

TOWN OF STURBRIDGE
Government Services Study Committee (GSSC)
Minutes of September 21, 2012

Meeting was called to order at 2:30 PM. A. Smith was absent.

Motion was made to accept the minutes of September 7, 2012 by P. Levine, seconded by M. Redetzke. Vote was 3 – 0 – 1 (S. Arndt).

Review of Chief Ford's Thoughts: The Committee members were very impressed with Chief Ford's vision concerning how the Public Safety Facility can run more efficiently now and in the future. The Committee likes how Chief Ford knows his department very well, and how he is able to be objective.

Interview with Chief Senecal: P. Gimas met the Chief Senecal on Thursday, September 20, 2012, because he was unable to attend today's GSSC meeting since he had an appointment. P. Gimas stated that the Chief has a personal medical issue and will be taking a medical leave, starting in about two weeks. The Committee feels it needs to expedite their interview process with Chief Senecal before he takes his leave. Chief Senecal's vision for the future is as follows:

- More equipment and manpower
- Keep the ambulance service in-house
- The Chief believes the Public Safety Facility runs very efficiently
- The Chief believes there should be a Town Facility Manager

The Committee feels there is a lack of knowledge concerning how the Fire Department works. They will shadow the department in the future to observe its operation first hand in order to get a better idea of what works and does not work.

P. Levine and M. Redetzke are going to make an appointment with Chief Senecal within the next two weeks as a follow-up to P. Gimas' interview with the Chief.

The following are some of the questions the Committee will have for the Fire Chief:

- How is the staff person paid who conducts the fire drills at the schools?
- How is the department staffed when some members are at training?
- What can be done to help the department run more efficiently?
- What is the Chief's vision of the department for the next five years?

Discussion of Questionnaire/Survey: A. Smith emailed the Committee members a series of five recommended questions that should be asked when interviewing the different departments. The Committee will discuss these questions.

Old Business: P. Levine and A. Smith attended the Regionalization Toolkit Conference on September 10, 2012. P. Levine stated the two workshops he attended were Regionalization 101 and Consensus Building: Tools for Shared Governance. P. Levine stated that the workshops were very informative.

P. Levine stated that the State and Central Mass Regional Planning Commission have the tools available for Towns to move in the direction of sharing services.

P. Gimas stated the Planning Department is part of the C-13 project which is thirteen Towns working together on priority sites.

P. Gimas stated that she will call the Police Chief in Mendon and set-up a meeting with him, either in Mendon or here at Town Hall, to ask about and see how they made their department run more efficiently.

P. Gimas stated FinCom will be voting at their meeting on September 24, 2012 to transfer the funds for secretarial services and technical services. Mr. Suhoski will then post the position and applications will be accepted.

P. Gimas stated that GSSC will have a page on the Town's web page. Mr. Suhoski asked if the Committee members would mind having their emails on the page. P. Gimas, M. Redetzke, S. Arndt and P. Levine all agreed to have their emails on the page. A. Smith was absent.

The Committee stated that there is a lot of work to be done, with many different avenues to research and look at. We need to get a true picture of each department and understand how it works.

The Committee agreed that progress is being made, and they are headed in the right direction.

Next meeting will be Friday, October 12, 2012 at 2:30 PM.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Trapasso, Secretary