

Ad Hoc Government Study Committee (Westborough, MA)
Minutes of September 6, 2006

Present: John E. Arnold, George Barrette, Brigitte Casemyr, Christopher Senie, Thomas Shea, Manohar Vichare
Absent: Kristina Allen

As directed in the charge to the Committee from the Town Moderator, G. Barrette acted as Chairman and J. Arnold acted as Secretary for this initial meeting of Westborough's Ad Hoc Government Study Committee.

G. Barrette called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm with a quorum being present. Mr. Barrette indicated that K. Allen had a scheduling conflict with this meeting and sends her regrets.

The committee members present briefly introduced themselves. Mr. Barrette is the Selectmen's representative to the Committee. Mr. Arnold is the Advisory Finance Committee's representative to the Committee. The remaining 5 committee members are Selectmen appointees to the Committee.

Each member present acknowledged that he/she has been duly sworn in by the Town Clerk for service on the Committee.

The members discussed their ideas for the process that will be used to perform the work of the Committee.

Since the Committee is an official Town Committee, all meetings of the group will be posted, open meetings. Until a more detailed timeline and structure for the Committee's work is adopted, the members present agreed to hold weekly meetings on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 pm at a place to be determined based on availability.

The Committee members reviewed the charge to the Committee and noted that its work is to focus on the structural and process aspects of town government and not on policy or finances. The Committee serves as a recommending committee with reporting obligations to the Selectman in early 2007 and to the Selectmen and Town Meeting for the May 2007 Annual Town Meeting.

In terms of the Committee's short-term process for conducting its business, ideas included the following:

- Reviewing the existing Town Charter and Bylaws such that each member make observations and report back to the next meeting of the Committee with a list of high-level observations and ideas for further study
- Review of charter and bylaws of similar towns in Massachusetts
- Consideration of possible groups or people from whom the Committee would like to solicit knowledge and/or opinions

- Meeting with other Town Officials or Town staff to gather information, knowledge, and/or opinions.
- Gathering public opinion in a manner that allows comments from the general public in a time-effective manner. Perhaps a call for written comments.

During this discussion, Mr. Barrette mentioned that committee member Kris Allen is working on an organization chart of the Town's departments. Mr. Arnold mentioned that he had seen Town Moderator Joe Harrington would like to meet with the Committee.

As the meeting ended, Mr. Barrette reminded the members that the Committee's charge indicated that the Chairman and Secretary of the Committee must be 'at large' members of the Committee. Mr. Barrette and Mr. Arnold will continue to act as Chairman and Secretary, respectively, until the next meeting. However, at the next meeting, it is expected that the Committee will choose a new Chairman and Secretary.

The next meeting of the Committee will be on Wednesday, Sept. 13 at 7:00 pm at a location to be determined and posted in Town Hall in accordance with the Open Meeting Law.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 pm. (Motion: T. Shea; 2nd: B. Casemyr; unanimous vote)

Submitted,
John E. Arnold, Secretary