

**Government Study Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 1, 2010
Norwell Town Hall**

In attendance: Betsy Gordon; Don Shute; Daniel Collins, Paula White, Eric Russo

1. Administrative issues

The committee unanimously voted to approve the minutes from the meetings dated November 10th, 15th and 22nd.

Betsy Gordon has been in contact with a representative from the best practices study and will set up a meeting with this person to review the proposals we bring forth when they are completed.

2. Discussion

After reviewing the minutes from the last meeting the committee discussed the following areas where further clarification is needed;

- Contract Negotiations,
- Hiring and firing practices for employees who work under a elected and appointed boards,
- town litigation, and
- Department head appointments.

During the last meeting this committee discussed what is understood to be the function and role of the board of selectmen. It is important to define the Board's role so that future elected members have a clear understanding of the expectations and can be held accountable for functions that they were elected to carryout and for preserving the work that has been done in the past.

The same was decided for the position of Town Administrator. By defining the responsibilities of the position, the person hired will better understand the expectations and performance goals. Without a proper job description the town is not protected from a "bad" hire.

Town Administrator Responsibilities

- Hiring and firing of town employees and department heads in cooperation with boards elected or appointed. Final veto on hires remains undecided at this point. The idea was put forth that the BOS would have veto power on appointed board and elected boards would retain veto power on all department hires. In this model, the final decision lies with those people who were elected by the residents of Norwell and are closest to the position being filled.
- Responsible for personnel matters on the municipal side of government

- Budget process – a better understanding of the budget process is needed by the committee before moving forward with wording on this point.
- Oversee and implement policies and goals set by the Board of Selectmen
- Work with all town boards and departments to assist in implementing policies and goals pertinent to their department.
- Facilitate clear and consistent communication among and between town departments.
- Ensure clear and consistent communication between town government and the public,
- Oversee personnel negotiations or oversee a professional negotiator if approved by the Board of Selectmen.

WHAT ELSE??????

3. Further issues to be discussed

Veto Power
Budget Process
Contract negotiations

4. Next Steps

Betsy Gordon will set up an appointment with the representative from the Best Practices Study as well as meet with a member of the advisory board to get a better understanding of the budget process.

5. Adjournment

The committee unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 8, 2010.