. It includes, meeting requirements, reporting requirements, budgets, appointments, and the election of officers.

4) Electing Officers

The members of the committee discussed the responsibilities of each officer, and the criteria for each position. After several members declined or accepted to be considered for each of the positions, the committee unanimously voted, Betsy Gordon as Chair, Donald E. Shute as vice chair, and Paula White as Clerk for the Government Study Committee.

5) Other questions regarding the formation of the committee

Donald Shute asked the committee to consider one question before starting to consider alternative and current forms of government. "What problem are we trying to rectify?" "Is there currently a problem?" It was suggested that the committee needs to define the problem before searching for a solution.

6) Future meeting schedule

It was decided by a unanimous vote the committee will meet on Wednesday evenings at 7:00pm, as town hall is open late on Wednesday evenings and does not conflict with members schedules. The committee will try to meet in a town hall conference room as availability will permit so that the meetings can be accessible to the public.

Next meeting, Wednesday, September 1, 2010 pending available space

7) Action items to be completed

There are several demographically similar towns who have recently recommended or researched alternative forms of town government. It was decided that some initial research of these other demographically like towns was needed. The committee members suggested a few questions to pose other towns:

- How the other town's committee conducted their research?
- What was the interview process?
- What was the impetus for the formation of the committee?
- What form(s) of government were considered?
- What was the final recommendation?
- Has it been successful or unsuccessful and why?

The committee members each volunteered to approach one town that has recently conducted local government study.

Donald Shute – Pembroke, MA

Paula White – Duxbury, MA

Eric Russo – Hingham, MA

Dan Collins – Groton, MA

Besty Gordon – Hanover, MA

The other towns that were suggested for possible research are Cohasset and Kingston. Paula White will contact Kiersten Warendorf to get a list of geographic and demographic-like towns that the school committee uses for equal comparatives.

In addition, the committee members will begin to meet with town hall personnel to understand the resources available and reporting requirements expected of this committee.

- Donald Shute and Betsy Gordon – Meet with Jim Boudreau, town administrator
- Paula White and Betsy Gordon – Meet with Pat , town clerk