

TOWN GOVERNMENT STUDY COMMITTEE

Thursday, January 30, 2014 – Minutes

Meeting called to order by the Chairperson at 6:00 p.m. & read the recording disclaimer.

Present: Chairperson: Phil Washko, Vice Chair: Bernie Roderick, Dick Douglass, Siobhan Henebury (arrived 6:08 p.m.), Linda Meredith, Pattie Pacella.

Absent: G. Steve Riley

Andy Jones has resigned.

AGENDA:

Review/approve minutes: January 16, 2014

Linda Meredith made a motion to approve both the 1/16/14 minutes as presented and was seconded by Dick Douglass. The motion passed unanimously.

Opening Public Comment:

No one present.

Review action items from last meeting:

The Committee reviewed action items from last meeting. No word back on potential public forum at the end of February. Going to leave as a standard open invitation.

Brief discussion on Town Planner works for Board of Selectman & Planning Board, but he is under the realm of the Selectboard.

Review Town Employee Survey:

Bernie Roderiques is not in agreeance with the survey as a whole. He wonders what we will do with the information gathered.

Pattie Pacella said that a few employees have asked about when we were going to interview them, and they have valuable information. She said she would want to know if 95% of employees didn't like one thing about Town Government or other.

A brief discussion went on about the employee survey.

Phil Washko then asked for a straw vote on those who wanted to proceed with the employee survey. Five members (Phil, Dick, Linda, Pattie & Sibohan) voted in favor, with one, Bernie oppose.

The members continued reviewing the employee survey, making a few changes.

Pattie Pacella made a motion with the changes to have Dick Douglass finalize the employee survey for its final review at the next meeting and was seconded by Linda Meredith. The motion passed 5-1. (with Bernie Roderick in opposition).

Brief discussion on how to get the surveys employees. Phil Washko and Dick Douglass will go to Town Hall on Friday and discuss. Also ask if surveys can actually go to union workers.

ACTION ITEM #1: Phil & Dick to discuss employee surveys with Jeff Osuch.

Discuss Town Administrator Job Description, next steps:

Discussion on what degree should be with minimum of Bachelor's. Bernie was in contact with Suffolk University who reported Masters in Political Science is a big program. They are going to send him some information. Linda also did some research and shared hers.

Bernie began a discussion suggesting that we meet with the Board of Selectman sooner than later, to make sure we're all on the same page of what we are proposing.

Phil stated that he has reached out to Board of Selectman with a potential dates.

Dick spoke about speaking to the Colin Center (which is part of UMASS, Boston) who has a placement team of Town Administrator's as well as does Government IT stuff.

ACTION ITEM #2: Dick to call Colin Center and invite someone to possible come down to speak to us (around their schedule) as they are placement coordinators of Town Administrator's.

Pattie asked that we invite Jeff Osuch to the round table discussion.

ACTION ITEM #3: Phil & Bernie to meet with Jeff Osuch and invite him to the round table discussion.

Phil stated that he received an email from Steve Riley questioning the Human Resource Management part of TA job description. Would they be responsible for job evaluations?

Brief discussion.

ACTION ITEM #4: Everyone is to again review the Job Description for the TA and send Phil any questions/comments for next meeting.

Discuss Town Administrator job descriptions, next steps:

Siobhan reviewed her research with finding Towns in Mass. Re: BPW & TA's.

Discussion on what reasons, if any are for eliminating BPW.

Brief discussion about personnel board, do we still have one? If so what do they do? How do we find out.

Towns discussed:
Andover – No BPW
Ipswich – “ “

Purpose is to try & streamline BPW & TA

Discussion on how unit would function whether disband DPW Board or 'advisory board'.

Pattie doesn't feel that Town Meeting (ultimate voting authority) is going to pass or vote on a Town Administrator & eliminating BPW Board. Two big changes. We need strong support of both if we decide that's the way to go.

Discussion.

ACTION ITEM #5: Phil to email all of us with Annual Reports he received from Vinnie Furtado.

Questions that came up in discussions:

What does BPW actually do? (budgets?) What would differences between appointed vs. elected?

Associated costs? Central Chain of Command?
Are we streamlining?
Responsibility & Accountability.

Bernie suggests speaking to Vinnie directly.

ACTION ITEM #6: Pattie to contact Vinnie to see if he can attend next Thursday's meeting for further information and cc: Bernie.

Dick suggested looking at different DOR Reports that had Executive Secretary's and switched to Town Administrator's and who had BPW and now don't.

Different Towns under discussion:

Hopkinton switched on their own, not because of a DOR report.

Wrentham, Lee

Andover, Ipswich

Hanover, Maynard (all Boards are appointed)

Lexington (Planning Board & Board of Selectman are elected; everyone else appointed)

ACTION ITEM #7: Everyone to do a little more research on different Towns.

Review outstanding interviews:

Phil & Bernie to do a few more, including sustainability.

Pattie to reach out to Wayne Hayward, and invite Planning Board if they want to discuss anything further.

Other questions from Committee members:

RE: Town Surveys. Dick reported that 750 have been returned via mail so far & 100 have been done on-line. Phil will have someone enter into a data entry program to look at.

Dick had a discussion what things still need to be looked at by committee and Phil agreed to prioritize a list for on-going stuff. He asked members to email him any thoughts.

Bernie did a review of the schedule:

Tentatively – 2/6 with Vinnie & Jeff; 2/13 regularly scheduled; & 2/20-might be round table.

Closing Public Comments:

None.

Bernie made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Linda. The meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Patricia A. Pacella
Recording Secretary